

HackMaster

Basic



The Plague of Cosolen

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The Plague of Cosolen

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INTRODUCTION



The Plague of Cosolen is a *HackMaster* adventure located in the [Kingdoms of Kalamar](#) campaign setting. More specifically, this adventure focuses on the kingdom of Cosdol and its capital city, Cosolen. It is designed to challenge four to six player characters of 3rd to 4th level. Encounters may be tailored to accommodate stronger or weaker players.

This adventure can easily accommodate larger or smaller parties of different levels with a little work by any competent GameMaster, who should fully familiarize himself with this adventure prior to running it. It's best if the party includes a thief and a cleric, but they are not required to complete the adventure.

Adventure Background

Cosolen, the capital of the kingdom of Cosdol, is a shockingly crowded city. Almost a year ago, a tsunami struck the eastern shores of Voldor Bay destroying many villages and inducing many of its survivors to migrate to the capital. Though the refugees were initially met with open arms and offered charity, their sheer numbers overwhelmed the capacity of the city to cope with this destitute mass of humanity.

City officials soon began to turn away the steady stream of migrants encouraging them to seek assistance in other parts of the realm. Many though had no desire to adopt a vagabond existence and opted to simply stay put and make the best of the hardscrabble life fate had delivered to them. Through a combination of latent sympathy, inaction and lack of consensus on the part of the ruling elite, the city has permitted the establishment of a shantytown colloquially known as Eastpeg.

These conditions proved ripe for exploitation by Ryeth Olm - a villain who arrived in Cosolen from the east three years ago, fleeing certain rumors after the death of his father.

Ryeth's history is a foul one. Even at a young age, he had a propensity for odd behavior and a particular interest in death and disease. This interest became vocation when he encountered a traveling priest of Mangrus the Rotlord - the man who indoctrinated Ryeth into the Conventicle of Affliction and thus started him on his path of faith. Ryeth excelled in his service to the Rotlord and after several trials and tribulations, he was blessed by becoming infected with lycanthropy. This young devotee was charged with a grand mission, that being the establishment of a new temple in honor to Mangrus.

Though he was given no specific instructions as to how to proceed, Ryeth decided that the best way to honor his god was to set a great plague upon a city. Avoiding his former home of Crandolen for fear of being recognized, Ryeth settled in Cosolen and began to implement his plan. Ryeth slowly gathered a small cult of worshippers dedicated to his lord.

For two years he toiled hatching one scheme after the other in an increasingly desperate attempt to cause a major plague in the city. All of these myriad convoluted projects failed, though not to any inherent flaw in their design or execution. Rather, the city itself was a bastion against contagion. Unlike many of the densely-packed cities of the south, Cosolen was built around greenspace. This, coupled with the relative affluence of its inhabitants and corresponding absence of squalid tenements, made it difficult for a pathogen to spread rapidly and affect a critical mass of individuals before being detected and remediative measures taken.

Nearly driven to despair, Ryeth became less discreet and encouraged his disheartened band of valetudinarians to commit overt acts in a final attempt to punish the city with an epidemic. When an alert night watchman apprehended one young disciple as he attempted to disgorge a wheelbarrow of raw sewage into the municipal water supply, Olm acknowledged defeat and prepared himself for the fatal affliction he would soon contract as his foul god passed judgment.

And then everything changed...

A disaster of indeterminate origin struck the eastern shores of Voldor Bay. A towering wall of water swept away entire villages killing many and leaving the survivors destitute as their fishing boats and goodly portions of the villages themselves were destroyed. Upon hearing of the event, the glum Ryeth was briefly elated, for any such story of death and misery cheers the blackest of hearts. However, the extent of his good fortune was not apparent for several weeks. It was only then that streams of refugees began to swarm upon the city. Soon the conditions that stood in his way would immutably change.

Cosolen was awash with poor, hungry and desperate refugees. The Greens were soon home to makeshift residences lacking heat and sanitation. All throughout the city, people were packing into living quarters designed for a quarter their number. No less importantly, the focus of the city's leadership was now distracted by this crisis. Petty nuisances (such as Ryeth's little cohort) were relegated to tertiary importance, as far more urgent matters demanded their attention.

The once friendly and attentive city guard bore the brunt of this onslaught. Where they once policed a genteel citizenry, they now were forced into the role of hated minions of the establishment and compelled to engage in argumentative confrontations with the increasingly numerous and often cantankerous (if not outright violent) throngs of refugees. If this proved an insufficient stressor, economic despair inculcated a criminal element hitherto unknown in Cosolen.

Interactions between the city watch and the refugees are uneasy at best. As such, the migrants will not seek out their aid unless all other avenues have been exhausted. Likewise they are not apt to seek assistance from the city leadership, having effectively established themselves as an independent faction.

No fool, Ryeth sees the refugee community as rife for

exploitation. Not only do they offer better prospects for recruitment, but the socially isolated and makeshift nature of their living arrangements offers an excellent incubation chamber for his plague.

Whether a divine bestowment or a heretofore unknown ailment, several of Ryeth's followers have contracted a [disease](#) that has become known as "[The Wrack](#)". Though not exceptionally contagious or lethal, it can prove fatal – particularly in those weakened by hunger and fatigue.

The Theatre of the Arts has unwittingly become involved in Ryeth's latest scheme for they alone among the Cosolen establishment made a determined outreach to the refugees. They see their mission as bringing some joy and entertainment to the beleaguered migrants. "*If they were but to experience the works of the bards,*" says Artiste Danasan "*then distractions of drink and brawling wouldst have not the appeal they do now command.*"

The Merry Muses are a frequent sight within Eastpeg and other areas in which the refugees congregate. They can often be seen entertaining children with puppet shows or performing impromptu street theater. Though this outreach has been less overtly effective than Danasan had hoped for (the muses are routinely mocked by the city guard), it has permitted the order to have a better insight as to the daily affairs within the community than anyone else in Cosolen. In addition, the Muses are generally viewed favorably as well-meaning, if somewhat impuissant, priests that can be trusted.

While entertaining the refugees, several of the Muses have noted that some individuals have contracted a disease that manifests itself with fever, open sores and blackened skin around the lymph nodes. Those open to their counsel have been encouraged to quarantine themselves while the priests minister to their ailments.

More disturbingly, several times they encountered a sick individual gladhanding with everyone he meets. This seemingly gregarious person then flees when they approach. Initially they thought this to be simply a deranged man, but when several Muses reported an identical *modus operandi* being employed by several distinct persons, they began to suspect something more insidious.

Ryeth is aware of the threat the Muses pose to his plan and has begun formulating a plan to deal with

them. Much to his surprise, the Muses intervened before he could set his plan into motion. Via questioning of friendly refugees, they were able to learn the identities of three of the suspicious characters they had observed in Eastpeg. Unfortunately, they were unaware that Ryeth had previously approached Gulda, leader of “The Pox”, under the guise of an arms dealer named Sevdol. Supposedly, he sought to secure her assistance in acquiring human weapons and possibly serving as armed escorts when trading with orcs in the Odril Hills. Though suspicious of his motives, the large downpayment he made to secure her services has (for the moment) earned her loyalty and protection for his followers.

When they spotted Vrastin and Dantral behaving suspiciously, the Muses Formin, Transdril and Bransel sought to confront them. Little did they know that they were being led into a trap. The servitors of the Rotlord ran to “The Stash” where they were joined by the massive Olmved and a half dozen Pox gang members. The impulsive Muses were overmatched and quickly subdued. Not wishing to be implicated in the murders of priests of the Raconteur (because of the trouble it might bring), the gang was happy to let Vrastin, Dantral and the late to arrive Eltrin take them into captivity.

With these priests in his durance vile, Ryeth arranged to have The Pox deliver a ransom note asking for 300 silver pieces for the return of the priests, along with a warning to cease their activities in Eastpeg and not to alert the City Watch lest the priests lives be forfeit. He left instructions to meet with him (as Sevdol) at dusk three days hence in the Farwater Inn.

The acting leader of the Theatre of the Arts, Dendrala Minel, is at a loss as how to proceed. She fears alerting the City Watch for fear of “Sevdol” murdering the priests and also the loss of face that would occur. She is extremely interested in resolving the kidnapping before her superior returns.

Player Introduction

If the PCs travel to Cosolen from elsewhere, read or paraphrase the following boxed text to the players as they make their journey. Farms and the occasional estate dot the landscape along the road and travel is relatively safe, especially for armed men.

At several points you pass workers in the fields, some using oxen to plow while others till by hand. Rickety carts carrying various sundries pass you and at one point a group of children rush the road to wave at you. Many farmers stop their work to watch you pass but never venture close enough for conversation.

If the PCs approach the farmers, they can make idle conversation but have no significant information to offer. Continue to read the following text aloud.

By day’s end your legs ache from the journey, but the number of farmhouses increase in frequency. On the horizon you spy dozens of small streams of smoke from the chimneys of Cosolen, indicating you should arrive within an hour or two.

At Cosolen, the characters find a city teeming with people, many of them without a place to stay. Refugees from the harsh winter and tidal wave are common, as are beggars and thieves.

Work is scarce and competition is fierce, as many of the new residents of the city bring strong skill-sets but no money. The economy of Cosolen suffers as well, and demand for food is high. The influx of people drove wages down while prices for goods and services increased.

Items purchased in Cosolen cost at least 1½ times the values in the *HackMaster Basic* equipment listing.

As the characters come closer to the city, read or paraphrase the following text aloud.

Drawing closer to the city you see a long line of people waiting to enter the gates. Many of them lead pack animals, burdened down with household furnishings and other such possessions, like refugees hoping to start a new life.

For what seems like eons, you watch the sun dip toward the horizon until finally you reach the city gates, just before they are to close for the night. The weary guards look you over and command you to halt.

The guards at the gates are hardworking folk, but like many in Cosolen they try their best to take advantage of any situation they can. New travelers, especially armed ones, present an opportunity for the guards to line their pockets.

When the characters arrive, the guards motion them off to the side and run their con, hoping to make a bit of silver on the side.

A burly guard waves his hand, motioning you out of the lone line of people. Over your shoulder you see the guards casually searching the new arrivals, turning away those who appear to be carrying all they own on their backs.

The guard approaches you and speaks in a clear voice.

"All weapons must be surrendered upon entrance to the city."

If the PCs balk, you may continue with the following.

The guard leans in and speaks in a sly whisper.

"Listen. New arrivals are supposed to surrender their blades, but it creates a lot of work for us. Not only do we need to find room to store your items but we also have to keep records of them. If you're willing to pay one silver coin - for each guard here - I'll forget I ever saw you and let you in; otherwise, you have to turn over your weapons."

Paying one silver coin for each guard (or giving away decent quality items or weapons of equivalent value) allows the characters to pass into the city unmolested. Anyone refusing to pay the extortion or relinquish his weapons forces the guards' hands, though the last thing they want is any bloodshed. They allow characters to retain knives, as these are the common tools of many trades.

Gate Guards (10): N Brandobian human Men-at-Arms; HP 28, Init +4, Spd 10, Rch 3.5', Atk +1, Dmg 2d8p+1, Def -2, DR 3, ToP 9/ 7

Notable Skills: Listening 30, Observation 30, Resist Persuasion 25

Getting There...

The most direct way for a GameMaster to introduce this adventure is simply to pick up the player characters (figuratively speaking, of course) and drop them right down in the city of Cosolen, on the edge of Voldor Bay.

This is particularly easy for new characters who aren't already established in some other location. Of course, you can also do this with existing player characters, even those who are hundreds of miles away. Simply preface the adventure with a few words like *"Your long journey comes to an end as you finally take your first steps into the city of Cosolen..."* and you're all set. If you'd like to start in Cosolen, simply familiarize yourself with the introduction, then turn to [Act One: Cosolen](#) and begin reading.

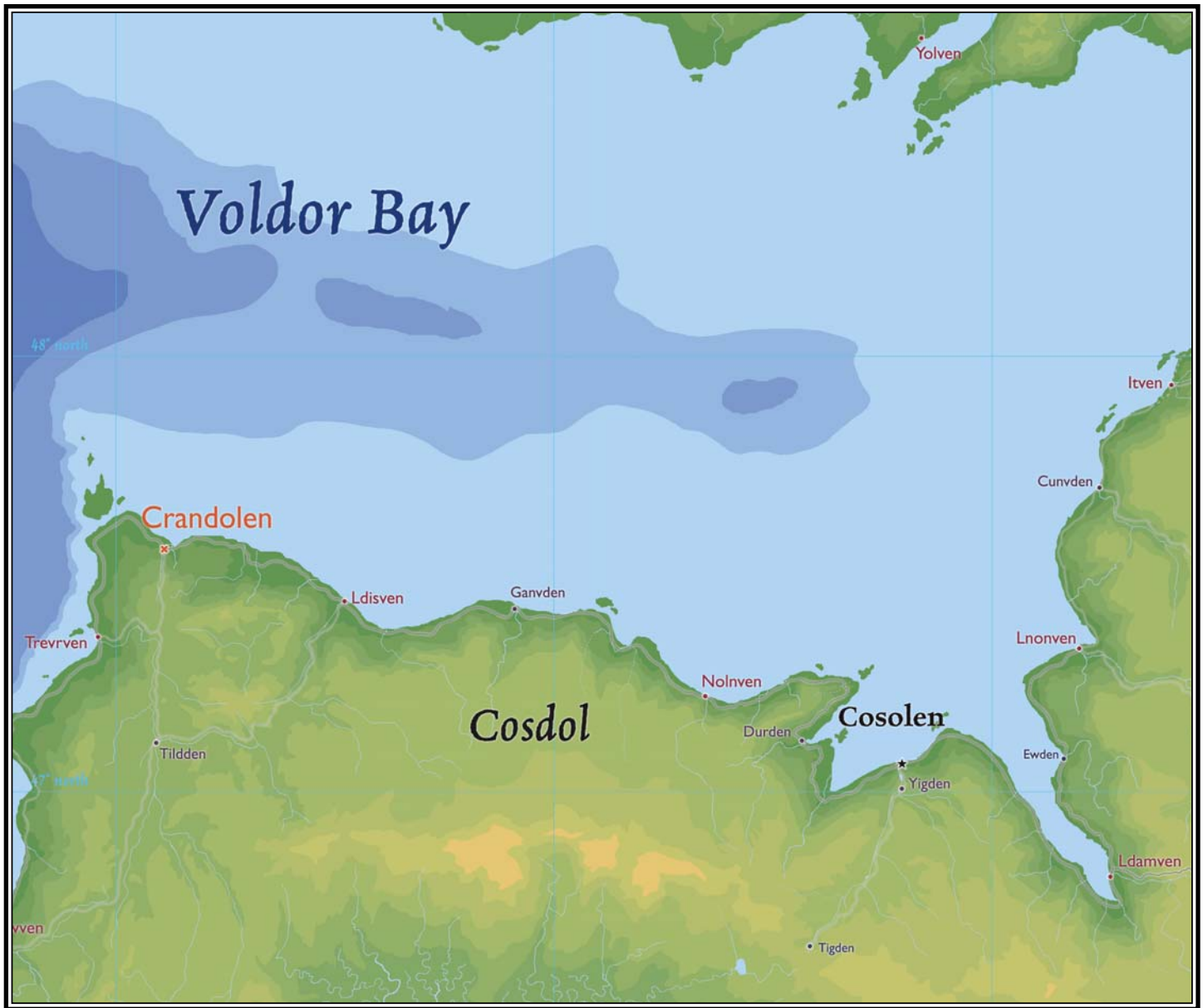
On the other hand, many [published HackMaster adventures](#) take place in the city-state of P'Bapar, and so it is likely that the player characters are based in this region. Since Cosolen lies roughly 350 miles due west of [Frاندor's Keep](#), however, getting there requires a bit of travel...

If explanation is required, the most likely eventuality was that the characters took on the roles of caravan guards, protecting a merchant shipment travelling by road from Frاندor's Keep (or other location) to the P'Baparan capital, then across the Krond Heights mountain range into Brandobia and its Cosdolite city of Napalido. From there, the PCs found further work traveling west to Ldamven, a small port city on Voldor Bay. Once there, another merchant brought them still further west to Cosolen.

▶ Anyone forced to leave the city can attempt to sneak in over the walls by making two successful opposed Sneaking and two successful opposed Hiding checks (versus the guards' Listening and Observation skill checks, respectively). Climbing the wall also requires at least Average mastery of the Climbing/Rappelling skill.

▶ A character can attempt a Diplomacy, Intimidation or Seduction skill check in order to talk his way out of paying the 'sword tax.' This check applies only to the character attempting it and not the group as a whole.

Once inside the city, the characters are free to explore Cosolen at their leisure.



Setting Note: The Kingdom of Cosdol

When the empire of Brandobia divided among three brothers, folk skilled in the use of magic (mostly elves) fled to the solitude of the north in fear of persecution. Veseln, the youngest brother and a skilled conjurer, was the first king and the founder of Cosdol (population 650,000). Today, Archmage Welren, a great-grandson of Veseln, rules Cosdol. He is more than 100 years old, having used magic to extend his life beyond that of a normal human.

Cosdol's population is a fairly peaceful collection of mages and merchants. The merchants deal in furs, rare oils and perfumes made from trapped animals. In season, the fishing off the coast is good, and game (caribou and elk) is plentiful. Towers surrounded by smaller buildings dapple the countryside. Stone walls circle many of these clusters of structures, keeping out the fearsome beasts that roam the wilderness.

Large numbers of demi-humans dwell in Cosdol. In fact, humans are in the minority behind elves. Further north, humanoids populate small towns and life there can be quite dangerous. The town of Dorndern, located in the north along the Omdal River, is said to house a vast library frequented by humanoid shamans.

Foreign trade occurs primarily through P'Bapar. Cosdolan merchants also trade foodstuffs and textiles to some tribes of orcs, goblins and hobgoblins living in the Odril Hills and Krond Heights for metals and minerals.

Religious tolerance ebbs high here, with evil religions found mostly in the northern territory. Cosdol's magic schools, guilds and military are centered in Cosolen, the capital. The standing army enlists the services of several powerful wizards and many junior mages. In times of war, there may be in excess of one mage for every 100 soldiers.

ACT ONE

Cosolen

Further details on Cosolen follow. Not all of this information is strictly required for the GameMaster, but is included to provide flavor and give a greater sense of scope. This detail may also be handy for GMs wishing to expand the scope of the adventure or allow the PCs greater rein throughout the city.

City Overview

AKA: Humans outside of Brandobia may refer to Cosolen as the “Capital of the Fey” (for its concentration of elves).

Population: 39,100 Brandobian humans and elves.

At a Glance: Rising up gentle slopes from the rocky shores of the Voldor Bay, Cosolen is a cosmopolitan city with roots buried deep in the elven heritage of northern Brandobia.

As one approaches the city, the farmsteads grow smaller and closer together and outlying buildings offer some respite for those that prefer the open spaces to the confines of the interior of the city. Inside the walls, buildings are tightly packed and streets small, in many cases merely ten feet apart. People move about their daily business in a hurry and the stench is often overwhelming. Garbage, farm animals, human waste, and sweat all intermingle to create an overpowering and unique smell common to large cities.

The tidal wave that struck the eastern coast of the Voldor Bay has begun to change Cosolen in ways city officials could have never envisioned. The city is the jewel of northern Brandobia, a center of learning and cultural acceptance (as much acceptance as can be expected, that is). Civil engineering is the pride of the city. Brick, stone, and tile streets crisscross the city opening into squares with public wells and fountains.

Unlike many major cities, Cosolen boasts several large green spaces. Trees line some of the more prominent streets – an influence adopted from the elven cultures in the region. Work crews manage these thoroughfares keeping the streets well maintained.

Lately, however, the city has begun to fall into disrepair. Money for public works projects has been rerouted to help deal with the massive influx of refugees that have arrived in the city over the last year. Skilled workers, artisans, farmers and laborers with no funds or employment (and little hope) arrive daily at the gates, carrying all they own on their backs looking for a new life. Most are turned away.

With the city filled to capacity many people now live on the once glorious streets. The guards and city workers turn these people out only to find they have migrated to another area the following day. With no homes, the alleys have become filled with people, refuse, filth and human waste. Try as they might, the city maintenance workers just can't keep up with the demand for their services.

In some of the more prosperous areas of the city, public wells and fountains are guarded. City watchmen encourage users to get their water and move along. Cosolen finds itself fighting new problems from within while trying to maintain the city's foundation of order and civic pride. Complicating matters is the lenient judicial code the city employs that follows the more elven model on how to handle crime.

Human morals (being more easily compromised than those of the elves) has allowed crime to become somewhat of a problem throughout the city. Con games and thievery are common but the crime is not limited to those two activities. Many residents openly carry weapons, even when they are not allowed to, and lately

smuggling has increased tenfold. The worse offense may be grave robbing. Elves burn their dead and little to no thought was given to the buried. Early law books failed to even mention this offense.

Crime and a massive influx of refugees are not the only problems the city faces. Like much of Brandobia, racial tensions can run high at times, both from the superior attitude of the demi-humans and the past military conflicts between both humans and elves. Much of the tension faded over the years, but some organizations and people within the city still cling to ancient attitudes and are openly hostile toward one another. Protecting the city is the watch and the military.

The guards spend as much of their time at the city searching newly arrived refugees and traders as they do patrolling the streets. Divided and stretched thin, they do their best to maintain the order of the city. Still, like many groups throughout the city, they are not above the occasional con to gain a few silvers. Meanwhile, soldiers are routinely being pulled from drills to assist in patrolling the city, a task they find demeaning and a waste of their abilities.

Cosolen offers visitors an exciting and dangerous place to call home. Powerful merchants and guilds control much of the commerce while pickpockets and con men run rampant through the streets. Those willing to brave the city streets quickly learn whom they can and can't trust.

Government: Cosolen is the capital of the Kingdom of Cosdol, and by tradition, the Royal Heir rules it directly as his fief. Prince Sevlen spent 11 years practicing magic full-time. Unfortunately, since the death of one of his father's principal councilors he has had to abandon his scholarly studies to devote more attention to the kingdom.

Economy: Refugees, who bring skills but little food, burden the economy. Winter was harsh, and citizens resent the intrusion. Fortunately, a bountiful harvest helped ease the resentment and provided many immigrants work. Normally, the city imports what it needs from P'Bapar via the pass, and trades food and textiles to civilized humanoid tribes in the east for iron and copper.

Military: The prince takes a direct hand in both organization and leadership of the military. The garrison allows Sevlen to draw upon 200 each light and

heavy infantry, pikemen and archers. These troops are familiar with fighting against mages, skirmishers and monsters – an array of experiences unavailable to most armies on Tellene. Their morale is high, and they practice against each other often.

Major military threats come from the goblins and hoarfrost giants ranging far from their homes in the Kronnd Heights and bloodthirsty orcs from the Odril Hills. Pirates do not trouble the city because the constant fog makes sailing hazardous.

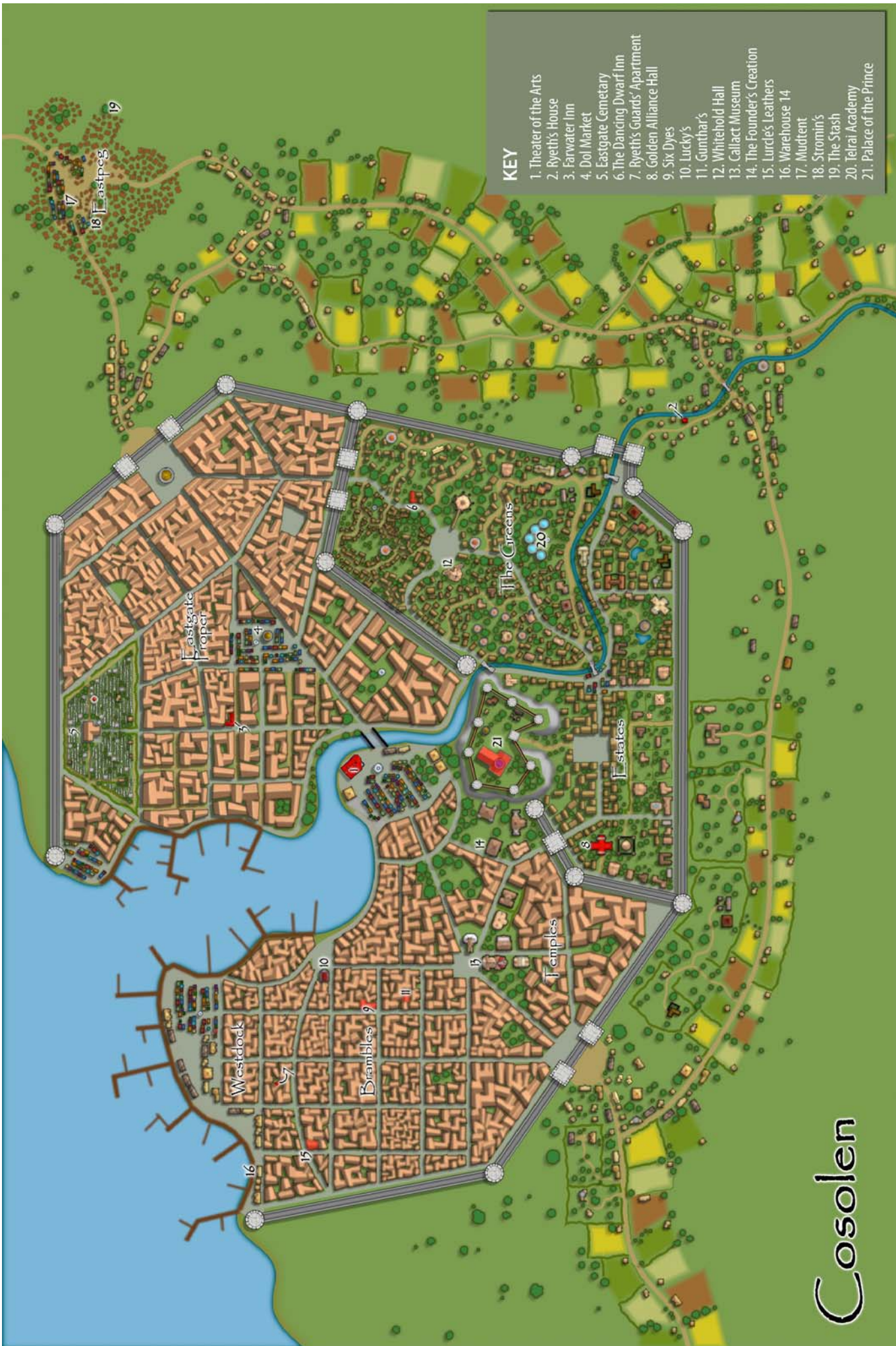
Temples: The Theatre of the Arts has a solid foundation among the elves of Cosdol. Surprisingly, many of the recent refugees cling to the faith. They are hungry for a bit of joy after their last grim spring. Artiste Danasan of Napalido welcomes them into the congregation by integrating them into plays and dances. The temple's performance hall seats 1,300 on full nights, and nobles from across Brandobia attend when the Artiste performs.

The Temple of Enchantment, the Founder's Creation, and the Temple of the Patient Arrow are most popular with the elves, while the Fraternal Order of Aptitude, the Face of the Free and the Assembly of the Four Corners are favorite human faiths. Other religions can be found in lesser numbers; there are even a few supporters of the Order of Agony in a rustic brick building near the west gate to Crandolen.

Underworld: Crime is a problem not likely to change in Cosolen for quite some time. After the breakup of Brandobia, Cosolen changed its judicial code more than its southerly neighbors did. Cosolen used the much more lenient elven model. Unfortunately, since the citizens do not all share the elven morals and social mores, much crime that would be suppressed in harsher governments goes un punished.

Con games are common, as is smuggling. Not everyone who wears a weapon has the right to do so. Forgery is difficult to prosecute. The worst threat might be grave robbing, since the elves often burn their dead and the early law books failed to mention of this appalling offense.

The thieves' guild is an exclusively human organization that maintains the Brandobian attitude toward demi-humans and foreigners. The Guild master is a faithful follower of the House of Scorn and frequently targets good temples for silent, quick thefts. Violent



KEY

- 1. Theater of the Arts
- 2. Ryeth's House
- 3. Farwater Inn
- 4. Dol Market
- 5. Eastgate Cemetery
- 6. The Dancing Dwarf Inn
- 7. Ryeth's Guards' Apartment
- 8. Golden Alliance Hall
- 9. Six Dyes
- 10. Lucky's
- 11. Gunthar's
- 12. Whitehold Hall
- 13. Callact Museum
- 14. The Founder's Creation
- 15. Lurd's Leathers
- 16. Warehouse 14
- 17. Mudrent
- 18. Stromin's
- 19. The Stash
- 20. Telrai Academy
- 21. Palace of the Prince

Cosolen

crime is rare. A mugger never can be too sure that the teetering sot leaving a tavern is not a mage looking for exactly that kind of trouble.

Places of Interest

Cosolen is divided into six districts or distinct areas the locals call Brambles, Eastgate Proper, Eastpeg, Estates, Temples and Westdock. While these names are not official in any way, most of the populace refer to them as if they were. Several locations are mentioned in each section to provide GameMasters and players alike with several locales to call home while they explore the city.

Brambles

Brambles is the most cluttered and densely populated district in the city. One small apartment is often home to six or seven people and space is at a premium, especially with the arrival of the refugees. Apartments are stacked up on top one another and, with the high cost of land, most buildings get larger as they get progressively higher, a feature typical throughout the city.

Second and third stories often protrude into the streets and alleyways but many buildings rise as high as four or five stories. Businesses occupy the ground floors of many of these buildings and travelers can find all manner of shops here including those that specialize in services and repairs. Apartments and homes make up the vast majority of the rest of the district. A few government buildings, such as guard towers and maintenance facilities, also can be found here.

Typical buildings are three to five stories tall with no basement and comprised of wood construction with a whitewashed stucco exterior. Buildings and tenements are often made on the cheap and it isn't uncommon to see several varieties of architecture or building styles on any given street. Alleyways cut and twist between each block opening into small shadowy squares and wider alleys hidden between buildings where locals hang laundry and have social gatherings. Once off the main streets it is easy to become lost in the maze-like mess of alleys that often dead-end. Pickpockets and thieves often dart down these alleys to avoid capture, knowing they can easily escape while their pursuers become lost.

The people here are generally poor and hard working eking out a living while trying to escape from the squalor in which they live. Alleyways are often infest-

ed with rats, human waste, and garbage. Once in a while, maintenance workers pass through to clean the streets and alleys but those trips have become fewer in recent months as city workers are overwhelmed with work. Beggars and thieves are common in Brambles and many of them operate outside the authority of the thieves' guild. Bodies occasionally appear in alleyways, but most honest citizens have little to fear from guild retribution.

Most of the wealthy avoid Brambles other than to pass through on the way to the docks. They view the place as home to the masses and see no reason to enter that portion of the city unless business takes them there. Those merchants and noblemen that have interests in Brambles often send a representative rather than go themselves. Despite the attitudes of the higher class there is no more animosity between the poor and the rich that one wouldn't find in many other cities across Tellene.

Guards patrol Brambles on regular intervals, but avoid alleys and shadowy public squares unless a specific incident draws their attention. Groups of five walk the streets with lanterns, but around midnight all patrols cease. Cries for help are answered in force and guards use horns or bells to summon help from nearby guard stations. All things considered Brambles is a fairly safe place to call home. Fewer thieves patrol this region, mostly because of the lack of wealth, and the rent and expenses are affordable. Common workers, laborers and even some skilled artisans trying to make their mark in the world have been known to call Brambles home.

Six Dyes [map area 9]: One of the more famous shops in Brambles is the dye and tailoring shop known as six dyes. Offering dying services for personal garments to bolts of wool the dye shop is extremely busy with people coming and going from sunup to sundown. A small shop serves as a contact point for people to drop cloth or garments off but the majority of the building is dedicated to a large area for dying clothing.

Several vats of dye occupy a large warehouse space where dozens of women work dying and mending clothing. Befitting its name the shop offers a standard block of six colors (yellow, green, blue, red, orange and purple). Colors outside of this spectrum are more expensive and considered custom orders.

Residents of Brambles tend to be poor, and tailoring services are in high demand in order to extend the life of clothing. As such, Six Dyes offers mending and custom tailoring in a small side shop adjacent to their dying business. This service is popular but most prefer to save the hard coin and manage the task themselves. The shop often hires new workers, as the practice of dying clothing can be dangerous at times. Turnover is high among the women that work here. The work is taxing and most of them earn a poor wage.

Lucky's [map area 10]: One of the more notable gambling halls in the area, Lucky's is popular among mercenaries and soldiers. Housed inside a four-story building, the gambling hall offers games of chance and an evening's companionship to those willing to pay. The first two stories are split into rooms where dice and card games are held. The upper levels include two-dozen bedrooms where working girls ply their trade.

Lucky's faced resistance from prominent elven leaders since its inception, but the gambling hall proves resilient thus far. Unknown to most, Lucky's is owned and operated by the Blades. Even so the games are not rigged and the guild does its best to maintain an aura of fairness. Visitors find Lucky's a lively place that never closes. Guild members can often be found here and those wishing to contact the Blades would be advised to start here.

Gunthar's [map area 11]: Crammed into the back of a building down a dark and narrow alley is a curiosity shop called Gunthar's. Specializing in rare herbs used as aromatics (and occasionally for spell components) the owner, a surly halfling named Gunthar, takes pride in sourcing anything his select cliental demands. Gunthar makes more money than most people could imagine. For years he has been a reliable source for certain spell components for the college of magic and so acquired a large stash of silver. Gunthar has deals with several farmers in the region to grow specific crops for him and in return he pays them quite well for their service and loyalty (though he is ruthless with those that cut deals on the side). This ensures a constant supply for his clients. Because of his steady income, Gunthar tends to be somewhat aloof to walk-in customers. He feels they need him more than he needs them, and acts accordingly.

Eastgate Proper

Comprising most of the eastern portion of the city inside the walls Eastgate Proper is the name of the largest district in the city. Folks of all social classes and economic station call Eastgate Proper home, making the area eclectic and unique all at the same time. Lively even in the darkest hours, residents of The Proper (as the locals refer to it) tend to be easy-going and full of life.

Prior to the tidal wave, this portion of the city was a place locals could shop, work and live near plenty of sights and entertainment with which to occupy their time. Since the coming of the refugees The Proper has become cluttered with the homeless that live in the alleys and streets. Refugees from dozens of small villages now call The Proper home and the congestion has begun to cause a fair number of problems.

Travelers that spend any amount of time in Eastgate proper quickly learn the lay of the land. Several markets nestle into alleys and small squares are scattered throughout. Taverns and inns are plentiful and the densest concentration of merchants can be found here.

Intermingled among the shops and curios are the homes of the Brandobians that dwell in Eastgate. Many of these residences are located on the second and third stories of shops. These tenements allow for a high concentration of residents and make Eastgate a lively and active part of the city. Most buildings in the Proper are two and three-story wood buildings with hand split wood shingles. Larger apartment buildings are common here. These places can sometimes span entire blocks and grow as high as five stories.

Streets here are mostly worn cobblestone, but some of the alleys are tile or dirt. Avenues and thoroughfares are wide and accommodating. Travelers will find most of Eastgate easy to navigate. Tenements and apartments are plentiful as are shops, taverns, inns and other locales where people can spend their hard earned coins.

Guards patrol the streets at all hours in groups of six to ten. At night these patrols carry lanterns doing their best to move people along to their homes. Since Cosolen has no official curfew, the guards look for any excuse to arrest or detain loiterers in order to keep the streets free of ner-do-wells. Guard towers house the men and women that keep order and a patrol is never far off. Some patrols carry small bells to ring out in

case of trouble, though this habit has waned since several youths started to ring bells - and then flee after drawing members of the watch.

Also located here is the east gate. Anyone attempting to enter the city from the east passes through this gate and must deal with the guards. At any time a line consisting of anywhere from a dozen to three hundred people wait to be granted access to the city. Guards working the gate search anyone entering the city while questioning them as to the purpose of their visit, the duration of their stay, and any other information they feel necessary. In many cases, the guards direct visitors to inns or places of business outside of the city if they decide that the visitor can accomplish his goals without passing through the gates. Refugees that arrive carrying all of their possessions are quickly turned away. Many of these people end up in Eastpeg, eking out an existence but holding out hope they may enter at a later date.

Dol Market [map area 4]: Located near the east gate along the main thoroughfare, Dol Market is one of the busiest and most active areas of The Proper. Merchants and peddlers hawk their goods to passersby, selling everything from weapons and armor to fruit and vegetables. Most of the residents of Eastgate shop here at some point during the month.

The Burnished Blades always have a lookout and several pickpockets patrol the market making sure to target strangers or visitors and avoid the locals. Exotic aromas mix with sweat and the stench of the city wafting through the market while merchants shout to travelers in several dialects and languages hoping to draw their attention.

Eastgate: This heavily trafficked portal serves as the main entrance into the city from the east. Flanked by two large towers that serve as home to scores of soldiers, the east gate is a hub of activity. Stationed inside each tower is a garrison of 100 men that serve in the Cosdol military. These men can often be seen drilling in the square and outside the city gates. Several practice targets have been erected outside the city gates and they are almost always in use.

The gate itself is over 25 feet in width and allows ample room for men, carts and wagons to come and go. On most days there is a line numbering hundreds of people outside awaiting approval to enter the city. Since the tidal wave hit the eastern shore, thousands of

refugees have flocked to the city and for many of them their first taste of the city comes here. Guards question and search all new arrivals, often turning people away. Some newcomers are persistent enough to attempt access on a daily basis, while others try the west or south gates hoping for better luck.

Guards working the eastern gate are stressed, weary and taxed with the steady amount of work. In addition to their normal duties of manning the gate, they are under orders to conduct regular patrols into Eastpeg (though they rarely do). Tensions run high and fights occasionally occur between the guards and new arrivals. Some of the guards that work the east gate run a scam in order to line their pockets (see the *Introduction*). Though this scam originated here, it can occur at any guarded entrance into Cosolen.

Eastgate Cemetery [map area 5]: The cemetery is a large track of greenery that occupies a significant portion of the Proper. Tombs and mausoleums break up the endless rows of tombstones and trees. Elves prefer to burn their dead, and burial plots are not cheap, so most of the bodies here are humans of some wealth. In Cosolen it is considered a great honor to be buried next to your loved ones, and noblemen ensure their place in eternity by having expensive stone mausoleums built. In order to ensure fairness, the city has several strict guidelines on the size and number of tombs a family is allowed to purchase.

At night, guards regularly route their patrols through the graveyard to deter grave robbing. Still, it isn't uncommon for the groundskeeper to discover freshly turned earth where some bold thief dug up a body. In the center of the graveyard stands a large building that serves as both a preparation space for the interred, as well as a center for ritual cremation.

During the day it is common to find guards lounging in the shade of the trees near the edge of the cemetery, as it provides them a peaceful respite during their daily travails.

The poor folk of Cosolen are forced to burn the bodies of their loved ones or lay them to rest in one of the smaller graveyards located within a day's walk from the city.

Farwater Inn [map area 3]: By far the most famous inn and tavern in Cosolen is the Farwater Inn. Located in the heart of Eastgate Proper, the inn is a hub of activity for travelers and adventurers alike.

Specializing in affordable rooms and cheap but hearty fare, the inn sees numerous visitors from within the city (for the daily meals) and even more from outside (looking for a room). While the location, the cheap food and the small but tidy rooms are all important factors in the inn's popularity, the biggest attraction is its owner.

Dorcrin Blondol, a former mercenary turned tavern owner, lost one of his legs during a great battle. He now operates the inn and entertains guests with his singing. Possessing a rich, deep voice, he regales customers with ancient ballads, many of which are in sung in Low Elven. His talent is so great that several notable guild leaders and powerful wizards are known to visit the inn on a regular basis in order to hear him perform.

Dorcrin rarely turns down a request to sing and nowhere in Cosolen will you find a more affable and charming man. It is rumored that several prominent merchant houses (and even the prince!) have requested Dorcrin perform privately for them on special occasions. No one is certain if he has ever accepted these invitations; if he has, he never speaks of it.

Eastpeg

Three main gates allow visitors access to Cosolen – one from each direction in the south, west and east. Outside this eastern gate and down the road lies the tent village of Eastpeg. As the refugees increasingly were turned away, many of them begun to erect tents outside of the city. At first, the guards were ordered to politely ask the people to move along. If that didn't work, the guards were permitted to knock the tents down. This naturally created animosity between the residents of the tent town and the guards.

Eventually, so many refugees erected tents that the guards began to fear reprisal from their strong-arm tactics. After some negotiation among civic leaders, they decided to let the tents remain. Most of the government officials assume winter will take care of their problem and sweep the town away with the coming rain, snow and colder temperatures. As the population of the area increased, the locals have begun to call the gathering of tents 'Eastpeg.'

The establishment of Eastpeg may have helped soothe relations with some of the refugees but it also created a fair amount of tension and worry for the soldiers manning the eastern gate into the city. The tent-

town has become a menace to the guards as they have been instructed to regularly patrol the place and keep order. Sadly most of the guards shirk this duty preferring in the shadows of the gates. As such, Eastpeg has become a dangerous place to call home.

Thugs and thieves roam the muddy avenues and paths that wind between the tents, stealing from those already poor and unfortunate souls living in squalor. Fights are common as residents argue over patches of mud they claim as their own. Some of these fights turn ugly, erupting into massive brawls and every few weeks a body is found face down in the mud - a victim of some nameless assault.

Many guards responsible for patrolling and monitoring the tent town have turned a blind eye to the problems and the complaints from residents, furthering the tension between the two groups. Residents of Eastpeg learned quickly that no help is forthcoming from the soldiers at the gates and have taken to resolving disputes themselves. Small groups of honest folk now band together for protection from the ruffians and thieves that prey on the folk of the tent town.

Of course, these groups aren't extremely popular in Eastpeg either. Many residents fear the ruffians will become the leaders of the tent village. Each of the factions and groups has a small cache of supporters who hope their group rises above the rest. The worst of these is a band of thieves called the Pox. This band of miscreants, thieves, thugs, and hoodlums steal and rob from those in tent town. Operating outside the approval of the Burnished Blades (the local thieves' guild) this group consists mostly of young upstarts too reckless to worry about what will happen when the thieves' guild finally comes a-calling.

Eastpeg is primarily a place of residences, but that doesn't mean there aren't goods or services to be found therein. While there are no permanent structures, several craftsmen, merchants, traders and laborers make a living by selling goods and services from their tents. Many fly a colored flag over their tent to indicate that they perform a service or have goods to trade.

Green flags indicate items for sale while a purple one indicates a service or laborer. Some of the more prominent merchants or craftsmen fly their own unique flag, and several multi-colored or more elaborately designed flags can be seen flying over tents throughout the village. Lately, a small market sprang to life in Eastpeg,

hoping to catch the eye of travelers arriving from the west and north.

Multi-colored tents and stalls occupy the center of the muddy swath, where locals can buy food and goods for their daily needs. Creative merchants offload over-ripe or damaged fruits and vegetables at Eastpeg that they would normally be forced to throw away. They sell or trade these goods for a fraction of their value, earning a few extra coppers from the hungry refugees. Many merchants pass through the Eastpeg market as they travel into or out of Cosolen, finding it a convenient place to dump unwanted inventory.

Mudtent [map area 17]: Located near the center of Eastpeg is a large tent with the sides tethered up, exposing the large tables underneath. Affectionately known as Mudtent, this tent is the only operating tavern in Eastpeg. Here residents enjoy a mug of cheap ale or beer (or whatever the owner, Vril, can get his hands on). Filled with equal parts laughter and tension, Mudtent is a hotspot for trouble and chaos. Vril employs several bouncers, but that doesn't seem to stop the customers from taking their frustrations out on one another. Still, the place is a good source for rumors and hearsay, and the one place a person can usually find a member of the Pox (if they so desire).

Stromin's [map area 18]: Flying a flag of green along a muddy path stands this rotten, leaky tent. Having arrived from the east just recently (or so he says), Stromin took the opportunity provided by Eastpeg to start a business selling crude clay mugs and pottery. Business is good for Stromin as many of the residents of Eastpeg were forced to leave behind the smaller luxuries of their former homes.

The wily old man actually has a contact inside the city that imports cheap pottery and sells Stromin the cast-offs and odd pieces from broken sets or poorly-crafted work. This keeps prices low and assures Stromin a constant stream of goods. In addition to selling and trading pottery, the old man serves as eyes and ears for the Cosolen thieves' guild. He keeps a ledger hidden in his tent and attempts to keep records on the activities and whereabouts of the members of the Pox. He is paid well for his services and is extremely loyal to the Burnished Blades.

The Stash [map area 19]: Located on the outskirts of Eastpeg, the Stash is the home of a burly man who seems to care little for the other residents. Whispers

and speculation surround Olmved. Some call him half an ogre and no one is sure what he does for money or food. Olmved rarely leaves the ragged hovel he calls home, but on occasion a cloaked and hooded figure brings food and water to the large man. On particularly warm and bright days, he stands outside his tent basking in the sun and the heat.

The Stash is just what it is called – a drop point for all the stolen goods acquired by members of the Pox. Each week, Gulda (the leader of the Pox) arrives in disguise to deliver food and gather the loot her band of thieves acquired. Most of the thieves arrive late at night and drop items through a cut in the rear of the tent. Larger goods are smuggled in by some other way. Olmved ensures anyone that nears the tent can see his massive great axe and unnerving glare. Just to make sure no one approaches, the large man occasionally sits outside with a grinding wheel, sharpening the large hunk of iron and glaring in anger at anyone who looks his way.

Estates

As the ground slopes up and away from the bay, Estates rises above the lower districts of the city. Home to the wealthy, powerful and influential, this area of the city features large homes, exclusive businesses and guilds that hold great power and help run the city. Buildings here are of the finest construction, ranging in size from small one-story businesses to large sprawling four and five-story homes and towers that shoot into the sky. Each building is unique in its appearance and great care is taken to ensure they remain that way.

Access to Estates is controlled through two gates, the southern gate into the city and the gate near the Temple district. Guards regularly patrol this area. Suspect individuals are followed and watched, perhaps even questioned as to their business within the district. Beggars and poorly-dressed visitors are quickly tuned away. Guards also follow travelers with the stink of dishonor and ask them to leave. Anyone with a plausible reason to visit is left alone (for the most part).

Old blood and money runs deep in Estates, and the residents are extremely snobbish regarding who may live here. In fact, many of the elves are the worst offenders. It is said that *"if you are unwanted you will never be welcome in Estates,"* and from some rumors and stories that appears to be true. New residents to

Estates, or those thinking of buying businesses or homes here, have been known to send expensive gifts or bribes to prominent and influential residents in order to ease the transition into the neighborhood.

The noble class and wealthy aren't the only ones to call the Estates home. Prince Sevlin, the leader of Cosdol and royal heir to the throne, rules from his palace here. His keep is situated on a large outcropping of rock and overlooks the lower city. Once, the prince spent most of his time practicing magic, but recently he has been forced to focus on the business of running the kingdom.

Several guilds are based out of Estates. Those guilds that deal with the lower classes on a regular basis have offices or places of business in other portions of the city in order to keep them from bringing guild matters into the quieter and wealthier areas of Cosolen.

Estates is also home to several prominent businesses, particularly those that deal in high-end commodities such as jewelry, fine clothing and luxury items. Many of these shops employ guards and may refuse entry to 'unwelcome' customers. Notable merchants import goods from southern Brandobia and the Young

Kingdoms, though goods from the south are heavily taxed – further increasing already outrageous prices.

Three large inns cater to visitors desiring a reprieve from the hustle and bustle of the lower city, by offering private and common rooms and expensive food and wine. Food and dining options abound, serving meals at all times of the day and providing catering services as needed.

Golden Alliance Guild Hall [map area 8]: By far the most influential and powerful guild in the city, the Golden Alliance guildhall is both an impressive and imposing structure. Built from cut granite and stone imported from all over northern Brandobia, the guild hall is an active place with merchants and tradesmen coming and going at all hours. Located just inside the gate that leads to the Temples, the guildhall is a large four-story complex that dominates the smaller buildings around it.

Merchants and traders come here frequently to deal with members of the Alliance. These meetings typically concern the purchase or sale of goods, the shipping of trade goods or the availability of trade coming into the city. The vast majority of the trade that comes into



The palace of Prince Sevlin

the city is controlled or influenced by the Alliance in some form or another.

Palace of the Prince [map area 21]: Located on a natural rise of limestone, the palace of Prince Sevlen was built during the founding of the city and for some time served as the only fortification against the wild animals and humanoids of the north. A large central keep is surrounded by stone walls 15 feet in height and seven feet in width. Soldiers patrol the walls, but this is merely a token assignment as there are no serious threats to the palace.

In addition to the prince and his family, a contingent of fifty soldiers live inside the palace walls. These men drill frequently in the grounds and are the oldest and most revered members of the military. It is considered a great honor to serve at the palace and many soldiers aspire to the assignment. Visitors to the keep are turned away unless they have documentation or the guards have already been told to allow the person to pass.

The Greens

Cosolen is heavily influenced by elven traditions and culture, and nowhere is that more evident than in the portion of the city the locals call The Greens. Winding paths of dirt crisscross through green tracts of land, elegant architecture and well-manicured parks are plentiful here and a large percentage of the residents are elves.

Dotting the skyline are several towers, and most of the buildings located here are residences. Merchants, city officials, guild officials and even a few mages all call this place home. Several civic leaders and prominent elven diplomats also live in the Greens. Many of the elves spend a lot of time out in the streets, holding meetings and discussions while walking through the parks and trails as opposed to being confined to a windowless room. Residents tend to look down upon the poor and downtrodden (especially the refugees). Guards quickly round up beggars and unwanted visitors and encourage them to move on to other areas of the city.

Much of the architecture here is elven in design. In some places, living trees and shrubbery are incorporated into the building construction, though this is less common here than in elven forest cities. Elegant flowing arches and natural curves grace these buildings,

making the blocky human constructions pale in comparison. Crime is less prevalent in the Greens than it is in other portions of the city. This is partially attributed to the more considerate elven attitudes toward personal property and crime, and the increase in patrols. Entertainers and musicians are common in The Greens and many of them perform in the streets both for profit and fun.

Parks are common and used frequently. Residents spend their idle time in these open spaces. Over the years, residents from other districts have learned to migrate to the Greens in nice weather and claim park space for picnics and other family events. This often leads to some consternation among those vying for prime real estate to enjoy the nice weather.

The Dancing Dwarf Inn [map area 6]: During the course of their stay in Cosolen, the characters may find themselves searching for rooms. Thus, the following is a short guide to a typical inn. The GM may modify this inn as needed for use in other areas of the city.

The Dancing Dwarf Inn is one of the major inns in the city, and a place frequented by new arrivals. It is of good quality and fairly affordable. Its sign is a flat, thick piece of wood portraying the full body profile of a dwarf with arms crossed, one leg outstretched and the supporting leg slightly bent.

Regulars: The Dancing Dwarf is a popular inn for local fishermen, as well as local merchants who stop in to see if they can make any new contacts or deals. There is a 40% chance that Telerai (male elf cleric of Caregiver) is here any evening. If the players make his acquaintance, he may help heal their wounds if they stagger back to the inn in desperate condition.

Telerai: NG elf male; cleric of Caregiver 3; HP 23, Init +3, Spd 13, Rch 8', Atk +2, Dmg 2d4p, Def 0, DR 1, ToP 8/ 5, Hon 26

Typical Spells: 1st – cure trifling injury; 2nd – bless, innocuousness; 3rd – cure light wounds, safe haven

Notable Skills: cooking/baking 33, divine lore 48, first aid 49, language (Brandobian 60, Elven 86), religion (Caregiver 66), resist persuasion 55;

Profs: staff

Equipment: staff, robes, divine icon

Staff: The owner/proprietor is an elf named Battee Nalabouriel, assisted by his wife Halaeri. He has four maids/serving wenches (Brandobians Elbren and Norvel, and elves Setita and Wylee) and two bouncers (Mosarel and Fortind). A few whores (Asaivelia, Guldto and Jelena) come in to solicit business most evenings..

Interactions: Battee Nalabouriel is a retired merchant who allows customers to have a good time and blow off steam, but has no hesitation to send his bouncers in to remove any troublemakers. Battee is usually good for a rumor, but he knows little of value to those on the trail of Ryeth and his associates.

The bouncers are fairly straightforward. They like to gossip, they like to drink (when not working) and they like women. Although not particularly bright, they keep their ears open and know several rumors, even if they find it hard to make any connections between the rumors they hear.

Strongbox: A strongbox holding over 300 sp is hidden under a large loose flagstone in the cellar, which is further hidden under a bag of spilled flour.

Battee Nalabouriel: N elf male; HP 34, Init 0, Def +5, DR 0, ToP 14/ 4; language (Brandobian 70, Elven 88), listening 40, salesmanship 65

Halaeri Nalabouriel: N elf female; HP 29, Init 0, Def +5, DR 0, ToP 12/ 4; language (Brandobian 70, Elven 89), listening 40, salesmanship 44

Bouncer (Fortind): N Brandobian human male Man-at-Arms; HP 31, Init +2, Spd 10, Rch 2%, Atk +1, Dmg (d6p+d4p)+1, Def +1, DR 0, ToP 10/ 7; *Quirk:* quick-tempered; *Notable Skills:* language (Brandobian 71), listening 8, observation 8, resist persuasion 15; *Profs:* club

Equipment: club, 2d8 cp

Bouncer (Mosarel): N Brandobian human male Man-at-Arms; HP 30, Init +2, Spd 10, Rch 2%, Atk +1, Dmg (d6p+d4p)+1, Def +1, DR 0, ToP 10/ 7 *Notable Skills:* appraisal (furs & pelts) 52, language (Brandobian 72), listening 30, observation 33, resist persuasion 27; *Profs:* club

Equipment: club, 2d4 cp

Whores (Jelena, Guldto, Asaivelia): N Brandobian human female Merchants; HP 22, Init +2, Def +1, DR 0, ToP 6/ 5, language (Brandobian 68), resist persuasion 40, seduction 53

The Dancing Dwarf Inn

Height: 40'

Dimensions: 40'x30' **Stories:** 3 (plus cellar)

Occupants:

Battee Nalabouriel (proprietor)
Halaeri Nalabouriel (wife/cook)
Elbren, Norvel, Setita, Wylee (serving wenches)
Fortind, Mosarel (bouncers)
Asaivelia, Jelena, Gulda (whores)

MENU/SERVICES

Drinks: Ale 6 trade coins/mug, mead 1 cp/mug, spiced tea 3 trade coins/mug, common wine 2 cp/pitcher, fine wine 10 sp/bottle, brandy 1 sp/shot or 5 sp/mug.

Food: Morning-meal (goat's milk and sweetbread) 5 cp, noon-meal (soup, a hard roll and tea) 5 cp, evening-meal (a mug of cut ale, a meat dish, a hard roll and a bit of cheese) 1 sp. Meals are not included in the cost of a room.

Companionship: 2+d4p sp (though the girls often vary the price based on a client's looks and apparent wealth).

Lodging: Common room 2 cp/day or 1 sp/week, private room 2 sp/day or 12 sp/week, semi-private (2 beds) room 1 sp/day or 6 sp/week.

Serving Wenches (Elbren, Norvel, Setita, Wylee): N Brandobian humans; HP 23, Init +2, Def +1, DR 0, ToP 6/ 5, language (Brandobian 66), resist persuasion 27, salesmanship 23

Telrai Academy [map area 20]: Named after its founder, Telrai Academy is a school of wizardry. Students are only allowed admission by reference, though there is no guarantee they will be accepted. Telrai is an elf, and all lessons are taught in Low Elven regardless of the student's race. He focuses his efforts on teaching his more accomplished students, who then have the responsibility of teaching the younger or less talented students.

Telrai not only instructs his students in the arcane arts but also in botany and diplomacy skills. Dropout rates stand at about 50% and it is considered a great

honor to graduate. Most fail because they cannot complete the tasks demanded of them, but some simply run out of money.

It costs roughly 500 silver pieces per year to learn at Telrai's feet. Some students arrange for benefactors to pay their way and agree to serve them in some capacity for the same number of years they spend at the academy. A student graduates not after a set amount of time, but after Telrai decides he has mastered the lessons.

Whitehold Hall [map area 12]: One of the most expensive and exclusive inns in the city, Whitehold Hall caters to the elven community. Non-elven visitors find service to be ponderously slow and the servers' attitude chilly at best. Elves that arrive in the company of humans can expect the same treatment unless they are well-known. The food here is excellent and most patrons find the smooth lines and natural woodwork appealing, as well as the etched leaves and carvings depicting elven legends that grace the walls. Many of the elven mages in Cosolen frequent this inn, as it provides them a place away from the sea of humans inside the city. Whitehold Hall offers rooms (though non-elves find the inn full if they wish to stay

here) and food for extravagant prices (5x the prices of the Dancing Dwarf Inn).

Temples

Home to an eclectic mix of upper middle class folk, including clergy, shop owners and city officials, Temples is the smallest district in the city. As befits its name, Temples is home to several temples including the Temple of Enchantment, the Founder's Creation, the Temple of the Patient Arrow, Fraternal Order of Aptitude, the Face of the Free, and the Assembly of the Four Corners. Near the western gate, a small brick building houses the Order of Agony and its small following of dedicated followers.

High-end mercantile shops, government offices, expansive apartments and luxurious inns also make Temples home. Many city officials, merchants, and upper middle class make their homes in the apartments above the district shops.

Temples is one of the cleanest districts in the city and often the first place visitors see when entering the city from the western gate. Parks are common, and city officials and workers are often in the district dealing with some public works project. Nobleman and guild



The Theatre of the Arts

leaders base much of their business in Temples, because it allows them access to the city without forcing unwanted visitors into Estates. Temples is somewhat unique in that it is home to several large apartments specializing in housing foreigners or catering to non-humans. Diplomats from visiting cities and ambassadors from southern Brandobia also own homes here, though they rarely stay long because of the non-human presence.

Most days, Temples is the quietest district in the city. Foot traffic is limited to the residents that live and work there. The exception is during times of mass or religious gatherings. With the number of temples, this can be a frequent occurrence. At these times, hundreds of visitors from every district inside and outside of the city arrive to visit the church of their choice. Otherwise, Temples is a peaceful and slow-moving district home to powerful temples and the people that run them.

Callact Museum [map area 13]: The Callact Museum is dedicated to beasts of all kinds, featuring stuffed and mounted corpses as well as wax and stone images. Each room is dedicated to a particular terrain or biome. The curator used to sculpt many of the wax figures personally, but that duty has now passed on to his three sons. Curator Minivl has friends and patrons among the most powerful nobles in Cosdol and any hostility toward him may earn the offender a quick exile or even corporal punishment. Unfortunately, many of the fantastical creatures within the museum never existed, having been fabricated by uscrupulous taxidermists and sculptors.

► If a character with the Monster Lore skill spends six days studying the creatures here (at least eight hours per day), he receives a free d12p mastery die increase to his current Monster Lore skill.

The Theatre of the Arts [map area 1]: Located in the temple market, the Theatre of the Arts is one of the busiest temples in the city. A large and ever-increasing flock of worshippers attend plays and sermons on a regular basis. The church has also proven popular with refugees. The building itself is made of quarried sandstone and rises to a patina copper roof fifty feet above the ground. The rear half of the temple is half this height and houses the quarters and living areas of the priests. Even when the church has no scheduled performance, the priests can often be found outside the doors performing all manner of acts and entertain-

ment. (More details on this Theatre of the Arts can be found in *Act Four: Tragedy at the Theatre of the Arts.*)

The Founder's Creation [map area 14]: This red brick building houses a temple dedicated to the Great Builder. The front half of the building houses a large temple for worshippers while the back half holds a small school dedicated to teaching engineering and architecture. Classes at the school are small and expensive, but the priests do an admirable job instructing students in the fine arts of building. A small and dedicated congregation worships regularly, but this is not one of the more popular churches.

Priests here have several important civic duties that include record-keeping and assisting in the building and maintenance of the city. As a result, there is a lot of traffic and many priests call this place home. Assistants, pages and scribes come and go at all hours, and priests can be found throughout the city supervising civil engineering projects. The temple also owns a large tract of land south of the city, with crops they sell in order to pay for the upkeep of their church. As part of their contract with the city, every tenant farmer within 25 miles of the walls must toil one day a year in the temple fields.

Westdock

In many ways, Westdock is just an extension of Brambles. Rundown wooden-framed construction clad in stucco or wood comprises the majority of the buildings. Where Brambles may be the poorest district, Westdock is the most unkempt. Roofs leak, foundations sag and many buildings teeter at odd angles. Warehouses and slaughterhouses comprise the majority of the commercial buildings but several rundown taverns and inns also stand here. Industrial buildings include a large iron smelting facility and a glassworks building. Thick acrid smoke pours from these buildings at all hours.

More often than not, the cobblestone streets need repair and have large patches of exposed mud and dirt exposed. Many alleys are lined with broken tile, as are the gutters that line every street here. The streets gently slope toward the harbor and waste washes into the gutters (and eventually into the Voldor Bay). Work crews are a constant presence and most of their work is directed at the streets. During particularly large storms, great pools of muddy water form, making travel messy.

Residents include warehouse workers, sailors, porters and laborers. A large percentage of the people that live here are sailors and their families. Fishermen spend a lot of time working on the docks, repairing nets and vessels for trips into the Voldor Bay. Because of the constant fog, navigating the waters is a difficult task and the docks aren't as busy as they would be in other coastal cities.

Merchants that operate in this portion of the city import regional vegetables to sell at the dock market, but most supply fish. Shellfish and cod are the most common catches and a fresh haul is likely to bring buyers from all over the city. A large portion of the food consumed in Cosolen is seafood, and when supply runs low prices for certain fish have the potential to skyrocket. Fish stews are common in most of the taverns, and even those made from the slurry and cast-off portions of other cuts tend to be better than most common fare found in other cities.

Like Brambles, dark and shadowy alleyways cut through every block in Westdock; unlike its sister district, criminals are a significant problem. Locals know which alleys to avoid – and not to travel alone, especially when taking a shortcut – but many visitors fall prey to these parasites. The Blades make a concerted effort to round up and dispose of these criminals, but the problem seems to be never-ending. The influx of additional criminals and travelers furthers the problem.

Beggars and transients are common here, sleeping on the streets in even the coldest weather. Nighttime muggings and thefts are frequent and more than one throat has been slit in the night. Guards patrol at night but direct most of their attention toward the docks, hoping to catch smugglers. Most smuggled imports come from southern Brandobia and are subject to high taxes. Smuggling has become a much larger problem in recent years and the city struggles with it.

Lurcle's Leathers [map area 15]: Citizens looking for bags, saddles, straps, or other leather goods eventually find their way to Lurcle's, owned by a feisty dwarf that loves working with leather. Lurcle is up before the sun and doesn't go to bed until after dark. Even the smallest and simplest job is undertaken with immense pride and ownership. Lurcle refuses to hire assistants for fear their work would ruin his reputation; as such, most work requested by him has at least a two week wait time. Lurcle also crafts custom-fitted leather armor but he charges triple the rates of similar

armorers. Unlike most dwarves, Lurcle keeps his beard trimmed short. This is in part because of the danger of his work and partly because he finds a longer beard irritating to maintain.

Warehouse 14 [map area 16]: Located near the end of the docks, Warehouse 14 is owned and operated by the Blades as a storage facility for smuggled goods. From the outside, it appears abandoned and boarded up, but there is a secret trapdoor where smugglers can gain access by rowboat beneath the docks.

Guilds and Organizations

The Burnished Blades: Long ago when the city was young, a band of mercenaries (the Company of the Burnished Blades) operated in northern Brandobia. After falling out of favor with the locals, most fled south. A few remained, refusing to leave the place they called home.

This small band settled in Cosolen and eventually gave up the mercenary life, organizing into a thieves' guild. Operating from the shadows, these thugs perfected the art of running cons, pick pocketing, burglary and theft. For whatever reason, they kept their old name.

Decades later, this group is ingrained within the city, wielding as much power as any group or individual (except for Prince Sevlén). The guild prefers to practice its trade in a manner that doesn't draw attention to its members. They do not condone murder, but also do not shun it. Members violating the guilds' code of conduct discover just how far they will go to ensure loyalty.

Anyone wishing to join must petition to become a member, or be recruited by scouts and lookouts that patrol the city looking for marks and new recruits. Those that practice their trade without guild approval find a powerful enemy, and failure to conform meets with drastic measures.

Most folks in Cosolen simply call the group "the Blades" and a sure sign of a stranger is referring to the group by their more formal name. Those familiar with the guild say they operate in a cell-like manner. New recruits to the guild work in small groups under the care of a watcher. Watchers know not only their own groups but those that operate in their district as well.

Watchers rarely participate outwardly in any form of illicit activity. They are responsible for their group's

intake of wealth, marking new targets, finding new jobs, and even recruiting new members into the guild. Most members never know anyone more important than the person to whom they report. Watchers, in turn, answer to overseers. Seven overseers control the guild activity in the city, one for each district and one for outside the city. Rich and powerful, overseers take a large percentage from the watchers. They also employ several Blades to serve as their eyes and ears in each district.

Overseers report directly to 'the Mouth,' the name for the voice of the guild. As an overseer's identity is known only to the watchers in his district, the Mouth's identity is unknown to any but the overseers. No one is entirely certain if the Mouth is actually the guild master, but many suspect (correctly) that he reports to a higher authority – the real leader of the guild. These safeguards make the guild difficult to infiltrate; though lesser thieves may be caught and convicted they cannot implicate everyone in the city, only those in a direct line above them.

Guild activity is mostly limited to theft, smuggling, robberies, con games and pick-pocketing. Violent crime is frowned upon, particularly murder and rape. Watchers strive to find new marks, typically stationing themselves near city gates and marketplaces. They shy away from robbing known mages, fearing they may have ties to the mages' guild.

Treasure hunters are often targeted, but some watchers prefer to leave such high risk marks alone. Most watchers prefer to run cons against these mercenaries, as robbery and outright theft is far more dangerous. More than one guild member has been hurt or killed by overzealous foreign explorers. Visiting merchants, traders and diplomats comprise the most high profile targets for the Blades. Dangerous or complicated jobs call for direct involvement from a watcher or, in extremely rare cases, an overseer.

Young members are instructed to remain silent if captured. The Blades claim to have more than one 'inside man' that can free an imprisoned Blade, if necessary. This is true, though the guild may just as likely to leave them to rot, depending on the situation. Members of the organization quickly learn to keep their mouths shut and practice their trade without bravado. Ignoring any of the guilds' demands, terms or policies results in instant expulsion or death.

City Watch: To the common man, there is little separation between the city watch and the soldiers stationed in Cosolen. Perceptions aside, the watch is a more relaxed organization. Charged with keeping order, enforcing the laws, patrolling the streets and manning the gates, members of the watch are busy and prominent throughout the city, especially during the day. Groups of five to 10 watchmen patrol the streets seeking out troublemakers and settling disputes.

At night, watchmen carry lanterns or torches and at all hours are usually armed with short swords and clubs. Select members also carry crossbows. A typical watchman is a young human or elven male. These men are provided either leather or studded leather armor depending on their rank, weapons, and a light blue tabard depicting a white oak tree with a star shining over it (the symbol of the city).

Members of the watch suffer a constant barrage of questions and pleas for help from the common folk. These include real crimes as well as small matters and personal disputes. Watchmen ignore many of these disputes, having become immune to the incessant whining of citizens that refuse to help themselves in small civil matters.

The Golden Alliance: Perhaps no group or organization holds as much sway or power in Cosolen as the Golden Alliance. The largest merchant's guild on Tellene much influence here. Prince Sevlén often delegates matters of commerce to the guild, since he can be overwhelmed with the business of running the kingdom. This causes much consternation among the noble houses and minor merchants, for those wishing to trade within the city must approach the guild or face the consequences (which could include being blocked from trading).

This intense interest in controlling all goods and services has made smuggling commonplace. Smugglers run goods through the fog-riddled bay to waiting ships in order to avoid paying the Alliance fees. Obviously, this doesn't sit well with the guild. Its officials make every effort to root out these men and bring them to justice (or convince them to hand over a piece of the action, so the Alliance receives a higher percentage on black market items than on taxed goods). However, the Alliance can be beneficial. For instance, they often strike deals that allow them to import goods with fewer tariffs and taxes.

This type of activity infuriates the prince, but the Alliance assures him it is better to have some leeway and, while they haven't been able to eliminate all the taxes, they have scored several small victories. Of course, the King is not aware of certain dealings and would become most aggravated if he were.

Follikar Pateris heads the Cosolen branch of the Golden Alliance. Follikar is a native of Kalamar, but fell in love with northern Brandobia as a young man and never left. He holds the rank of Gem within the organization, as well as a fair amount of power and influence. Follikar delegates much power and responsibility to less prominent members, trusting them to strive to the utmost of their abilities. The Golden Alliance is a large and far-reaching organization, and these Trinkets often operate without heavy supervision.

Brandobian guild members must follow the guild's lead on pricing and how much they can sell. This even extends to farmers who sell directly to the guild; approval for crops is required in the spring to learn what they may grow. Independent farmers can find harvest time difficult if the guild decides to plant a certain crop in order to increase prices of other imported crops.

In such cases, the guild purchases the rights to the crop early or drives the farmers out of business outright (by having merchants refuse to purchase these crops). This has led to many late harvests, as these independent farmers wait to see what other farmers – under the thumb of the Alliance – are planting before making their decisions.

The Pox: Despite the ominous-sounding name, this group aren't devotees of the Conventicle of Affliction (although, ironically, they are affiliated with Ryeth the Leader of the local cult but they know him as "Sevdol" and believe him to be an arms dealer).

Composed mostly of young hoodlums, members of the Pox prowl Eastpeg committing crimes of theft, vandalism, burglary, assault and more. The Pox seems unconcerned about whom it attacks, and don't seem inclined to stop.

The leader of the Pox goes by the name of Gulda. She commands seventeen young men, and shows no interest in recruiting women. Young homeless or orphaned males are the main targets sought out and recruited.

She often toys with the emotions of her members, taking one as a lover while leading others on. This ensures the men stay focused on her and creates a rivalry to acquire more wealth to draw her affections. On occasion, one of the boys takes things too far, but Gulda manages to keep the damage to a minimum. Gulda has a home in the city but takes great care to keep it secret from members of the Pox. When she cavorts with her underlings she rents a room at an inn or finds some other place to be together.

Members of the group are free to do as they wish (inside of Eastpeg) as long as half their take goes to Gulda. Those that do not comply soon appear floating in the sewers or harbor.

People of Interest

Cordan the Black: Known throughout the city by various names and guises, Cordan is a con man extraordinaire. He lives life to the fullest, never caring about the consequences of his actions. While he prefers not to murder, he isn't opposed to the idea if he deems it necessary.

Cordan is a middle-aged human of average height and build. He keeps his brown hair neatly trimmed and grows facial hair as the need arises. He dresses for the occasion and current scam. Charismatic and charming, he can usually be found in the company of giggling serving girls. He has a penchant for elven lovers.

Cordan the Black: N Brandobian human thief 2, HP 22, Init -1 (-1 die), Spd 7 (5) dagger, Rch 1, Atk +4, Dmg 2d4p -2 (dagger) or 2d6p -2 (short sword), Def +3, DR 0, ToP 8/ 3, Luck Points 12

Quirk/Flaw: greedy, allergies (animal dander)

Notable Skills: current affairs 41, disarm trap 25, disguise 51, identify trap 31, listening 25, language (Brandobian 72), pick pocket 18, sneaking 23

Possessions: Varies, but typically some clothing that befits the station of person he is trying to replicate. He always carries a dagger, disguises and a cloak in addition to any other gear

Curlan the Spellsmith: In order to stand out among his flamboyant elven rivals, Curlan chose to bring attention to himself through creativity. He claims to have researched over 100 spells. Some are useful and others are flashy, but most are interesting while also being practically useless.

Curlan spends an inordinate amount of time studying and documenting random occurrences, such as the change in weather patterns or where squirrels make their homes. Most mages find him peculiar as best. If it wasn't for his tremendous ability, he would be ignored by most mages. Every decade or so, Curlan creates a highly useful spell that thrusts him to the forefront of the arcane community for a short time.

Danasan of Napalido: Head of the Theatre of the Arts, Danasan is a prominent and important figure in many social circles. He takes immense pride in his performances and sermons, and expects the same from clerics serving under him. Despite his social standing, Danasan feels his performances are an obligation to the community and one he shouldn't take lightly. His views on social reform, entertaining and assisting the common folk often clash with those of his peers. He is often openly criticized for his beliefs.

Danasan has been known to cancel shows and sermons if he feels his priests aren't ready, but he tries to maintain a regular schedule so as not to disappoint. Danasan is getting on in years and has just turned fifty. He has a strong, thin build, a drooping white mustache and long wispy hair. He speaks in a calming, gentle voice and is easily approachable and affable.

Flamarze: Old by even elven standards, Flamarze is one of the more powerful and outspoken mages in Cosolen. A staunch traditionalist, Flamarze is at the forefront of a movement that warns other elves about adopting the ways of other races. Flamarze has as much influence among the elves as anyone in the city, but is careful how she wields her power. Despite speaking Brandobian fluently, she prefers her native language in conversation and often fakes a thick Elven accent. Like all elves, although she is old, she still retains her youthful appearance. Many men have courted her over the years, but she remains devoted to her roots and her pursuit of magic, never making time for a husband or family.

Hulrad Redbark: A distant cousin to Flamarze, Hulrad Redbark is known as one of the most techni-

cally proficient casters in Tellene. Like Flamarze, Hulrad is old, but few wrinkles mar his features. Hulrad's reputation precedes him in most social engagements, many men finding him intimidating and dry. Possessing a measured and precise demeanor, Hulrad rarely smiles and never makes jokes. He views the world as a serious place with serious issues, and makes little time for those that don't share his opinions.

Unlike Flamarze, Hulrad sees himself above the petty squabbles of men and elves. He feels as if he has reached a point in his life where others can fight those battles; he will worry about "the important issues" like advising kings, creating magical spells and running the world.

Folikar Pateris: A native of Kalamar, Folikar has always had the vision and foresight to see the big picture. At a young age he took a position with the Golden Alliance, intent on one day becoming a leader. Thirty years later, he finds himself a Gem, in charge of the Cosolen guildhall and responsible for the organization and regulation of all trade in northern Brandobia. Folikar isn't easily intimidated or bullied, and seems to have the unique ability to remain calm in even the most difficult situations.

Folikar is a tall, heavy-set man in his early fifties. He carries himself with confidence befitting a man of his position and authority. Folikar wears his hair and full thick beard trimmed short and dresses in the fashion of his homeland. Folikar is extremely particular about his clothing and has it imported. He refuses to buy native Brandobian clothing and insists his wife dress in a similar manner, though she tends to mix and match fashions.

Grunnal: Grunnal is a new watcher for the Blades and most often found near the east gate, posing as a beggar. Other Blades know to find him here and often drop his portion of their take into his hat. Most of the guards and other beggars have no idea that Grunnal works for the thieves' guild. Positioned near the gates, Grunnal is able to mark new merchants, treasure hunters and travelers as they enter, passing the information off to his underlings.

Grunnal is an ugly, pockmarked man in his mid thirties. He has lived his entire life in northern Brandobia and has no intention of ever leaving. Grunnal is particularly adept at picking pockets, and practices his

trade whenever the opportunity arises. Grunnal is well-known for his foul mouth; every other word seems to be some form of expletive. He rarely carries more than a knife or dagger. Though he is adept at swordplay, he prefers not to engage in it if necessary.

Grunnal: CN Brandobian human thief 4, HP 30, Init -1, Spd 7 (5 jab), Rch 1', Atk +3, Dmg 2d4p+1, Def +3, DR 0, ToP 11/ 5, Luck Points 17

Quirk/Flaw: foul-mouthed, pocking

Notable Skills: disarm trap 15, identify trap 30, listening 35, language (Brandobian 80), lock picking 19, pick pocket 53, sneaking 49

Possessions: dagger, tattered clothing, worn hat

Gulda: Born and raised in Cosolen, she has never had the desire to leave the city. Orphaned at the age of six, the young lady caught on with the Burnished Blades. Quickly rising through the ranks, Evla (as she called herself then) became a watcher before eventually losing favor and splitting from the organization. After taking on a third new name (no one knows her birth name), she remade herself as Gulda, the leader of a band of petty thieves and thugs she calls the Pox.

Tall and lithe, Gulda is an attractive woman in her late twenties with raven-black hair and bright green eyes. When not in the guise of another, she wears loose skirts and blouses that tear away easily. Underneath she usually wears tight fitting clothes and several bags and pouches (containing tools, money and equipment to aid in a quick disguise).

Gulda: CN Brandobian human thief 5, HP 32, Init -3 (-1 die), Spd 6 (4 jab), Rch 1', Atk +6, Dmg 2d4p +2, Def +5, DR 1, ToP 11/ 4; *Luck Points:* 19

Quirk/Flaw: paranoid, sterile

Notable Skills: disarm trap 53, disguise 32, identify trap 32, listening 45, language (Brandobian 84, Merchant's Tongue 23), lock picking 49, pick pocket 61, recruiting 41, sneaking 54

Possessions: Dagger +2, heavy cloak, clothing, pouch with 42 cp and 55 sp, thieves' tools

Olmved: Once a recruit of the Burnished Blades, Olmved was ousted when it became apparent the large man didn't possess the subtlety required of a thief; his stuttering further complicated matters. Gulda found him drunk in a gutter, but saw potential in him and helped to sober him up.

The brutish man has pledged his life to Gulda, who treats him well. No one bothers him and he is paid well for his services. Once a week Gulda brings him food, beer and water, and the two spend the evening talking, as best as he can. Olmved has slowly been falling in love with the leader of the band, a fact of which Gulda is quite aware. Olmved's unusually severe speech impediment has allowed Gulda to ignore the matter for the time being.

Olmved is a mammoth of a man, standing well over six feet tall and carrying a massive 300 pounds of muscle on his large frame. He shaves what little hair grows atop his balding head and never grows a beard. Olmved rarely wears more clothing than a tattered pair of pants and despises shirts and boots unless the weather is extremely cold. Despite his flaws and lack of intelligence, he possesses quite a bit of street smarts and common sense. Olmved finds his life to be peaceful and happy where others might complain.

Olmved: CN Brandobian human fighter 3; HP 44, Init +5, Spd 11, Rch 4', Atk -1, Dmg 4d4p+6 (battle axe), Def -1, DR 0, ToP 16/ 9

Quirk/Flaw: fear of heights, stutterer

Notable Skills: fire-building 23, language (Brandobian 64), intimidation 35, observation 21, riding (horse) 32

Possessions: Battle Axe, tattered clothing

Unusual Encounters in Cosolen

Players who spend any amount of time in Cosolen will have a variety of encounters with pedestrians. Most of these are mundane and unworthy of note. Some though bear mention and are thus deemed "unusual encounters".

Unusual encounters occur on a roll of a '1' on a d10. Check one per hour that the players are out in the public thoroughfares. If an unusual encounter results, roll a d6 and consult the list below to determine what the PCs encounter. Rolls 01, 02 and 05 can occur multiple times.

01) Thieving Beggars

The characters encounter a group of refugees that approach them for coins or food. If the characters refuse, one of the group attempts to pick the pocket of a random character. If caught, the beggar attempts to flee to safety.

Beggars (5): Human: Sedentary, HP 19, Init +3, Def -2, DR 0, ToP 6/ 4, *Notable skills:* pick pocket 14, survival: urban 23

02) Guards

A group of city guards notices the characters and decide to shadow them to ensure they are not up to mischief. After fifteen minutes they become bored and locate another individual to follow unless the characters approach or are, in fact, up to mischief.

Guards (1d4+1): N Brandobian Men-at-Arms; HP 27, Init +4, Spd 8 (7), Rch 2', Atk +1, Dmg 2d6p +1, Def -1, DR 2, ToP 9/ 7

Equipment: short sword, leather armor, 1d4 cp, 6 trade coins

03) Street Theater

The characters stumble across a puppet show taking place in the streets. The performers are quite obviously novices but seem to be trying their best. Anyone dropping greater than a single copper into the tip hat is marked by an observing thief in the crowd and followed with hopes of picking that character's pocket.

If you roll this as a duplicate roll, roll again or select encounter 01, 02 or 05.

Performers (4): Human: Sedentary, HP 20, Init +3, Def -2, DR 0, ToP 6/ 4, *Notable skills:* acting 13

Thief: N Brandobian human thief 1; HP 24; Init -1; Spd 7 (5); Rch 1'; Atk +2; Dmg 2d4p-1; Def +3; DR 0; ToP 7/ 5; Luck Points 14; Hon 16

Notable Skills: disarm trap 16, hiding 20, identify trap 15, language (Brandobian 70), listening 17, lock picking 14, pick pocket 18, sneaking 22

Equipment: dagger, 1d6 sp, 2d4 cp, 5 trade coins



04) Mage

A dilettante mage has been dragged from his home to find his shipment of goods (salt, sugar, apples, wine, ale and 24 clay mugs), stalled due to a broken wagon. Unaccustomed to having to deal with such matters, Munden has no idea what the drivers expect him to do, since he is paying for the items to be delivered.

Upon seeing the PCs, he commands them to complete the shipment and walks off, with no indication where he wants the goods delivered or that he is willing to pay for the service. Completing the task may increase the PCs' reputation but won't earn them any coins unless they can persuade Munden to offer some (up to 10 total sp).

If you roll this as a duplicate roll, roll again or select encounter 01, 02 or 05.

Munden Velst: N Brandobian human mage 1; HP 20; Init +3; Spd 6; Rch 1'; Atk +1; Dmg 1d6p-3; Def +1; DR 0; ToP 6/ 4; Hon 12; *Quirk:* absent-minded
Spell Memorized: A: repair, J: candlelight,
1: translate

Notable Skills: arcane lore 23, language (Brandobian 84, Kalamaran 65), observation 36, resist persuasion 34

05) Sick Beggars

A mob of aggressive beggars approach, asking for alms. Each of these men sport open sores that pour pus and discolored bruise-like spots on their skin. They paw at the characters as they plead for charity. If characters resist being touched by the beggars, have the beggars roll an Attack die versus the PC's Defense.

Any character coming into contact with one of these beggars must check for communicability to see if the PC contracts the Wrack.

Beggars (10): Human: Sedentary, HP 19, Init +3, Spd 10; Rch 1', Atk -1, Dmg *exposure to the Wrack*, Def -2, DR 0, ToP 6/ 4

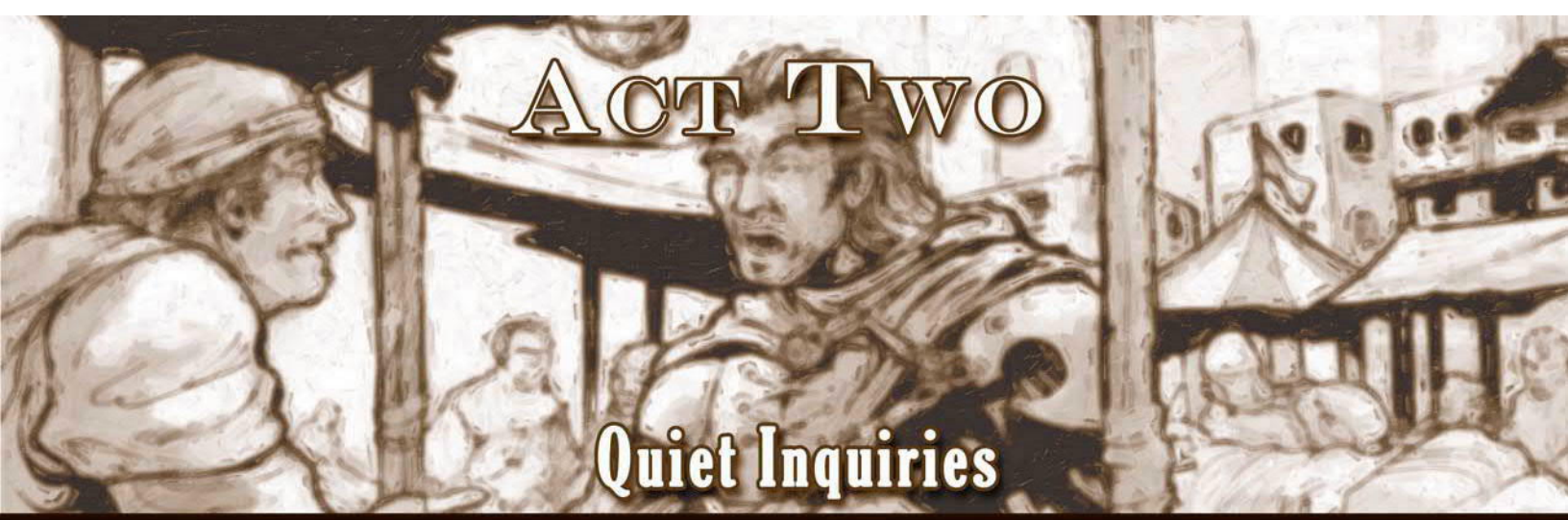
06) Acolytes of Raconteur

Some novice clerics of Raconteur dressed in red and gold robes, wearing theatrical masks (either smiling faces or frowning), waving braziers and chanting make their way through the streets. The acolytes are performing a harmless ritual and are nothing more than a spectacle to observe.

If you roll this as a duplicate roll, roll again or select encounter 01, 02 or 05.

Acolytes of Raconteur (1d3+1): CG Brandobian humans; HP 25, Init +2, Atk/Spd/Dmg *unarmed*, Def +3, DR 0, ToP 8/ 6, *Notable Skills:* acting 21, language (Brandobian 77), religion (Raconteur) 16

Spells: 1st – alleviate trauma, cure trifling injury



Introducing your Players to the Storyline

There are a number of ways you can introduce your players into the storyline laid out at the start of this book (pages 2-4). The options listed below are presented for your convenience but you may mix and match elements to best suit your own players and gaming style.

Option 1: The Deliverymen

Prerequisite: Coordination prior to leaving their former locale

This option works best if your players are traveling from a significant distance from Cosolen (perhaps from the region around Frandor's Keep). They may be traveling as part of a caravan or merchant train (either as hired guards or for mutual protection and companionship) destined for the capital of Cosdol. One piece of the cargo is a fine harp commissioned by the Cosolen Theatre of the Arts. The caravan leader has pressing business to attend to in the city and delivering this instrument, while an important task, is a distraction from more vital matters. He offers the PCs a nominal sum to promptly deliver the harp to the [Theatre of the Arts](#). Once there, the players meet the exasperated Dendrala Minel who requests their assistance.

Option 2: Co-religionist

Prerequisite: Party contains a cleric (or worshipper) of the Raconteur

Should any of your players be an anointed follower or cleric of the Raconteur, this option may be optimal. Any such individual should naturally wish to visit the Grand Theater. If necessary, you may goad them by ensuring they meet up with [Random Encounter #6 – Acolytes of Raconteur](#) shortly after arriving in the city. These novice priests recognize their co-religionists and

take them into their confidence, giving a very cursory outline of events and urging that they seek out Thespian Dendrala immediately.

Once any Merry Muse enters the temple, Dendrala urges them to assist her as it is their religious duty to do so.

Option 3: Trusted Ally

Prerequisite: Party contains worshippers of The Guardian

In this scenario, Dendrala dispatched her acolytes to seek reputable mercenaries to aid her in the temple's plight. As an allied religion, the Messengers of Liberty [The Guardian] are considered trustworthy peers. Acolyte Merry Muses will not hesitate to approach an individual openly displaying a divine icon or symbol of this faith (again, you may ensure that the first Random Encounter the PCs have is #6). The young cleric politely requests their service though he shies away from offering any details, rather urging them to accompany him to the [Theatre of the Arts](#).

At the temple, Dendrala plays to The Guardian's strong commitment to charity and the fact that her priests are being held captive in order to enlist their assistance – preferably with a minimal cash outlay. Bear in mind that Dendrala is a skilled actress and will use this to her advantage.

Option 4: Sympathy Ploy

Prerequisite: Party contains worshippers of The Caregiver

This scenario should be used only after the players have had an opportunity to explore the city and have encountered some of the diseased beggars pleading for assistance from the Caregiver amongst them. During any subsequent encounter with the afflicted (you may opt to force the issue and place this 'chance' meeting

where it suits you), add an acolyte of Raconteur to the group. He will be attempting to raise their spirits with a merry story but keeps a wary distance. This will be noted if anyone makes an Observation (Trivial) check.

As the acolyte is seemingly aware of the contagiousness of the beggar's disease, this is a clue that he may know more. If anyone inquires of him about the disease or anything along those lines, he nods and gestures that he wishes a private conversation. He then reveals that there is some sinister force behind this but knows little else. His mistress, the Thespian Dendrala Minel, knows more and can be found at the Theatre of the Arts.

Should they proceed to the theater, Dendrala plays to the Caregiver's sphere of influence and strongly implies that a cleric of Mangrus is behind "The Wrack" (though, in fact, she only has circumstantial evidence). She desperately wants the cleric of the Caregiver to take up this quest, and shades her information to accomplish that end. She claims to know the names of three worshippers of the Conventicle (Vrastin, Dantral and Eltrin) and a vague physical description of these individuals but no more. She urges the cleric to act before it is too late and the city is seized by this plague!

Option 5: A pox on the Pox

Prerequisite: 'staged' encounter ideally in Eastpeg but also possible in Eastgate Proper

If your players are principally self-centered mercenaries in it for the money, this encounter may cajole them into enlisting as Thespian Minel's hired swords. You should withhold this scenario until the players' have had ample opportunity to explore the city. Several encounters with diseased beggars may goad them into joining the anti-Mangrus forces if only to avoid being trapped in a plague-ridden city.

You stumble upon a fight. Four scruffy-looking youths are beating up an effete man clad in a jester's outfit.

The youths are all members of the Pox and their victim is an acolyte of the Raconteur. Ever since the encounter in which they captured the Merry Muses, these poxers assumed that any Muse is fair game. Gulda has not shared her suspicions of Sevdol [Ryeth] with her gang but were she to know that 'her boys' were acting in such a dangerously provocative manner she

would certainly act to quell this foolishness.

The poxers are cowards at heart and will flee from any group they see as a credible threat (though not without hurling some epithets as they scamper away!)

The 'jester' is named Vrasil and is enthusiastically thankful for the players' assistance. If not interrogated further, he limps away and that's that. However, if questioned about the fight, he states that he was jumped by these hoodlums for no reason at all. He then pauses... "*Maybe there is a reason, though I am unaware of the wider ramifications. Perhaps it would be best if you spoke with my superior Thespian Minel at the Theatre of the Arts.*"

Vrasil: CG human male; cleric of Raconteur 1; HP 25 (16), Init 0, Atk +3, Def +4, DR 0, ToP 8/ 6, Hon 12

Spells: 1st – alleviate trauma, cure trifling injury

Notable Skills: acting 26, riddling 27; *Profs:* mace

Equipment: jester outfit, divine icon

Pox Thug (2): CN Brandobian human male Brigand; HP 24, Init +1, Spd 7, Rch 1', Atk +2, Dmg d6p, Def +3, DR 0, ToP 8/ 5; *Notable Skills:* language (Brandobian 58), listening 8, observation 8, resist persuasion 8; *Profs:* knife

Equipment: knife, 2d6 cp

Pox Thief (2): CN Brandobian human male thief 1; HP 22, Init +1 (-1 die), Spd 7, Rch 1', Atk +3, Dmg d6p-1, Def +2, DR 0, ToP 7/ 5, Hon 7; *Luck Points:* 12; *Notable Skills:* hiding 20, language (Brandobian 67), listening 18, observation 15, pick pocket 26, resist persuasion 8, sneaking 27; *Profs:* knife

Equipment: knife, 2d6 cp

Should the PCs escort Vrasil back to the Theatre of the Arts, Dendrala will be horrified at this crime. She then composes herself while ruminating on the possibility that the Pox is somehow behind the disappearance of her fellow clerics. Although this is an angle she hadn't considered, she has little choice but to pursue it. When addressing the characters, she feigns confidence and relates that this Pox gang has declared war on the Theatre of the Arts (though in truth she knows no such thing). This is the second act they've committed, the first being the kidnapping and ransom of three of her priests (again, she is shooting in the dark but if she unleashes a gang of mercenaries on these known out-

laws it's hardly an act she'll have to beg contrition for...) She offers 50 silver pieces if the characters are willing to seek reprisal on the Pox and an additional 50 coins if they can determine the whereabouts of her fellow priests). If the party takes her offer, she informs them that the gang is led by a woman named Gulda who frequents Eastpeg. She has a "dozen or so" ruffians in her service but they are not seasoned warriors.

Option 6: The Villains

Prerequisite: Your players are dirty rotten scoundrels

This option is not in the spirit of the adventure but exists as a contrarian option. It is designed for players that are really just murders and thieves. If they fail to join the anti-Mangrus forces, Ryeth eventually comes calling in an attempt to hire them as muscle for his own dark purposes.

Of course, as a two-faced ratman, he does his utmost to deceive and use the PCs for his own plans, disposing of them when their utility has been expended. His immediate aim is to use the players as a breaching force to assault the Temple of the Arts and take the greatest part of the load. For this service, he will offer 1000 silver pieces, though only 100 up front. Ryeth has nowhere near the currency to pay this outrageous sum but he has no intention of doing so anyway. He draws up plans that give the impression of a joint attack and works assiduously to quell any doubts the players may raise. Should the players actually go through with this assault, he secretly sneaks in ahead and raises the alarm to ensure that the Thespians are fully prepared to meet the players in battle – so as to ensure they tee off on the PCs and not his own forces or himself. His guards fight if necessary but invariably delay or hesitate to conserve their strength, since their true foe is the victor of the clash between the Thespians and the PCs. At no time will he reveal that he is a wererat.

This option requires a lot of preparation on the part of the GM, for it is incumbent upon you to deploy sufficient forces in the Theatre of the Arts to challenge the PCs. It is suggested that the head priest of the temple, Danasan of Napalido, return prior to the engagement and that he be 9th-10th level. If necessary, two to three additional priests (each 4th-7th level) can be added along with a dozen city guards. This complement, along with Dendrala Minel (wearing studded leather and shield) and a half-dozen acolytes should prove a worthy match.

At this point the characters may have a lot of questions. Dendrela will provide different levels of detail depending on the circumstances in which the PCs came into her service. Only [Option #2](#) prompts full disclosure.

Dendrela's Q&A

Common questions the characters may ask, and the answers they receive, are listed here. It is important to note that Dendrala is herself only dimly aware of some nefarious scheme based on the circumstantial evidence of the very odd behavior of Vrastin, Dantral and Eltrin. Everything else is based on conjecture. She suspects that a cleric of Mangrus could be in the city but is unaware of Ryeth's existence. She knows that her fellow priests Formin, Transdril and Bransel disappeared four days ago but knows little of the circumstances other than the fact that a man named Sevdol has demanded a ransom of 300 silver pieces. The ransom is to be delivered to him tomorrow at dusk at the Farwater Inn (though [Option #5](#) leads her to conclude that the Pox was involved).

As far as general knowledge and current events is concerned, Dendrala is remarkably well informed. She was raised in Cosolen and knows the city inside and out. Her acolytes also serve as her eyes and ears in the wider community. She knows that a woman named Gulda is the leader of the Pox and maintains a stable of anywhere from 12 to 20 young hooligans in her service. She is also aware of the sorry tale of the Vorguld family and the closure of their candle-making operation (though she would be shocked to learn that it has become a temple of the Rotlord). Should she be queried about Jelena the supposed escapee from the Rotlord cult, she knows her to be an evil duplicitous woman who should not be trusted under any circumstance.

Under no circumstances does Dendrela give the characters money up front. If they claim poverty, she offers them a place to stay in the temple and food to eat, but little else. Lastly, anyone that shows any interest in the Raconteur can become anointed at Dendrela's hand if they so desire. Under normal circumstances she would take extended measures to make sure the person being anointed has a true heart and desire to follow his church. In this case, she makes an exception, feeling the characters need all the help she can provide.

Q: *What type of reward can we expect? (Or some variation thereof).*

A: This is a touchy question as Dendrala would prefer to dip into the temple's treasury as little as possible. Should she be hiring mercenaries outright (Options #1 and #5), she is prepared to offer the group a reward of 300 sp. This reward is only gained if the characters can successfully rescue her subordinate priests and learn who is behind the plot (if anyone). If employing Options #2, #3 or #4, she attempts to play on the characters' sense of honor and righteousness to induce the priests into performing the service for free. She is aware that their compatriots may not be so generous and thus may offer up to 200 sp as a benefaction for their service.

In any negotiation Dendrela alludes to the fact that successfully serving the Theatre of the Arts could earn them the gratitude of the church; she implies that such thanks carries far more weight than silver or riches.

Q: *Tell us of this nefarious plot!*

A: As mentioned above, Dendrala is unaware of Ryeth's plot. What information she is willing to share (or fabricate) is dependant on the circumstances of the players' employment. She will not hesitate to extemporize if need be in order to get the PCs moving. Always bear in mind that she is a gifted actress and not above telling the players what they want to hear.

One caveat is that she is extremely reluctant to mention the word "plague" (except in the case of Option #4). She greatly fears the panic and mayhem that would ensue if it became generally known that a contagious and potentially lethal disease lurked within Cosolen's walls.

Q: *Why haven't you alerted the authorities about this plot/kidnapping?*

A: Dendrela has received a ransom note warning her not to contact the city watch and to deliver 300 sp to an individual named Sevdol at the **Farwater Inn**. She fears for the safety of her fellow priests and dares not alert the watch.

Q: *Who is the mastermind behind this foul plot?*

A: Dendrela cannot answer this question as she isn't even certain there is such an individual. If she were to guess, she would implicate Sevdol, though she has no idea who he is.

Q: *Where should we start?*

A: At this point Dendrela has little to go on. Her two solid clues worth pursuing are **1)** the identities of the suspicious men (Vrastin, Dantral and Eltrin) and **2)** the scheduled meeting with Sevdol.

One idea Dendrela has is **3)** to **search the public tax records** and see if Sevdol owns any land in Cosolen. Property owners are required to register official documents in order to keep track of taxes and if Sevdol owns any property or buildings in the city he should have filed paperwork. Of course, it is possible Sevdol owns land under another name but it is a good place to start.

Other lines of inquiry might be to **4)** **investigate the Pox in Eastpeg** (if Option #5 was used to hire the characters consider this a credible lead – in other circumstances it is a wild guess) or to **5)** perform some inquiries as to the possible presence of a Conventicle of Affliction within the city.

As it is likely that your PCs are new to the city, they may feel that these detective tasks are overwhelming. Cosolen is a rather large city, after all, and it would be nearly hopeless to walk the streets questioning people. Should the players voice this concern, Dendrela reluctantly voices the fact that information can be bought on the streets. This is dangerous and could lead to the enemy discovering someone is asking around about him. However, if the characters desire a shortcut, she suggests getting in contact with a member of the Burnished Blades. Dendrela has no dealings with these people and she warns any character that this could be a dangerous course of action to pursue.

Dendrala Minel: CG Brandobian human cleric 3; HP 34; Init +1; Spd/Rch per weapon; Atk +3; Dmg per weapon +1; Def +3; DR 0; ToP 12/ 6

Typical Spells: 1: ceremony (consecrate divine icon); 2: bless, ceremony (anoint); 3: blessing, cure light wounds

Notable Skills: acting 55, diplomacy 29, disguise 40, language (Brandobian 82), religion (Raconteur) 40, resist persuasion 36

Equipment: clothing, divine icon

Detective Work

There are a number of pieces of information the players may attempt to learn. They will have to employ the Glean Information skill to perform these inquiries. Use of the skill requires 1d4 hours per query though characters may certainly split up to simultaneously perform multiple inquiries. Although not mandatory, the expenditure of 1d10 silver pieces facilitates looser tongues and avoids a 15% penalty on the skill check.

Q: *Where do Vrastin, Dantral and Eltrin live?* (Very Difficult)

A: Area #7 on the [Cosolen city map](#); Confronting these men is covered in [City Encounter 5: City Quarters](#)

Note: Failure by ≥ 30 on the skill check draws the attention of one of Ryeth's followers (see [City Encounter 2: Too Many Questions](#))

Q: *Who is Sevdol?* (Difficult)

A: Any successful inquiries will only produce repetitions of the lie Ryeth told the pox (*i.e.*, he is an arms dealer interested in acquiring human made weapons to trade with orcs in the Odril Hills)

Note: Failure by ≥ 30 on the skill check draws the attention of one of Ryeth's followers (see [City Encounter 2: Too Many Questions](#))

Q: *Is there a Temple to the Rotlord in Cosolen?* (Difficult)

A: Yes

Note: Failure by ≥ 30 on the skill check draws the attention of one of Ryeth's followers (see [City Encounter 2: Too Many Questions](#))

Q: *Where is it?* (Impossible)

A: No one but the worshippers of the Rotlord know

Q: *Where can I make contact with the Burnished Blades or Where can I purchase information?* (Easy)

A: Characters are directed to Mellyn Tendrilia (see [City Encounter 1: Mellyn](#))

City Encounter 1: Mellyn

It's no big secret that a good way to get information on other citizens is by contacting an elf named Mellyn Tendrilia.

He is often found near the east gate of the city selling shields or other trinkets but he does move around

a lot. Those that direct the characters to Mellyn indicate that no one knows the comings or goings of the city's residents better than he does. Characters that go in search of Mellyn indeed locate him at the east gate.

Inside the east gate you find a bustling, packed yard. In the center, a round, five-story stone guard tower rises into the air. Men dressed in the light blue uniform of the city watchmen linger outside its doors, laughing and talking while watching the throngs of people.

Beggars and panhandlers hover near the gate waiting for new arrivals and hoping for a few coins. Several temporary stalls are erected nearby and men shout out to passersby as they hawk their goods. Meanwhile, hundreds of people pass through, moving from one place to another or gathering to talk about business or family.

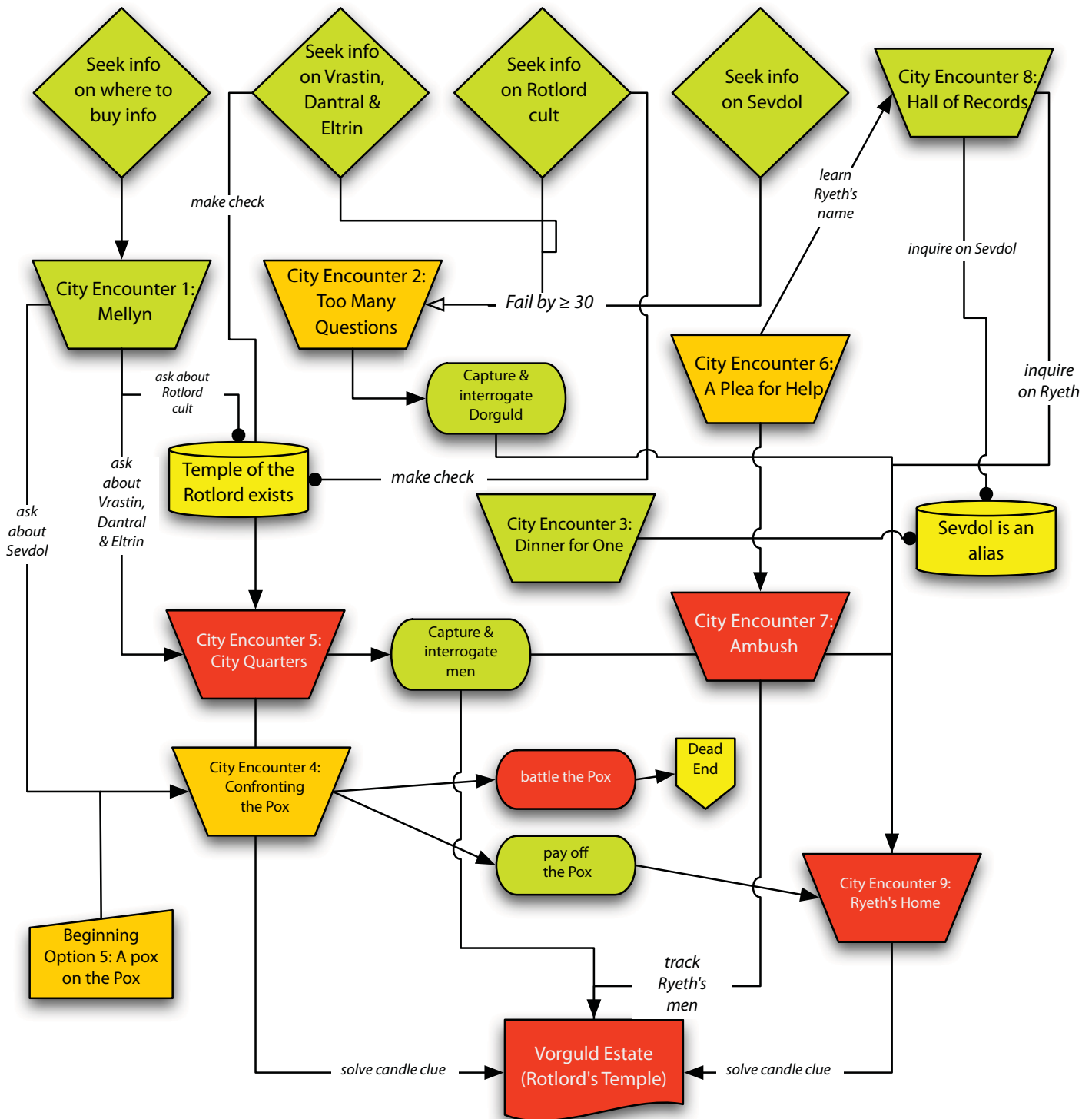
Outside a closed building, a lone elf stands at an impromptu booth selling various wooden bowls, used chairs, kegs and shields in various sizes and conditions. His wares are propped against the building, and he shouts and points to the passersby, hoping to convince them to stop and browse his goods.

Mellyn is a native of Cosolen and has been running his scams for several years as a member of the Blades. He falls into a unique category in that he works by himself and often deals with the overseers because of his extensive knowledge of people. Mellyn has a unique talent in that he rarely, if ever, forgets a person's face or name. In fact, Mellyn is so adept at this that even if he hears a rumor about an unknown person, he remembers it. He makes little effort to cultivate this talent or improve it, as it is just something he has always been able to do.

Because of his abilities, he is highly sought-after and often called upon for information. In spite of his reputation, Mellyn doesn't know everyone and some of the information he does possess is entirely false. Just because he heard a rumor about someone doesn't mean it is true. He is most useful for finding someone in the city. Asking him if he has heard of someone and where that person may be found is precisely the reason the thieves' guild keeps him on retainer.

Mellyn isn't particularly shy about whom he sells

City Encounters Flowchart



In this opening section of the Plague of Cosolen, your players have several options that they can pursue as they hunt down Ryeth and his cult of the Rotlord. Their final objective is to assault the temple located at the Vorguld Estate. Although the storyline implications of each individual scenario are summarized in its conclusion, it may be helpful to have a visual rendering of how the events are interlinked to assist you in running this adventure.

information to. He rarely raises his standard fee unless the person being asked about is difficult to locate or the guild has some reason for him to charge more. Some organizations are off limits by order of the guild master, and he refuses to help anyone suspected of working for such organizations.

The shields he sells are cheap facsimiles, as a buyer will eventually discover. Mellyn sells small, medium and large shields for three-fourths the standard rate in the *HackMaster Basic* rulebook.

- ▶ At first inspection, the shields appear to be fine, but a successful Appraisal: Armor & Weaponry check (Average) reveals that they are of poor quality.

Anyone buying and using one of Mellyn's shields loses it sooner rather than later, for the amount of damage required to destroy it is half the value listed in the rulebook.

Upon seeing the characters approach, Mellyn attempts to sell them some shields. Realizing that the characters are probably mercenaries or explorers, he even cuts them a deal in order to upgrade a small shield for a large or medium shield. Mellyn only charges one-third the book rate for a shield as long as the character is willing to trade in his or her old one.

Once it is established that the characters are interested in information, he inquires as to what they want. Mellyn's standard rate for information is 30 to 75 sp depending on who the characters are looking for and what information they want. He charges dishonorable or notorious characters double the rate for the information. In a group dynamic, this holds true if any one of the characters are in either of these categories. In fact, Mellyn is perfectly honest with them and he tells them *"I don't like the look of your friend there."*

Mellyn never negotiates for information and is upfront about that, shrugging his shoulders with a 'take it or leave it' attitude. He fears no reprisal or conflict since he has the backing of the Burnished Blades; should any harm befall him the assailant would face severe repercussions.

For information regarding the men Vrastin, Dantral and Eltrin, Mellyn charges his minimum fee of 30 sp. He knows they share a residence together in Westdock and will provide the characters with the location. Information about Sevdol also costs 30 sp. The elf only knows what he's heard (*i.e.*, that the man is an arms dealer connected to orcish tribes in the Odril Hills and

that he seems to have some connection with the Pox). He has never seen the man within the city walls.

If the players inquire about followers of the Rotlord, Mellyn hesitates for a moment. After a long pause in which he noticeably looks the PCs up and down he states, *"This one's on me. No charge. Yes, there's a cult somewhere around here. But you owe me one favor. Find them and kill them."*

Mellyn's penchant for self-preservation won over his greed for he rightly fears the harmful affect a plague could have on his comfortable life in Cosolen. If the players previous asked about Vrastin, Dantral and Eltrin, Mellyn adds, *"I believe those three are somehow mixed up with that disgusting cult."*

During their questioning, Mellyn ensures he is properly introduced to all of the characters and that he gets their names. He attempts to make small talk and learn as much about the characters as possible without sounding pushy. Mellyn is charismatic and friendly, and shouldn't appear too nosy. He accumulates information because he is curious by nature and because it could prove valuable.

At the end of the day, he relates the extent of the PCs' inquiry to the Burnished Blades. This is a standard debriefing and ensures that the thieves guild is aware of everything going on in the city.

Storyline Implications:

If the players can stomach Mellyn's prices, they may learn that a cult of the Rotlord does indeed exist in the vicinity of Cosolen and that Vrastin, Dantral and Eltrin are affiliates. They also are [given the location of their residence and may now seek them out](#). They may also infer that the Conventicle of Affliction is greatly despised by all elements of society irrespective of moral disposition. A logical inference is that no one is going to interfere with their mission. In point of fact, once Mellyn informs his superiors about this interaction, the Burnished Blades issue strict orders to ignore the PCs. From this point until the completion of the adventure, no member of the thieves' guild will disturb the party.

Mellyn's information regarding Sevdol is patently wrong and may lead the players to [seek a confrontation with the Pox](#).

Mellyn Tendrilia: N elf male; HP 31, Init 0, Def +5, DR 0, ToP 13/ 4, Notable Skills: language (Elven 73, Brandobian 61), observation 93, listening 84, resist persuasion 52, survival: urban 71

Expanded Rules

All of the followers of the Rotlord are infected with a disease. Rules for diseases are not covered in *HackMaster Basic* though they were published in *Knights of the Dinner Table #153*. For your convenience [these rules are reprinted in the appendix of this book](#). In addition, the priesthoods of both the protagonist and antagonist in this story, specifically the [Theatre of the Arts](#) and the [Rotlord](#) (*a.k.a.* Mangrus) do not appear in *HackMaster Basic*. You can find details on these religions in the appendix as well.

City Encounter 2: Too Many Questions

Encounter: Dorguld (34 EPs)

Dorguld is one of several members of Ryeth's congregation that are patrolling the city on a regular basis keeping their eyes and ears open. At any sign that someone is incautiously asking around about the Conventicle of Affliction, Sevdol, Ryeth Olm, Vrastin, Dantral or Eltrin, Dorguld has instructions to tail them and gain as much information as possible before reporting back to Ryeth. He is under strict orders not to cause a disturbance or engage in combat if possible. Dorguld wears dirty rags befitting a beggar.

- ▶ Characters that draw Dorguld's attention are unlikely to discover they are being followed unless the players specifically state they are watching for such a thing. In the latter instance, permit them to make an Observation check (secretly comparing it to Dorguld's Sneaking check). If successful, merely annotate that Dorguld has been spotted without revealing anything to the players. Only a *second* successful Observation check (again with the intent of spotting a tail) reveals that Dorguld is shadowing them.

Confronting Dorguld induces him to flee with the hope that he can lose the characters in the city streets or alleyways. If need be, the man cries out to the guards for help. Should this occur, a pair of constables appears in a matter of minutes. While this may rattle the PCs, the fact is that the city watch is far more inclined to believe their version of events than Dorguld's. Any remotely plausible story suffices and, for the mere price of a few pieces of silver, they turn a

blind eye towards even the harshest application of vigilante justice.

If the PCs capture the ragged Dorguld, he claims to be a poor beggar hoping for a few coins. He hoped one of the characters would show mercy on him.

- ▶ A trivial First Aid skill check reveals that he is obviously suffering from some form of sickness. Anyone touching him is subject to a communicability check to see if they become infected with the Wrack.

He has nothing on him to indicate he is a member of the Rotlord cult or knows anything about Ryeth, and any such questions are met with a blank expression.

- ▶ Dorguld is no stoic (his Resist Persuasion mastery is only 8) and may break easily under Interrogation or Torture (though the latter requires a communicability check).

If the PCs can force him to talk, he reveals that he is a member of the Rotlord cult dispatched by his master Ryeth Olm to spy on them and report back what he observed. He knows they are in the employ of Thespian Dendrala Minel. He will also reveal that Ryeth lives in a shack outside of town ([see City Encounter 9: Ryeth's Home](#)). He knows nothing about Sevdol (Ryeth's alias when dealing with the Pox) or the location of the temple other than it is "some distance away". Although Dorguld was initiated at the temple on the Vorguld estate, he was transported there while blindfolded.

Storyline Implications:

If the players spot Dorguld, they can assume they are being watched (though they may have reached this conclusion if they played [City Encounter 3: Dinner for One](#) prior to this scenario, and spoke to Dendrela afterwards). If the city watch becomes involved, their attitude is telling and reveals the tensions between the establishment and the refugee community. A logical and correct inference is that they have relative impunity to cause trouble in Eastpeg without fear of official repercussions. This may be important should they choose to confront the Pox.

Should they capture and break Dorguld, the players receive some extremely valuable information – specifically the name of the leader of the Rotlord cult and [his place of residence](#).

Dorguld: CE human brigand, HP 21, Init +3, Spd 7, Rch 1', Atk +2, Dmg d6p-1, Def +3, DR 0, ToP 9/5

Disease: The Wrack - minor effect

Notable Skills: current affairs 23, hiding 34, language (Brandobian 59), listening 22, observation 22, resist persuasion 8, sneaking 25, survival: urban 30

Possessions: knife, rags

City Encounter 3: Dinner for One

Dendrala's second solid piece of evidence (so she believes) is the ransom note she received asking for 300 silver pieces in order to secure the return of her captured priests. She has been instructed to meet with a man named Sevdol at the Farwater Inn on the evening following her hiring (or enlistment) of the players.

Citing her need to remain at the theater in this time of crisis, she requests the PCs to act as her bagmen and meet with Sevdol precisely at dusk at this famous establishment. She provides them with a calfskin valise containing 300 silver coins to exchange for the lives of Formin, Transdril and Bransel.

With no description of Sevdol and no one stepping forward to greet them, the players may be at a loss. All inquires regarding Sevdol are greeted with blank looks or shrugs. It will become readily apparent that no one has heard of the man. Similarly, asking if a message was left at the bar produces only a hasty *"Sorry, can't help you."*

Players with a larcenous streak may face a dilemma. There is little to prevent them from simply leaving town with Dendrala's silver and seeking their next grand adventure. This would, of course, be an extremely dishonorable action to take and any Honor award (or lack thereof) at the scenario's conclusion should reflect this. All party members will thereafter gain the reputation of being untrustworthy thieves within Cosolen.

Storyline Implications:

The idea of sending a ransom note was just an afterthought on Ryeth's part as a means of mollifying Gulda over her concerns about being implicated in the murder of several priests from the Theatre of the Arts.

Killing these men meant nothing to her but she was understandably concerned about the trouble it would bring should her role be discovered.

Ryeth, for his part, has no intention of returning the priests dead or alive. This red herring, though, proved a valuable opportunity to spy upon Dendrala or any associates she may have recruited. In one sense 'Sevdol' hasn't skipped this meeting at all, for Ryeth (in rat form) has been waiting at the Farwater Inn to see whom, if anyone, arrives searching for him. After this evening he has a cursory assessment of his enemies.

If a lone courier arrives (it not being improbable that Dendrala might arrive unescorted), he attempts to ambush and kill the courier as he or she makes their way back to the theater. This is a simple murder of opportunity in that he suspects the courier may have a large amount of currency.

Ryeth is not the only spy present at the Farwater Inn. Gulda, leader of the Pox, has had serious doubts about this man called Sevdol and what his true intentions are. The illiterate pox brigand Sevdol/Ryeth dispatched to deliver the ransom note surreptitiously returned to Gulda to let her read the note before leaving it at the Theatre of the Arts. To gauge the man's veracity, she stationed two of her boys in the area to witness the transaction. When they return and report that Sevdol didn't show up, her suspicions are confirmed. Thereafter she will be extremely wary of him and has no qualms about ratting him out.

In a final irony, Ryeth's rat form permits him to discretely spy on his spies. He is now aware that the Pox do not trust him and the usefulness of continuing to employ them is dubious at best.

The following morning, a letter is delivered to the Theatre of the Arts warning Dendrala to call off her thugs if she values the lives of Formin, Transdril and Bransel. Only when she complies will any further word of the fates of the captive priests be forthcoming. The letter is accompanied by the three priests' divine icons and a finger.

City Encounter 4: Confronting the Pox

GMs Note: It is vital to note whether *City Encounter 3: Dinner for One* occurred. In most instances it will have, but players recruited under *Option 5: A pox on the Pox* or those given incorrect information in *City Encounter 1: Mellyn* may seek out the Pox prior to

The Secret Confidant

At the conclusion of *City Encounter 3: Dinner for One*, Dendrala receives a message warning her to call off ‘her thugs’ or else the captured priests will be killed. She cannot take this risk yet neither can she do without the services of the PCs. Since it is now clear that she is under surveillance, she must continue the relationship covertly. Fortunately this is a role she is well prepared to play.

With the connivance of the players, she stages a termination meeting at the Dancing Dwarf Inn where she provides them an honorarium of 50 silver pieces for services rendered and has arranged private rooms for all of them for the next week as severance (she and Halaeri Nalabouriel have an arrangement).

Thereafter she makes occasional and unexpected appearances in a variety of roles and costumes from serving wench to city watchman.

Her meta-role is to move the storyline forward if the players become stuck and frustrated. By asking for status reports and updates, you can have her put the pieces together if your players are unable to do so. One such example may involve the clues provided by the candles. Using Dendrala in this role should be an option of last resort – do not let her have a Eureka moment unless absolutely necessary.

Another purpose served by severing the tie with the Theatre of the Arts is that it forces the players to employ their own resources. No longer is there the temptation of returning to the temple and expecting the priests there to cure them. For better or worse, the players have to confront the cult of the Rotlord on their own. Facing each and every opponent with full hit points and a fresh allotment of spell points is simply not a challenge worthy of heroes.



them having a change of heart regarding their relationship with Sevdol/Ryeth. The description that follows assumes the Pox learned of Sevdol's/Ryeth's duplicity.

- ▶ Learning about the Pox requires only a Glean Information skill check (Trivial). It is common knowledge that they are a disruptive element in Eastpeg and that members of the gang frequent [Mudtent](#) (see page 14 and map area 17). At any time d4+1 poxer brigands will be found in that establishment. Subsequently inquiring as to the leader of the gang is an easy skill check. The leader's name is Gulda (see page 24).

If the characters' intent is simply to pick a fight, the poxers are easy enough to provoke.

That being said, the owner Vril has no intent of letting his establishment be turned into a butcher's shop. PCs that press the issue find a force of no less than four bouncers and 2d6 bar patrons allied against them. Should the players insist on drawing blades instigating a wholesale melee, the Mudtenters break and run when 25% of their number are either killed or incapacitated. Such an action on the part of the players is simply too egregious for the city watch to ignore and a score of soldiers will be dispatched to arrest them. The characters may be able to buy their way out of this disaster by cash payments and bribes of 100 sp per person killed and 50 sp per person injured, but failing that they will be executed.

Pox Thug (2-5): CN Brandobian human male Brigand; HP 24, Init +1, Spd 7, Rch 1', Atk +2, Dmg d6p, Def +3, DR 0, ToP 8/ 5; *Notable Skills:* language (Brandobian 58), listening 8, observation 8, resist persuasion 8; *Profs:* knife

Equipment: knife, 2d6 cp

Bouncer (4): N Brandobian human male Man-at-Arms; HP 30, Init +2, Spd 10, Rch 2½', Atk +1, Dmg (d6p+d4p)+1, Def +1, DR 0, ToP 10/ 7; *Notable Skills:* language (Brandobian 61), listening 20, observation 25, resist persuasion 17; *Profs:* club

Equipment: club, 2d4 cp

Bar Patron (2-12): N Brandobian human male Laborer; HP 27, Init +5, Spd 10, Rch 2½', Atk 0, Dmg (d6p+d4p)+2, Def -1, DR 1, ToP 10/ 7; *Notable Skills:* laborer proficiency, language (Brandobian 60), listening 10, observation 10, resist persuasion 10; *Profs:* club

Equipment: club (table leg), 2d6 trade coins

Should the players seek a meeting with Gulda, they have to communicate this via her Poxers. This may be a trying experience since these teenage punks are mouthy braggarts and completely disrespectful of anyone not in their gang. Eventually, they tire of hassling the characters, particularly if the PCs seem formidable. Note that the Poxers respect only strength. Attempts to win them over via calm rationality or bribery are interpreted as weakness and only prolong this irritating interaction.

- ▶ A successful use of the Intimidation skill forces meek compliance from these hooligans.

Gulda agrees to meet with the characters at the Stash (map area 19). She prepares for the presumed confrontation by rallying her allies including the gigantic Olmved and all 17 of her gang members. She emerges from the crude hut flanked only by Olmved but the characters are quickly surrounded as the Poxers close in around them from hiding places nearby. Once she feels secure in having demonstrated her power, she declares, *"Let's talk."*

It is impossible to provide a script for Gulda since a variety of events may have inspired this confrontation. She inquires as to why the characters sought her out.

If the characters seek revenge for the assault on Vrasil (see [Option 5: A pox on the Pox](#) from page 28), she explains that it was just a misunderstanding. Her boys got carried away and have been punished. To prove her point, she summons four of the Poxers (the ones responsible for the battery) and they can be seen to have clear welts or black eyes. *"We got no beef wit the theater and the boys know dat."* She is unwilling to accept any intrusion into her own disciplinary methods and considers the matter settled.

If the players come looking for the captured priests or inquire about Sevdol, she initially denies any knowledge or involvement. *"Look I don't know nothin' about dat. I ain't seen 'em and I don't know who dis Sevdol fellow is."*

She sticks with this story unless it becomes apparent that a fight will break out. If the PCs are adamant in their queries, she reconsiders her course. Assuming that [City Encounter 3: Dinner for One](#) has been played through, she now has no loyalty to Sevdol/Ryeth and won't risk any losses to protect him. She still is a criminal, though, and will try to parley her knowledge into financial gain.

Should she be compelled into negotiation via threat of force, she replies with, "OK, I *might* know somethin'. What's it worth to you?" This behavior is driven more by the need to present herself as a tough and wily leader unwilling to knuckle under to a band of mercenaries rather than greed. Humbly acquiescing to the players' demands without extracting any concessions would diminish her as a leader. If the question is put to her, she asks for 40 silver pieces, but if the PCs offer a sum she accepts (after some theatrical hemming and hawing) as little as 20 silver. She will not engage in negotiations in front of her boys because being haggled down would again signal weakness. She hopes to extract a reasonable (but not exorbitant) sum in a manner that makes it appear that she is in charge of the situation.

If the players insist on a fight by backing Gulda into a corner she cannot extricate herself from, then a fight they'll have. The Poxers demonstrate exceptional morale while Gulda is present, only breaking and

running if ten of their number are killed or incapacitated. The oafish Olmved fights to the death, but Gulda flees if she sustains wounds totaling 18 HP or more. Should Gulda retreat, the Poxers disperse immediately.

The players face no legal ramifications for battling the Pox – indeed they may be given a bit more respect by the city watch. However, they will forfeit the information Gulda was prepared to sell them and all Eastpegers have nothing to do with them thereafter.

Gulda [242 EP]: CN Brandobian human thief 5, HP 32, Init -3 (-1 die), Spd 6 (4 jab), Rch 1', Atk +6, Dmg 2d4p +2, Def +5, DR 1, ToP 11/ 4; *Luck Points:* 19

Quirk/Flaw: paranoid, sterile

Notable Skills: disarm trap 53, disguise 32, identify trap 32, listening 45, language (Brandobian 84, Merchant's Tongue 23), lock picking 49, pick pocket 61, recruiting 41, sneaking 54



Possessions: Dagger +2, heavy cloak, clothing, pouch with 42 cp and 55 sp, thieves' tools

Olmved [167 EP]: CN Brandobian human fighter 3; HP 44, Init +5, Spd 11, Rch 4', Atk -1, Dmg 4d4p+6 (battle axe), Def -1, DR 0, ToP 16/ 9

Quirk/Flaw: fear of heights, stutterer

Notable Skills: fire-building 23, language (Brandobian 64), intimidation 35, observation 21, riding (horse) 32

Possessions: Battle Axe, tattered clothing

Pox Thug (11) [34 EP ea]: CN Brandobian human male Brigand; HP 24, Init +1, Spd 7, Rch 1', Atk +2, Dmg d6p, Def +3, DR 0, ToP 8/ 5;

Notable Skills: language (Brandobian 58), listening 8, observation 8, resist persuasion 8; *Profs:* knife

Equipment: knife, 2d6 cp

Pox Thief (6) [67 EP ea]: CN Brandobian human male thief 1; HP 22, Init +1 (-1 die), Spd 7, Rch 1', Atk +3, Dmg d6p-1, Def +2, DR 0, ToP 7/ 5, Hon 7; *Luck Points:* 12; *Notable Skills:* hiding 20, language (Brandobian 67), listening 18, observation 15, pick pocket 26, resist persuasion 8, sneaking 27; *Profs:* knife

Equipment: knife, 2d6 cp

If the players agree to cough up a bribe, she provides them a colored version of events.

"Yea, I know dis Sevdol guy. Tried to make us his lackies but we wouldn't have none 'o dat would we boys! Found out the truth about him too. Claims he's an arms dealer but we ain't never seen him set foot in a weaponsmith's shop. Up to no good he is always sneaking around at night and associatin' with them sick fellows. Sly one too. Set some 'o me boys to watch him and he give 'em the slip more often 'an not. But one night we seen 'im creeping in late at night to some rat infested shack down by the main road outta da city. If yer lookin' fer 'im dats the place I'd start. One 'o my boys can take ya there right now if'n ya want."

She never admits any involvement in the attack on the three priests Formin, Transdril and Bransel. Gulda is happy both to get rid of the menace posed by an

armed band of mercenaries with her in their sights, as well as to have an unwitting third party deal with Sevdol for the trouble he brought the Pox.

Storyline Implications:

Battling the Pox is a dead-end since they are only peripherally connected with events. Avoiding a fight and, for a nominal fee, gaining Gulda's admittedly distorted information provides several advantages. Most importantly, the PCs can learn of the location of Ryeth's house (see *City Encounter 9: Ryeth's Home*). Other details that may be deduced are that Sevdol is an alias and he associates with disease carriers. This may be enough to implicate him as the leader of the Rotlord cult. More subtle clues to the fact that he is a wererat are that his house is rat infested and he's extremely good at avoiding detection. The Poxers sent to tail him were always evaded whenever he shape-shifted.

City Encounter 5: City Quarters

GM Note: It is vital to note whether *City Encounter 3: Dinner for One* has occurred. In most instances it will have, but extremely ambitious players may have learned of the apartment's location in *City Encounter 1: Mellyn* and set out immediately to confront these men. Should this occur, the men are all in *Mudtent* (see page 14).

GM Note 2: All three men are infected with the Wrack. Close contact (i.e., touching them or appropriating their body armor or clothing) necessitates a communicability check.

The description that follows assumes the Pox and Sevdol have already had a falling out.

Dantral, Eltrin and Vrastin serve as guards for Ryeth and spend a fair amount of time at the temple. When they are not working they live in this apartment and perform sundry errands in the city. All three are afflicted with the Wrack, which greatly diminishes their ability to be inconspicuous and effectively bars them from all the city's eating establishments. They had previously spent an inordinate amount of time in Eastpeg but the Pox has recently made them unwelcome in that part of town.

The men occupy a small, two-room apartment on the third floor of their building. They rise at the crack of noon and spend roughly six hours in town performing general surveillance work or shopping for food or other sundries required for day-to-day maintenance of the

temple. Their evenings are spent in the apartment playing cards or maintaining their equipment.

Characters reconnoitering the building see a group of three stocky men leave after noon and return six hours later. Three days after the characters learn where they live, the men return to the temple to serve a week of guard duty.

► Following the men could be difficult as they are wary and somewhat paranoid. Characters wishing to do so must succeed at a Sneaking skill check (versus an Observation skill check on their part). Two consecutive failed checks means they have spotted the tail. Check every half hour as the men are very wary.

Should the men spot a tail, they give no indication. Rather, they proceed to purchase sufficient supplies to tide them over until they need to return to the temple and then hole up in the apartment. They arm themselves and someone will always be awake on guard duty.

Dantral: CE Brandobian human fighter 1, HP 26, Init +3, Spd 7 (6), Rch 2', Atk +2, Dmg 2d6p+2, Def +4, DR 2, ToP 9/ 5

Disease: The Wrack - minor effect

Notable Skills: language (Brandobian) 74, listening 9, observation 17, resist persuasion 14

Possessions: leather armor, small shield, short sword, clothing, boots, cloak, small pouch with 4 trade coins, 5 cp and 4 sp

Eltrin: CE Brandobian human fighter 1, HP 26, Init +3, Spd 9 (7), Rch 3', Atk +2, Dmg 2d8p+2, Def +4, DR 2, ToP 9/ 5

Disease: The Wrack - minor effect

Notable Skills: language (Brandobian) 68, listening 9, observation 9, resist persuasion 9

Possessions: leather armor, small shield, longsword, clothing, boots, cloak, small pouch with 13 trade coins, 6 cp and 5 sp

Vrastin: CE Brandobian human fighter 1, HP 27, Init +3, Spd 7 (6), Rch 2', Atk +2, Dmg 2d6+2, Def +4, DR 2, ToP 9/ 5

Disease: The Wrack - minor effect

Notable Skills: language (Brandobian) 71, listening 9, observation 13, resist persuasion 12

Possessions: leather armor, small shield, short

sword, clothing, boots, cloak, small pouch with 9 trade coins, 2 cp and 4 sp

Attacking these men in the street compels them to fight defensively and await the arrival of the city guard (who appear within two minutes). As these men appear to be upstanding citizens and not beggars or refugees, the PCs are almost certain to be arrested and detained. With Dendrala's assistance they may be released after three days but only if none of the men were killed. Dendrala severely lectures any players she is compelled to free from prison, and is seemingly exasperated at the utter barbarity they exhibited by attempting to murder people in the streets!

Alternatively, the players may wish to break into the apartment while the men are away. Crime of this nature is not uncommon in Westdock and elicits little reaction from the neighbors – provided it is done discretely. The apartment door has only a shoddy lock (providing a 80% bonus to any Lock Picking skill checks). Physically bashing the door in compels someone to fetch the city guard but it will take 30 minutes before they arrive on the scene.

Another possibility is that the PCs attempt to break in while the men are home (any time other than noon-6 PM). As a GM, you may wish to head this possibility off. A home invasion and triple homicide will, at best, force the characters to flee the city and marks them as dangerous criminals subject to immediate arrest and execution. This is a human city, after all, not an orc lair. Stationing a nosy neighbor or two in the hallway hopefully will discourage the PCs from making a disastrous decision.

If the characters knock on the door while the men are home, one answers the door and asks what they want (while the other two reach for their weapons). They will not initiate an attack since the last thing they desire is to draw the attention of the authorities but neither will they invite strangers – armed and dangerous ones at that – into their home.

From this point forward, you need to exercise your improvising skills as a GM. There are a variety of magic spells that the PCs could cleverly employ or they might use Intimidation to cow the men.

► If these men are captured in some manner, they may be interrogated or tortured for information (the latter necessitates a communicability check as each is afflicted with the Wrack). Each knows the identities of all the Rotlord's followers (specifically Ryeth Olm their leader, Jelena the actress and Dorguld the beggar as well as Eldon Vorguld and the six guards (Krevit, Kolgrund, Dolact, Jarglan, Krant and Drelmin). They do not know that the latter three were dispatched to Brencol's farm and are lying in wait in *City Encounter 7: Ambush* nor do they know about Hurgle the Ogre. They do know that Ryeth is employing the pseudonym 'Sevdol' when dealing with the Pox.

These guards also know the locations of Ryeth's house and that the Vorguld Estate is home to the Rotlord's temple. The three captured priests (whose names they didn't care to learn) were alive when they left the temple a week ago. If the PCs want, they can force the men to provide a room by room description of the *Vorguld Estate*.

If forced to talk, these men will not simply disgorge the information listed here. Rather, this is a summation of what they know so that you as the GM will be able to address specific questions the players may ask.

Searching the apartment reveals simple furnishings and cots. On a table is a deck of cards, unwashed wooden plates with food remnants, and a candle nub in a crude iron holder. A dirty rag wrapped around a dozen beeswax candles lies on the floor next to a wall.

- If a player opts to examine the candles, he notices that they are all stamped with the symbol of a shield emblazoned with a wolf's head.
- A Glean Information skill check (Average difficulty) reveals that these candles bear the mark of the Vorguld Chandlery. Once an esteemed manufacturer of high quality candles, the firm ceased operation a year ago after Brollan Vorguld succumbed to a mysterious ailment. It is unusual to find any stock of these candles for local vendors sold through their last remaining inventory months ago. Subsequent questions seeking information on Brollan Vorguld or his operation reveals that his workshop is located a couple of miles east of the city. Locals know his "good-for-nothing son still lives there" but he no longer makes or sells candles.

Storyline Implications:

This is a dangerous encounter in that it is easy for PCs to forget that tactics appropriate when in a humanoid lair are considered heinous crimes when committed in civilization. Do not let the players off easy if they insist on committing a triple homicide.

If the adventurers gain access to the apartment, they have the opportunity to gain an invaluable clue as to the location of the Conventicle of Affliction and may be able to bypass the balance of the city encounters. That said, there is no assuredness that they will think to examine the candles. If they do and deduce that the Rotlord's temple is located at the former chandlery, it is suggested that you immediately deploy *City Encounter 6: A Plea for Help*.

Should the players capture and competently interrogate any of these men, they should be able to deduce the entirety of Ryeth's scheme. All that is left then is the dirty work of attacking the temple – a task that may be facilitated by solid intelligence on the estate's defenses.

If Dantral, Eltrin or Vrastin survive this scenario, they leave at first light and relocate to *Vorguld Manor* (see Act 3) to reinforce the guards there. Place them in *Area B2: Temple Proper*.

City encounter 6: A Plea for Help

Once Ryeth learns that the Theatre of the Arts engaged mercenaries that are actively pursuing the Conventicle of Affliction, he dispatches Dorguld to assess their capabilities and monitor their progress, so that he can be kept abreast of his enemy's intentions. Should he decide that they pose a serious threat (either through reports from Dorguld or the sudden disappearance of this wretch), he lays a trap for his new opponents.

One of his followers, a former actress by the name of Jelena, has been chosen as the bait. Her mission is to lure the PCs into an ambush by feeding them false information as to the whereabouts of the temple. In so doing, she may inadvertently be providing information the PCs do not currently possess – specifically Ryeth's true name and identity. This is a measured risk for it lends true credence to her tale and significantly increases the chance that Dendrala's mercenaries will act on her bogus lead. The downside is that his opponents now have a real identity to pursue. However,

Ryeth figures they'll soon be dead and unable to utilize this information against him.

The characters will be approached by a woman who introduces herself as Jelena.

Your queries have turned up no leads thus far as your questions are met with blank expressions and shrugged shoulders. You are starting to wonder if perhaps you should take a different course of action, when a nervous, young woman draped in a tattered cloak of olive approaches.

Her hacking cough alerts you to her presence even before she steps forward, her hands tightly pulling the cloak around her thin frame. She brushes aside a stand of dirty blonde hair that escapes the hood of her cloak and addresses you in a hoarse voice.

"There is a rumor you are seeking information about the Conventicle of Affliction. If this is true, I can help."

She glances around nervously and coughs once more, spitting up flecks of black bile.

As a member of the Conventicle of Affliction, Jelena was purposefully infected with the Wrack. She isn't quite as sick as she pretends to be, though.

When asked how she can help, she speaks to them eagerly, acting out her hatred of Ryeth:

"My name is Jelena. I know you seek Ryeth though you may not yet know him by that name. I can tell you who he is and where to find him! Last year he ensnared my husband with promises of gold and power and inducted him into his temple. It almost destroyed me."

She fights back tears as she begins to speak.

"I thought my husband lost, but then a few weeks ago he returned. I was shocked, but there he stood before me, claiming to have found his path in life. It was true, I had never seen him look so strong, powerful or confident. We are poor people, you have to understand, and he told me he had found enlightenment. He claimed we could start a new life of prosperity and luxury."

I was confused. Those were hard months, barely scratching out a living as weaver while my husband went missing. At the time I knew nothing about the temple or Ryeth, I only knew that my husband was back and offering me a chance at a new life."

Her next words are spoken almost in a whisper.

"I had to take it."

If the PCs do not interrupt, continue.

"With the promise of a new life we gathered up what meager belongings we had and left the city to find this temple. On our journey, he explained he was a part of a new faith, a new religion, and that together we could foster its growth. He told me there were dangers, that the temple was fighting the better-established religions and that they had to keep the temple secret until the time was right."

We traveled outside of the city, but there was no temple as I had imagined it, only a run-down farm owned by a man named Harke — another of Ryeth's followers. It is in his barn that the temple of the Rotlord lies hidden."

If the PCs do not interrupt, continue with the conversation:

Jelena furrows her brow as she tries to remember.

"At first, all went well. I met others of this new faith and we settled in. I was excited, for there was a certain danger to our actions. Then I learned what my husband had become involved with."

The god these people worshiped was vile and evil. He preached death and disease and was altogether a despicable being. I had no idea how my beloved had become so enthralled, but I was horrified. Two weeks I lived there among the rats before I could escape, and this was the price I paid for my time."

Jelena coughs again and her delicate elven form is wracked with pain.

If the PCs do not interrupt, continue with the conversation.

"I am leaving Cosolen for the east, where I have family, but when I heard that you seek Ryeth I knew I had to help. I lost my husband to that man and no doubt I shall lose my life as well.

Ryeth's temple is small and hidden underground; the only access to it is through a trap door in the barn. The guards wait inside the tunnel, which leads downward to a small antechamber outside of the temple. There are only two rooms and Ryeth rarely leaves them."

She smiles weakly as she continues.

"I hope you find him — and kill him. You will find the farm to the south of town, about half a day's walk. There is a fork in the road at Harke's farm. You will know it because Harke has an odd affection for scarecrows. Take the small hunting trail that forks off the road, and you will come to the farm you seek."

Jelena is a competent actress and Ryeth chose her for this part for that very reason. Most of her tale is a lie, but there is sufficient truth interspersed to make it believable. Jelena's husband did take up with Ryeth and come back for her, yet she was not afraid. She was eager to learn the teachings of the Rotlord and saw Ryeth as a way out of poverty.

Jelena's only intent is to lure the characters into the ambush. She provides whatever details she can about the temple and Ryeth, but under no circumstances does she agree to travel with the characters – if need be, feigning utter horror at the very prospect. Jelena purposefully keeps the description of the temple simple and limits it to two rooms so that she doesn't get bogged down with questions and details. She insists that on most days Ryeth is alone in the temple and that most of his followers stay elsewhere.

Jelena: CE Brandobian human thief 2, HP 25, Init 0 (-1 die), Spd/Atk/Dmg unarmed, Def +2, DR 0, ToP 8/ 5, Luck Points 15

Disease: The Wrack - minor effect

Quirk: superstitious (unlucky number 12)

Notable Skills: acting 29, hiding 31, identify trap 24, listening 32, observation 39, resist persuasion 9, sneaking 19

Possessions: clothing, pouch with 14 sp and 15 cp

Jelena is a local actress that never could quite make it on the big stage and was relegated to lesser roles in plays and traveling shows. When she was younger, she always felt that hard work would eventually land her the roles she desired and she constantly worked to improve her trade. As she grew older and bitter, she realized that was not to be. She turned her back on her acting and the 'unworthy god that refused to bless her performances'. Eventually, she married and settled down.

When her husband (Kolgrund) met Ryeth, he was instantly intrigued by the prospect of joining the temple and leaving behind his old life. He rushed home and found Jelena equally interested. Since that time the two have become dedicated members of the church and some of Ryeth's most loyal and trustworthy guards. She has a particular hatred for the Theatre of the Arts.

Storyline Implications:

This scenario offers what appears to be a significant breakthrough in tracking down the Rotlord's cult. It is not, but since players may believe they will be assaulting the temple, they may take the time to prepare spells and heal wounds before heading out to the farm and thus be better able to deal with the ogre that lurks there.

It is possible that the PCs may have learned of Jelena's cult affiliation by interrogating Dantral, Eltrin and Vrastin (see [City Encounter 5: City Quarters](#)). If so, they may chose to waylay her – a possibility she is ill prepared for. She expends all her Luck Points to escape, but if captured can be forced to talk. She knows what the guards know plus the details of the ambush she is attempting to lead them into.

City Encounter 7: Ambush!

Encounter: Ogre (242 EPs), 3 fighters (102 EPs)

Potential Yield: 3 longswords, 3 knives, 3 light crossbows, 3 medium shields, 3 suits of ringmail armor (human sized), 4 days rations plus the ogre's stash (622 trade coins, 21 cp, 12 sp, Warhammer +1, Potion of Healing, Potion of Sleep, four-wheeled wagon woth 60 sp)

When Ryeth first arrived in the area, he often moved his church (for a variety of reasons that included paranoia and an expanding congregation). One of his first, and most loved, locations was Brencol's farm. Brencol was Ryeth's first recruit. An old farmer beaten down by

life, he shared Ryeth's vision and possessed an interest in the Rotlord that was fostered at a young age.

The two men became quick friends and Brencol was more than happy to offer the use of his farmstead. Located a half a day from the city with a large barn, the place served Ryeth well. The increased foot traffic didn't go unnoticed, though, and eventually Ryeth determined he had to move his temple to a more accommodating location. Still, Ryeth loved that farm, even after Brencol died from the disease he had infected on the old man. Over the years, Ryeth returned to the barn for various ceremonies and when he sought a place of solitude to commune with his god – until the night Ryeth returned and found an ogre had made the barn his home.

'Hurgle', as his kin called him, was more than Ryeth was prepared to deal with. Lamenting the loss of his favorite place, Ryeth moved on and gave little thought to the place since – that is, until he learned that a formidable band of mercenaries in the employ of the Theatre of the Arts is looking for him.

Ryeth's plan is to have Jelena lure the characters to the barn so Hurgle can slaughter them. In order to ensure the ogre's success, he dispatches three of his followers to lie in wait nearby in order to murder anyone the ogre cannot kill. In addition, the guards have orders to kill the ogre if it wins but is gravely wounded. Eliminating the characters and getting his barn back would make Ryeth extremely happy.

When the characters decide to venture to the farm, read or paraphrase the following text aloud:

You travel south from Cosolen for several hours, passing farms separated by hedgerows or low, stone walls. As the hours wear on, the frequency of farms lessens, with large groves of trees and small hillocks separating them. The land becomes a bit more rugged and untamed as you follow the winding road to the south.

Toward midday you spot a strange sight ahead. What first appeared to have been a dozen people standing in a field is eventually revealed to be a large number of scarecrows.

Ranging in size from a small child to a large man, the scarecrows are dressed in a variety of rags and an odd collection of clothing. Ravens sit astride the immobile creatures' arms, gawking at your intrusion.

As you near the field you see a small trail split to your right and enter a darkened wood of oak and pine.

Continue to read the following if the characters enter the woods:

The woodland trail winds through the dark trees, the canopy overhead not allowing for much undergrowth, but providing a carpet of pine needles. Shadows fall at odd angles as you walk for another half hour up gentle slopes. Finally, the larger trees begin to give way to smaller and thinner ones.

Foliage and undergrowth grows dense here and you are forced to follow the small trail in a single file. Then, abruptly, the tree growth ends. Standing at the edge of the clearing, you can see a small farm nestled safely alongside the woods.

A pile of wood and thatch suggests that at one point a building stood off to your left, but the only intact structure appears to be a large barn. It stands like a sentinel some distance from the edge of the woods and the collapsed farmhouse.

Ryeth's men have camouflaged themselves in the woodline fifty feet from the barn. Having had over a day to prepare, they took great care to erect a blind in some of the thickest foliage and undergrowth. While certainly not invisible, this blind provides a 30% bonus to any Hiding skills checks they may employ versus a party member's Observation skill check. They are heavily armed as they anticipate a savage fight either with the ogre or the PCs.

Once the characters arrive, they hunker down and wait for them to approach the barn so they can watch the show. However, if the PCs make a concerted effort to search the woodline or if an exceptionally observant party member spots their blind, they fire a volley of bolts in the hope that it will startle the party, and yell loudly to attract the ogre's attention. In the confusion,

they attempt to escape.

Note that if anyone approaches the barn, Hurgle investigates. The sole exception is if someone sneaks up undetected (the ogre has 15 mastery in Observation). Anyone so bold as to enter the barn is set upon immediately.

You draw close to the barn, inching closer to the moldy doors that cling to rusted hinges. Suddenly, one of the door panels splinters into pieces with a great crash!

A large male form strides from the darkened interior of the barn. The great naked brute stands about nine feet tall with gray-brown skin covered in thick, coarse, black hair.

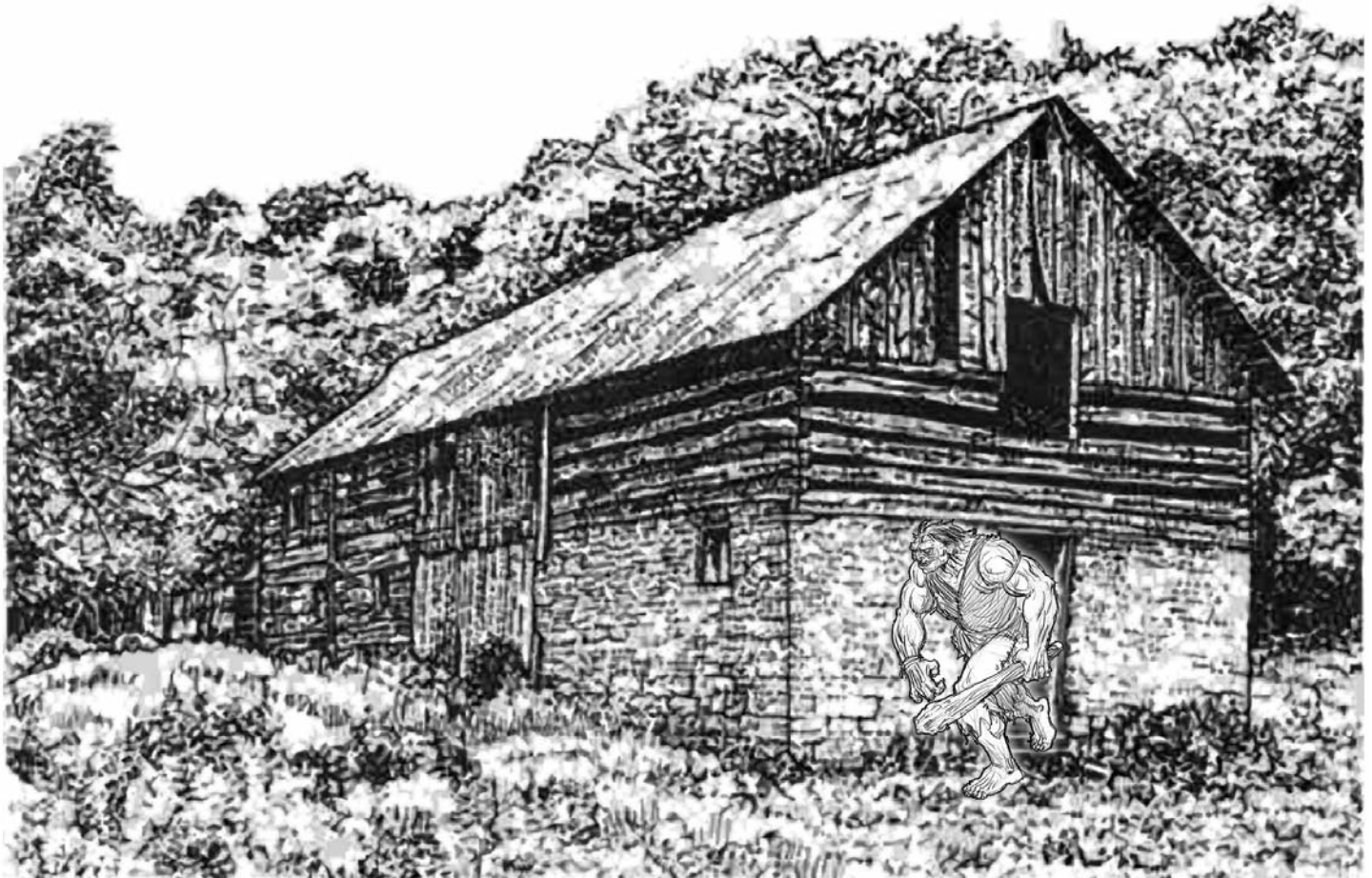
In its right hand it wields a thick, heavy limb of oak. A wagon wheel covered in broken and splintered boards is strapped to its left arm, serving as a makeshift shield. The enraged creature bellows an unintelligible challenge to you, then charges!

Never one to give much thought to the future, Hurgle lived like many ogres, driven by his base desires. One day while out searching for food, he discovered the isolated barn that he now calls home. Hurgle spends his evenings hunting in the woods and consuming the occasional stray livestock or local farmer.

These disappearances don't go unnoticed, but thus far Hurgle has managed to avoid detection. Hurgle knows enough to be wary of large groups of men, particularly those that are well-armed. Still, Hurgle isn't a coward and catching anyone on what he considers 'his land' drives him instantly into a rage.

Hurgle never wears clothing unless it is extremely cold. He feels no shame and in fact is quite proud to run around naked as the gods made him. Part of this attitude is because he feels only the weak races need to clothe themselves, but also because he seeks a mate and wishes to give any prospective ogress a good look.

Hurgle the Ogre (242 EP): HP 51, Init 4, Spd 8, Rch 4½, Atk +5, Dmg 2d10p+6 (club), Def +5 (w/shield), DR 3, ToP 20/ 9, Size H, Move 10 ft./sec.



Ryeth's men watch the fight, sizing up their adversaries and determining a battle strategy. Their intent is to fire their crossbows in unison at a lightly armored and shieldless target in order to dispatch him instantly. They then drop their crossbows and grab their shields. Once they close to melee, they concentrate their attacks on a single opponent, if possible, seeking to systematically eliminate one opponent at a time rather than haphazardly swinging at targets of opportunity.

Drelmin (67 EP): CE Brandobian human fighter 1, HP 27, Init +4, Spd 10 (8) (longsword) or 20 (lt. crossbow), Rch 3½, Atk +2, Dmg 2d8p+2 (sword) or 2d6p (lt crossbow), Def +4, DR 4, ToP 9/ 5

Disease: The Wrack - minor effect

Flaw: pocking

Notable Skills: hiding 16, language (Brandobian 70), listening 9, observation 9, resist persuasion 17

Possessions: ringmail armor, medium shield, longsword, light crossbow with 12 bolts, knife, clothing, small pouch with 2 days rations

Jarglan (67 EP): CE Brandobian human fighter 1, HP 26, Init +4, Spd 10 (8) (longsword) or 20 (lt. crossbow), Rch 3½, Atk +2, Dmg 2d8p+2 (sword) or 2d6p (lt crossbow), Def +4, DR 4, ToP 9/ 5

Disease: The Wrack - minor effect

Quirk/Flaw: paranoid, facial scar

Notable Skills: hiding 20, language (Brandobian 67), listening 9, observation 20, resist persuasion 9

Possessions: ringmail armor, medium shield, longsword, light crossbow with 12 bolts, knife, clothing, small pouch with 2 days rations

Krant (67 EP): CE Brandobian human fighter 1, HP 28, Init +4, Spd 10 (8) (longsword) or 20 (lt. crossbow), Rch 3½, Atk +2, Dmg 2d8p+2 (sword) or 2d6p (lt crossbow), Def +4, DR 4, ToP 9/ 5

Disease: The Wrack - minor effect

Quirk: glutton

Notable Skills: hiding 19, language (Brandobian 73), listening 9, observation 9, resist persuasion 9

Possessions: ringmail armor, medium shield, longsword, light crossbow with 12 bolts, knife, clothing, small pouch containing only bits of crumbs

Once the ogre falls, Ryeth's men initiate their attack with a volley of crossbow bolts. It is important to remember that this encounter can easily get out of hand if the guards join forces with the ogre. The plan is to let Hurgle deal with the characters first, then move in and attempt to finish them all. In essence, this should be treated as two separate encounters. Ryeth's men are intimidated by the ogre and know that getting too close to it could prove fatal.

Ryeth's men flee if any of their number are killed or incapacitated. All of them know that they possess information of extreme value to their foes (namely the location of the Rotlord's temple). Anyone captured by the party attempts suicide (stabbing themselves in the heart) rather than risk revealing information under torture. They succeed unless disarmed.

- ▶ Interrogation or torture reveals that these cultists have the same information as Dantral, Eltrin and Vrastin (see *City Encounter 5: City Quarters*).

Aside from their weapons and armor, the guards carry little of value. Each carries a small divine icon of the Rotlord on a chain around his neck or in his pocket. Their food and water, one deck of cards and a set of dice are all hidden behind their blind. Note that the cultists are all infected with the Wrack. Wearing their armor necessitates a communicability check to see if that character contracts this disease.

- ▶ The players may attempt to track the fleeing cultists (if any). The first successful check shows that they are headed back to Cosolen along the same road the PCs took to reach Brencol's farm. About four miles from the city they veer off to the east (a second Tracking check is required to note this). At this point, night approaches. If the players continue, a third Tracking check is required for the final hour-long length of the trail once the sun sets. If this too is successful, the tracks lead to [Vorguld Manor](#).

Searching the barn, the characters discover a pile of rotting, moldy, straw and bloody clothing that Hurgle uses for a bed. Bones from several animals are scattered throughout the building. The ogre's small stash of 'trophies' from his kills over the years lies in the bed of a perfectly functional four-wheeled wagon that has been rolled into an old horse stall. This wagon could fetch 60 sp if sold in Cosolen. Dragging it manually is a cumbersome affair requiring at least four men and a full day's time.

Hurgle's stash includes the following items:

- **Warhammer +1**
- **Potion of Healing** (a odorless blue liquid)
- **Potion of Sleep** (a pale green milky liquid that smells like mint)
- coins (622 trade coins, 21 cp and 12 sp)
- 9 crushed skulls (apparently human) and a myriad of other broken bones
- two small shields (broken)
- leather armor (unusable and heavily masticated)
- a shovel with a broken handle
- a scythe with a broken handle
- bloody clothes (typical peasant dress)

No trapdoor exists in the barn. Jelena lied.

Storyline Implications:

This encounter is another red herring designed to kill rather than delay the party, as it is now apparent that they pose a real threat to Ryeth and the Rotlord cult. Capturing any of Ryeth's men could provide a bonanza of information, but they go to extreme measures to safeguard their secrets.

City Encounter 8: Hall of Records

One of Dendrala's suggestions on where to start searching for the identity of the ransomer Sevdol was to visit the temple of the Founder's Creation, where records of land purchases are stored.

Priests of the Great Builder are charged with keeping the records of all tax paying people in the city. In payment for this service, the city allocates that all farmers within a 25-mile radius of the city must work the church's land for one day each year. This service is highly regulated and organized to allow for maximum efficiency. The Founder's Creation owns fifty acres of land south of the city and nearly all of the planting, upkeep, and harvesting is undertaken at the hands of the peasants paying their dues or priests of the order.

- ▶ A character can attempt a Current Affairs skill check (Average difficulty) in order to learn that Cosolen's tax records in are kept at the temple of the Great Builder. In addition, any character that exceeds this check by more than 20% learns why the temple is in charge of the tax records and their deal with the prince and city officials (detailed below).

Priests of the Great Builder maintain property records in an office near the temple. Anyone can request a copy of these record for a fee of 5 sp. Copies of tax records for specific people are also available, but because of the work involved these cost 15 sp. In most cases, these records are requested when a problem arises, a person dies, or a business or property is up for sale though it isn't uncommon for a private party to ask on occasion.

Public tax records contain basic information that details a property's location, the owner and what tax is paid and when. Little more information is available and in many cases these records are incomplete and incorrect names are given. Unlike modern society, there are few checks and balances and if a property owner cannot be located, the tax records are left blank for that year.



Temple of the Great Builder

Characters that request Sevdol's tax records are told the process could take a day or two, and are asked to return the following day. When they return, the clerk states they haven't yet been able to find any records and to return tomorrow. This time the clerk asks if they spelled the name correctly or if this individual goes by a different name. If they answer yes and no respectively, then he apologizes since there are no records by that name anywhere in the files. Characters asking for their money back will be politely but firmly refused.

No records exist because 'Sevdol' is a fictional name.

If the characters return at a later date with the name Ryeth or Ryeth Olm (gained via interrogating either Dorguld in *City Encounter 2: Too Many Questions* or any of Dantral, Eltrin and Vrastin in *City Encounter 5: City Quarters* or as told to them by Jelena in *City Encounter 6: A Plea for Help*), the clerks are able to locate a file. The record is for a small parcel of property outside of the city (see map location 2) and it indicates that Ryeth purchased the land three years ago and has paid the tax every year since then. No other information is available. If questioned about the parcel of land, the priest produces a map showing the characters where the property is located.

Storyline Implications:

Failing to find a record for Sevdol is an indicator that this is a pseudonym and should cause the PCs to doubt any leads connected with this name. Once the party has learned that Ryeth is the Rotlord cult leader, property records can lead the PCs to his residence – that is if they're not too disenchanted to bother with the process after their initial failure.

City Encounter 9: Ryeth's Home

Encounter: 15 giant rats (180 EPs)

Potential Yield: Dagger +1, coinage (4 trade coins, 51 cp, 18 sp), sundry equipment, 4 beeswax candles

There are a variety of means through which the players can learn the location of Ryeth's home – a small, run-down shack situated by the river. He uses this building on a regular basis though he often comes and goes at night in order to keep a low profile. He splits his time between his house and the temple and often sleeps here. Once or twice a month he brings supplies (food, candles, blankets, etc.) to the house while in his human form. During these trips he is always cloaked

and comes and leaves quickly.

If questioned, the neighbors claim the man that lives in the building is rarely home and that he is a nervous and suspicious sort, always cloaked and mysterious. Ryeth's neighbors give him a wide berth and don't speak with him at all.

Characters wishing to investigate the shack should find the task easy enough. Ryeth never locks the door. If someone opens it when he is present, he quickly scurries into one of several holes in the wall or floor and waits to observe the situation. Ryeth won't attack anyone here and, unless the characters have a reason to believe Ryeth is a wererat, they have little to no chance of detecting him when they arrive.

Situated on the bank of the small river you find a ramshackle, run-down building comprised of weather-worn and rotting wood. From the outside, it appears to be little more than a one-room shack, one of several in this area. A lone door appears to be the only means of entry.

Despite all outward appearances, the shack is structurally sound. It is up to the GameMaster to determine if Ryeth is present when the characters arrive or not. He usually spends two or three days at the temple, then a few days here. If he has pressing business in town or is recruiting followers he stays here. Ryeth has been spending more time here as of late since the actions of the players have become a drain on his patience and time.

Characters find the shack to be rife with rat droppings, moldy straw and food, and small pieces of garbage or debris. There are several small holes in the walls, though none of them are large enough for a man and the roof leaks in three places. Ryeth sleeps in one of the piles of straw, curled up with several other rats, when he is here. What food he brings with him is eventually consumed, though he shares much of it with the rats. Ryeth is comfortable eating moldy and rotten food and feels it is just one small way that he can commune with his god.

Characters that do not leave after performing a cursory examination of the building will be set upon by a swarm of giant rats that Ryeth commands. He needn't be present to control them. Their orders are to lie in wait and permit curious neighbors to poke around to

their heart's content. However, if anyone attempts to rip up the floorboards (thus gaining access to Ryeth's emergency stash), they will attempt to drive off the intruders.

Note that these rats are carriers of [Rat Bite Fever](#). Communicability should be checked any time a PC is bitten by a rat.

15 Giant Rats (12 EP ea): HP 9 each, Init 0, Spd 10, Rch Short, Atk 0, Dmg 1d4+1, Special Atk *any bite subjects victim to Rat Bite Fever*, Def -1, DR 1, ToP 10/3, Size S, Move 5 ft./sec.

While Ryeth cannot be captured (or likely even found) here, there are several clues that could lead the characters to the location of the temple. Anyone who suspects the presence of a secret door (and rolls successfully to locate it) finds Ryeth's emergency stash under the floor. He adds a few more coins to this small hoard every week or so.

Ryeth's stash isn't overly difficult to locate but it is difficult to access. This is because he has hidden a small box in the floor of his shack that contains a slot in the top, allowing him to drop the occasional coin in without having to remove and open it.

Poison Needle Trap: Hidden under a series of wooden planks covered with loose straw is a hole containing a heavy iron lockbox roughly a foot square. This lockbox is heavy (and rather expensive being worth 20 sp alone). The top has a slot roughly the width and length of a coin. If shaken, coins can be heard rattling within. A lock is integrated into the box and Ryeth carries the only key.

A successful Lock Picking skill check (for a Good quality lock) or use of the 3rd Level Mage spell Unlock will open the box. Note that unless a successful Identify Traps skill check is made prior to attempting to pick the lock, the locksmith will set off the poison needle trap.

- ▶ Anyone inspecting the box for traps must succeed at an Identify Trap skill check (Difficult) in order to locate the needle trap inside.
- ▶ A Disarm Trap check (Average) is required to disarm it. Alternatively, a Disarm Traps check (Easy) may be attempted to set it off without risking injury.

This is accomplished by jamming something into the lock that is large enough to cover the opening (e.g. the tip of a dagger or a piece of wood) and which blocks the needle as it emerges.

Anyone triggering the trap is pierced by a poisoned needle for 1 point of damage and forced to make a saving throw vs. poison (VF 9). On a failed save, the victim suffers weakness, dizziness, headache, difficulty breathing and nausea [game effect: -2 penalty to Attack, Defense & Damage for 2d12 hours]. A natural "1" on the saving throw die indicates death; there is no effect if the saving throw is successful.

The box may be pounded open with a mace or hammer (destroying it in the process) but it's so well built that this takes an hour of effort. Only the beeswax candles break if the box is smashed open.

The box contains a small amount of money and some personal items. One item in particular could be of interest to the characters as it provides the location of Ryeth's temple.

Inside the box is Ryeth's emergency stash:

- a **Dagger +1**
 - Clothing (sandals, breeches, tunic and a belt)
 - Equipment (a small sack, flint and steel)
 - Coins (18 sp, 51 cp, 4 trade coins)
 - Four beeswax candles
- ▶ If a player opts to examine the candles, he notices that they are all stamped with the symbol of a shield emblazoned with a wolf's head.

Stealing Ryeth's lockbox enrages the priest, especially if he is there to witness the act. The theft also drives home the fact that time is running short for him and causes him to advance his plan. Ryeth returns to his temple with all haste and organizes his guards to begin preparing for the attack on the meddling priests of the Theatre of the Arts.

Storyline Implications:

While most of the items in Ryeth's stash are mundane, the candles hold a particular clue. The stamped symbol is not unusual by itself, as many chandlers stamp their products – but this particular chandler, Brollan Vorguld, is dead.

Brollan's son is one of Ryeth's men. When Brollan

learned this, Ryeth's men captured and infected him, leading to a quick death. The death had unexpected consequences for Ryeth as he underestimated the popularity of the candles and their maker. The man's son was able to put the issue to rest and eventually the furor died out. Since that time Ryeth has used Brollan's workshop as his temple.

▶ A Glean Information skill check (Average difficulty) reveal that these candles bear the mark of the Vorguld Chandlery. Once an esteemed manufacturer of high quality candles, the firm ceased operation a year ago after Brollan Vorguld succumbed to a mysterious ailment. It is unusual to find any stock of these candles for local vendors sold through their last remaining inventory months ago. Subsequent questions seeking information on Brollan Vorguld or his operation reveals that his workshop is located a couple of miles east of the city. Locals know his *"good-for-nothing son still lives there"* but he no longer makes or sells candles.

Story Awards for Act 2:

Because it is possible to accomplish similar end results in different scenarios, the story awards for the city scenarios are aggregated in this list.

- Discovering that "Sevdol" is an alias (50 EP)
- Learning of the location of Ryeth's Home (100 EP)
- Confronting the Pox without instigating a battle (300 EP)
- Learning that Vorguld Estate is host to the Conventicle of Affliction (500 EP)
- Locating the trap in Ryeth's stash box (67 EP) or Disarming this trap (133 EP)



ACT THREE

The Conventicle of Affliction

For nearly a century the Vorguld family were the most important chandlers in Cosolen. Most candles used in northern Brandobia were made of rendered animal fat or tallow until the Vorguld candles appeared on the market. Made of beeswax, Vorguld candles burned brighter and without the smoke associated with tallow candles.

Within weeks of their debut, the candles became immensely popular and high demand led to several other candle shops opening in the region. Vorguld candles were, so it was said, the first and best in the Cosolen region. Passing down the trade from generation to generation, Vorguld candles were a staple in the city. Business was so good that the family eventually moved to a large estate outside of the city where they could harvest wax from bees they kept on the grounds.

Brollan learned the trade from his father and did an admirable job running the business. Hoping to continue the trend, he groomed his two young boys, Celdon and Eldon, for the task of taking over the business. Celdon, the elder of the two, was eager to learn the chandler's trade and excelled at all the tasks required. This handsome boy soon became an integral part of the operation, taking over the distribution. Eldon wasn't so fortunate.

Still bitter about his mother's death several years prior, Eldon revolted against his father. He began stealing at a young age and, after being caught several times, fell into disfavor with his father. Brollan held out hope that his youngest son would right the ship. He himself had been a bit of a troublemaker in his youth, so he was not particularly harsh, chalking Eldon's troublesome ways up to a misguided attempt to seek attention.

Unfortunately, Eldon's activities were not a cry for

attention. The boy had a dark streak in him and took joy in the misery of others. For the last few years, the boy had pondered slipping away in the night and joining the thieves' guild. Before that could happen, however, he met Ryeth.

The priest had been recruiting his flock of followers for a year or so, and was becoming quite adept at recognizing young, like-minded men. When he met Eldon, he knew almost immediately that he could be corrupted. To Ryeth's surprise, it took far less time or effort than he ever imagined.

Ryeth and Eldon shared a similar upbringing, being the second sons of wealthy fathers, and they connected on a level unlike any of his other recruits. In only a short time, Eldon became Ryeth's right-hand man and learned much about being a priest of the Rotlord.

When Ryeth once again sought a place to gather his flock, Eldon quickly offered up his father's facility. Isolated and hidden away from the city, it could serve as a potential home to the temple – assuming something could be done about his father and brother. Ryeth took a trip to the estate one night to investigate and determined it would make the perfect location for his new home.

Ryeth's first act was to have his men murder Celdon, dumping his body into the bay. That same evening, Ryeth infected Brollan with a wasting disease. The old man died a short time later.

Eldon inherited the estate that housed the chandler's facility and the bees, but quickly decided to shut down the business (citing a lack of knowledge in candle-making). Once the furor ceased, Ryeth and his congregation moved in.

Since then, the chandler's shop has become an ideal

temple for Ryeth, so much so that he is considering making it permanent. Located a half-hour walk from the city, the large estate is removed from the well-traveled roads and encircled by acres of woods, thus affording the priest all the privacy he desires. Eldon still owns the estate, but is a devout follower of the Rotlord. All things considered, Ryeth is extremely happy with his situation. His guards and followers are able to live in the house with Eldon and have free run of the place, affording Ryeth a bit of comfort in the knowledge that the place is well-protected.

Once the characters learn the location of the temple (there being a variety of paths in the city encounters to accomplish this end), they can investigate as they see fit. Asking Cosolen locals about Vorguld candles draws melancholy responses. Most people consider it a sad tragedy that Brollan suddenly died from a mysterious disease, especially after his eldest son ran off to Crandolen to start a new life (or so they think). Many lament that his good-for-nothing son Eldon was the remaining heir and that the candle workshop closed shortly after Brollan's death.

▶ A Glean Information check (Average difficulty) reveals that youngest son Eldon rarely comes into town; he prefers to remain at his estate. Obtaining directions to the estate is easy enough. The PCs can readily learn that the estate lies to the west, half an hour's walk down a narrow path intersecting the main road at a sign indicating the Vorguld estate.

The Vorguld estate is a large sprawling tract of land that covers 30 acres, most of which is heavily forested. In the center, a large area has been cleared, providing ample room for a large house, a chandler's workshop and many manmade and natural beehives. The estate is home to Eldon and several of Ryeth's followers.

Characters that reconnoiter the estate find it to be quiet most of the time. Only on holy days (every waning moon) or special occasions are there more than a handful of people here. The estate is broken down into three sections: the manor house (A), the chandler's workshop (B) and the beehives (C).

A: The Manor House

This two-story wooden building served as the home to the Vorguld family for over 50 years. Now a year removed from the last happy memory, the building is quickly falling into disrepair.

The manor house serves as living quarters for Ryeth's followers when they are required to be on the temple grounds. Other than Eldon, no rooms are permanently assigned. Most have other living arrangements within or near Cosolen that facilitates their insidious work.

Living within the Vorguld Manor House is a definite improvement from the abject squalor most of them are accustomed to. Given the remote location of the site, guard duties are generally minimal permitting ample time for games of chance or other means of idly whiling away the days. That said, since the capture of the Merry Muses and the subsequent repercussion (to wit, any actions the PCs have taken to date), those stationed at the estate have been more attentive. They are under orders to kill or capture anyone they catch snooping around the grounds.

Ryeth's agents have been spying on the players so unless the PCs promptly march to Vorguld Estate after learning that it is host the Rotlord's cult, the men here will be expecting an attack of some sort.

When the characters arrive, there are four men inside (including Eldon). All are on the second story of the building; two of them wielding crossbows.

General Tactics

If the PCs assault the manor house, the men defend from the second floor landing. Dolact positions himself on the stairs to bar their use and ensure that he can only be fought one-on-one. Behind him and with the cover provided by the three-foot wall, Krevit and Kolgrund fire their crossbows at targets of opportunity. The wall provides 50% cover when firing (*i.e.*, any missiles fired at them are blocked on a roll of 11-20 on a d20). In addition, they duck down when reloading gaining 100% cover. They pop up to fire bolts then duck down to reload for as long as Dolact can hold the stairs.

Eldon casts his spells from the landing, also gaining the benefit of 50% cover. He first *Blesses* Dolact providing the guard with +1 to Attack and Defense. Subsequent actions depend on how the battle progresses. If Dolact continues to hold the stairs, Eldon will begin hurling javelins every 7 seconds. Should the guard fall, he takes his place casting *Moderate Emotion: Cause Fear* on the first PC in line. After casting the spell, he orders either Krevit or Kolgrund to cease reloading their crossbow and step into battle while he attempts a fighting withdrawal.



If still engaged in combat, he employs his *Touch of the Rotlord power* to inflict a 2-point wound (that circumvents armor damage reduction) before drawing his short sword.

If it becomes readily apparent that the cultists are overmatched by their enemy (*i.e.*, two or more of their number are killed or incapacitated without inflicting like casualties), Eldon flees by jumping out a window. Because the building is surrounded by topsoil, the 10-foot drop only inflicts d6p-3 damage. If not actively pursued, he flees to the Chandler's Workshop and murders the captive Merry Muses before making his way back to Cosolen to link up with Ryeth.

As long as Eldon is present and alive (even if incapacitated), the guards fight to the death. Should he flee or be killed, they attempt a fighting withdrawal but soon run out of room. They are loath to leap out the windows but will do so if the only other option is being spitted at the end of a blade. If any guards escape, they flee back to Cosolen and seek out Ryeth.

No cultist ever surrenders. They are aware of the hatred most people have for their deity and his followers and expect no mercy from their foes.

Eldon Vorguld (133 EP): CE Brandobian human cleric of Mangrus 2, HP 27, Init +1, Spd 8 (7) (short sword) or RoF 7 with javelins, Rch 2', Atk +2, Dmg 2d6p or d12p, Def +7, DR 2, ToP 9/ 5

Disease: The Wrack - minor effect

Quirk/Flaw: quick-tempered, facial scar

Notable Skills: botany 19, language (Brandobian) 83 [literate], listening 23, religion (Mangrus) 25, resist persuasion 15, sneaking 21

Spells: 1: moderate emotion (cause fear); 2: aggravate pain, bless

Special Powers: Once per day Eldon may injure an individual with his touch, causing 2 points of damage and ignoring DR.

Possessions: leather armor, **small shield +1**, short sword, 3 javelins, rotted robes, decomposing hand (divine icon of Mangrus)

Krevit (67 EP): CE Brandobian human fighter 1, HP 26, Init +3, Spd 7 (6) short sword or RoF 20 (lt crossbow), Rch 2' (short sword), Atk +2 (short sword) or +1 (lt crossbow), Dmg 2d6p+2 (short

sword) or 2d6p (lt crossbow), Def 0, DR 2, ToP 9/ 5

Disease: The Wrack - minor effect

Quirk/Flaw: compulsive liar, flatulence

Notable Skills: language (Brandobian) 74, listening 9, observation 9, resist persuasion 9

Possessions: leather armor, short sword, light crossbow with 10 bolts, clothing, small pouch with 12 cp

Kolgrund (67 EP): CE Brandobian human fighter 1, HP 26, Init +3, Spd 7 (6) short sword or RoF 20 (lt crossbow), Rch 2' (short sword), Atk +2 (short sword) or +1 (lt crossbow), Dmg 2d6p+2 (short sword) or 2d6p (lt crossbow), Def 0, DR 2, ToP 9/ 5

Disease: The Wrack - minor effect

Quirk/Flaw: superstitious (avoids ocean travel), colorblind

Notable Skills: language (Brandobian) 71, listening 9, observation 9, resist persuasion 9

Possessions: leather armor, short sword, light crossbow with 14 bolts, clothing, small pouch with 3 trade coins and 9 cp

Dolact (67 EP): CE Brandobian human fighter 1, HP 28, Init +4, Spd 8, Rch 3', Atk +2, Dmg 2d8p+2, Def +5, DR 3, ToP 9/ 5

Disease: The Wrack - minor effect

Flaw: pocking

Notable Skills: language (Brandobian) 67, listening 10, observation 10, resist persuasion 10

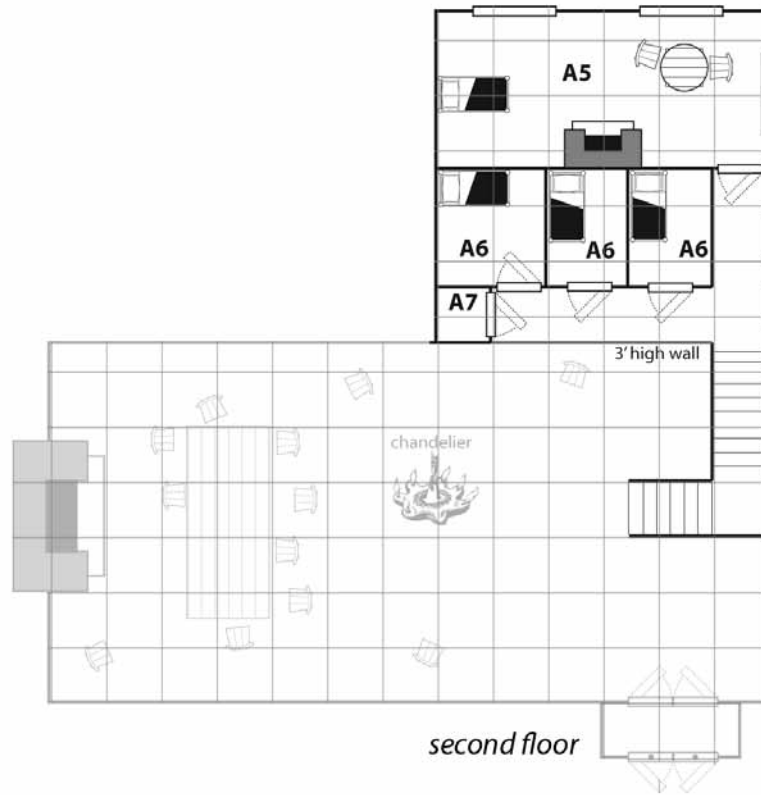
Possessions: studded leather armor, medium shield, scimitar, clothing, small pouch with 5 trade coins, 6 cp and 1 sp

Note that the cultists are all infected with [the Wrack](#). Wearing their armor necessitates a communicability check to see if that character contracts this disease.

A1: Foyer

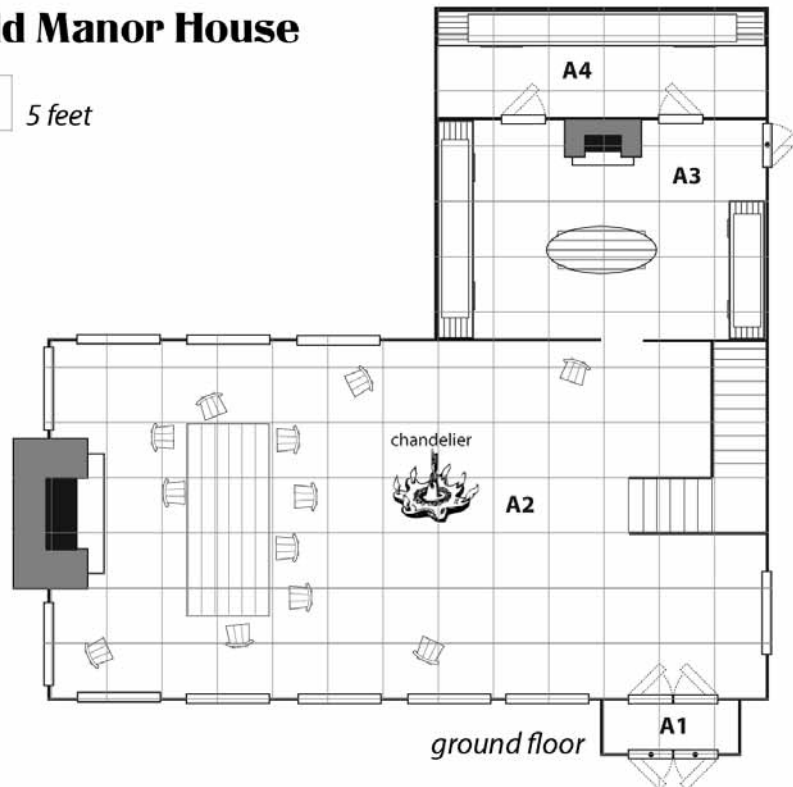
This room is cluttered with broken bits of furniture and other garbage. A large set of double doors exit the room on the far wall.

The foyer is devoid of anything of value. The double doors enter into the great hall.



Vorguld Manor House

□ 5 feet



A2: Great Hall

Potential Yield: playing cards (1 cp), iron chandelier (25 sp)

In happier days gone by, this room often served as a gathering point for family and workers alike. Large feasts were held here and no person was allowed to go hungry, no matter their station. Now the room is a shadow of its former self. The men here use this room for most of their daily activities including eating, and gambling. When Ryeth is here he takes his meals in this room.

A large fieldstone fireplace dominates this once grand hall. Faded timbers cross the ceiling above and support a large ornamental iron chandelier. A lone table sits in the middle of this room and appears large enough to seat a dozen people.

Chairs are haphazardly strewn about the room. Dirty wooden plates covered in old food sit on the table next to a stack of worn cards. Several goblets lie on their side suggesting this room is commonly ill-used.

An archway opens into another room on the north wall.

The playing cards could be sold for 1 cp. The iron chandelier above is custom-made to hold twenty-four candles and if removed it could fetch up to 25 sp from the right buyer. Most common city folk wouldn't have much use for the chandelier but a wealthy merchant or minor nobleman may be interested.

A3: Kitchen

A large kitchen dominates this portion of the main floor. Shelves and cabinets occupy most of the wall space, with pots and kettles hanging from hooks.

A large cauldron hangs over a fireplace and appears to be the main instrument used for the preparation of food. Two sacks containing potatoes and carrots rest on the floor near the fireplace.

Salt, sugar, flour and vegetables occupy several of the shelves. This room is well-used and the guards make an effort to restock the kitchen with supplies on their trips into the city.

A4: Larder

Racks of aged beef hang from hooks in this small larder.

Once every couple of weeks, Ryeth purchases beef and stores it here. There is enough here to last the guards three more days.

A5: Eldon's Room

Potential Yield: bone dice (2 cp), 44 cp, 25 sp, 3 theatrical masks (divine icons of Raconteur)

After Brollan's death, Eldon took his father's room and made it his own. When Eldon first became a priest he was bedridden by the new 'gift' bestowed upon him. As such, his men got used to playing cards in his room. That habit continued even after Eldon recovered from the disease Ryeth 'generously' infected him with.

As Ryeth spends more time in the city, Eldon remains at the estate slowly trying to turn his men against his mentor, planning for the time when he will take control. While playing cards, the men can observe the temple and keep an eye on the estate. Even with the appearance of the Merry Muses, the guards here are confident they can spot and react to any threat that comes their way.

Two men keep watch with crossbows while the rest gamble with cards or dice. They rotate every hour or so. If the skeletons are awakened, the guards grab their weapons and investigate while two men provide crossbow fire support. Eldon accompanies the guards outside.

Eldon is a petulant child who never wanted to work. He explored several avenues to escape his former life before he stumbled upon Ryeth. Never one to give much of an effort, Eldon found that the path Ryeth provided him an easy escape. Since that time, his aspirations have grown. He gains the loyalty of the guards by dumping money to them in games of chance, slowly poisoning their minds with tales of visions from the Rotlord and incriminating stories about Ryeth's

unworthiness. Thus far the wererat hasn't caught on and Eldon is learning to be patient in his plotting.

Eldon is a nondescript man in his early twenties with short brown hair and a mousy appearance. When he was young, a horse kick grazed his face, giving him a jagged scar on the left side. Eldon suffers from an extremely short temper and may become livid at the smallest slight. If the characters already dealt with the four men, or defeat them in the room, they are free to explore its contents.

A four-poster bed of sturdy oak dominates this large bedchamber, its stained mattress suggesting that whoever lives here rarely bathes. Several upholstered chairs are scattered about the room.

A battered wardrobe lies open on its side, forming a makeshift table. On the table lies a small pile of coins next to a pair of bone dice. A pile of clothing lies in one corner and emits a stale, sweaty odor.

Since becoming a Pestilent One, Eldon refuses to bathe or clean himself. This has become somewhat of a problem for him as some of the guards refuse to get too close to him now. On top of the wardrobe is 13 cp and a small pair of bone dice (worth 5 cp). The clothing is worthless and reeks of musty sweat. Hidden under the pile of clothing is a small pouch with Eldon's personal wealth (31 cp and 25 sp). In addition anyone searching the wardrobe finds three divine icons of the Raconteur and a large headdress in the shape of a rat's head. The headdress is worn during the cult's rites and permits the wearer to mimic a wererat.

Eldon hasn't decided what he wants to do with these, but has been saving them for a special ceremony in order to dispose of them.

► The rat (or rather, wererat) headdress is a clue that the cult reveres wererats. It may also serve as misdirection in that the PCs may think that when they encounter Ryeth he is merely in costume rather than a full-blooded wererat.

A6: Bedchambers

These rooms serve as sleeping quarters for any lesser member of the cult of the Rotlord while stationed at the temple. They are clearly designed for multiple occupancy since each room contains a bunkbed and both beds have been slept in recently. (The other residents of these rooms, Drelmin, Jargland and Krant, are the followers that are or were tasked with killing the PCs in *City Encounter 7: Ambush!* If they survived, they quickly departed the manor and joined up with Ryeth for his escapade in Act 4.)

A7: Privy

This privy empties into a small chamber that contains a large chamber pot. The guards empty it on a daily basis.

B: Chandler's Workshop

Encounter: 6 skeletons (402 EPs)

The Vorguld chandlers took pride in their work and nowhere is this more evident than in the candle making facility. While the manor house was charming and elegant, the chandler's workshop was the pride of the estate. The long single-story building was made of the finest oak and hickory and finished with the precision only a master carpenter could achieve. Every detail was perfect and, even in its current state of disrepair, it is obvious the facility was the center of activity on the estate. It is now the domain of Ryeth and the church to the Rotlord. Ryeth claimed the offices for his personal quarters, while several rooms and the candle making shop became the chapel.

Despite the presence of Eldon and his guards, Ryeth took other precautions to ensure his temple remains protected in his absence. Anyone coming within 20 feet of the Conventicle of Affliction must boldly present a divine icon of the Rotlord as he approaches. Failure to do so results in the animation of several skeletons that Ryeth buried when he first arrived here (marked on the area map with 'S' and denoted on the [Chandler's Workshop map](#) by skeletal figures). The skeletons are scattered around the area in shallow graves covered with loose earth. Ryeth's followers are aware of this defense but unless invited they stay clear of the temple at Ryeth's behest.

Read the following text aloud when the PCs approach:

You move closer to the long rectangular building that once served as the chandler facility. As you draw near you notice several areas on the ground where the earth has been turned over in recent months. Suddenly, a bony arm shoots from the ground! Before you can react, several more break from the earth nearby. Skeletons begin to drag themselves from the ground!

It takes some time for all six skeletons to break free and get to the characters (see the Vorguld estate map for skeleton locations). In addition, each skeleton should roll d20p for Initiative as it takes a bit of time to tear through the earth.

6 Skeletons (67 EP ea): HP 33 each, Init 0, Spd 9, Rch 3', Atk +1, Dmg 2d8p-1 (scimitar), DR 3 vs. crushing, 9 vs. hacking & 13 vs. piercing, WF 1, ToP n/a, Size M, Move 10 ft/sec

Any combat here draws the attention of Eldon and the three guards in Vorguld Manor (if they have not previously been encountered). It takes 3 minutes for them to reach the battle.

If Dantral, Eltrin or Vrastin are present in the [Temple Proper \(B2\)](#), combat with the skeleton will alert them as well. They arrive in a mere 30 seconds.

B1: Entrance

This room served as the main point of contact for merchants and other vendors. It was intended to be the first (and sometimes only) room that customers saw, and thus was well-kept and designed to feature the chandlers' work. Even with the arrival of Ryeth, this room hasn't changed much and still serves a similar purpose. Ryeth's congregation must pass through this room before entering the temple, experiencing the first taste of the Rotlord and the Conventicle of Affliction.

Dark brown drapes cover the windows of this room and prevent light from entering. Only a small table occupies this room, standing near a door that leads deeper inside. In a bowl atop the table is a human hand. Maggots cover the rotting flesh and flies buzz about the room. The odor of decay and dried blood is heavy here.

A lone door is set in the far wall while a tapestry hangs on each wall to the left and right. Each tapestry depicts a skeletal figure draped in worms and maggots standing over dead humans or demi-humans.

The hand inside the bowl is an offering for the Rotlord and belongs to one of the priests being held captive inside. Followers tithe to this bowl when they arrive at the temple.

▶ Characters with the Divine Lore skill may attempt an Easy check to comprehend the purpose of the bowl.

▶ Anyone with the Appraisal (textiles) skill can determine that the tapestries are well manufactured. Their subject matter, however, precludes any resale value.

B2: Temple Proper

This room was the shop floor for the creation and storage of candles. As such, it is the largest room in the building. The workshop now serves as the temple for Ryeth's growing flock. Most of the equipment was removed and sold off when Eldon announced he was exiting the chandlery business but some remnants remain.

A pungent odor of death and decay permeates this long, rectangular room. At first sight it is obvious this room serves as a temple dedicated to some foul deity. Benches, chairs and other makeshift seating are scattered chaotically throughout the room.

Drapes of orange, red and brown cover the windows along the far wall and mask the room in relative darkness, the only light provided by the obscene and grotesque chandeliers above.

Two child-sized corpses hang by their ankles and neck in a horizontal position from chains affixed to the ceiling. Their nude forms are covered in hundreds of candles, most of which have burned down to stubs, though a few fresh ones remain lit. It is unclear how long the bodies have been hanging there. Flesh hangs and drips, and flies swarm on them.

There is no one present in this room when the characters arrive unless Ryeth's guards from Cosolen either escaped or were not encountered in the city. There is nothing of value here. Anyone handling the corpses must make a communicability check or contract Flesh Rot (see the appendix for disease rules).

To your right along the wall is a raised area that serves as a dais. A large table seems to serve as an altar and from all appearances is covered in dried blood and ichor. Below the table a pile of rotted and deteriorating viscera is heaped from whatever ritual took place here.

On the far left wall, two doors exit the room.

If Dantral, Eltrin or Vrastin (see *City Encounter 5: City Quarters*) survived their run-in with the players or if they were never encountered, these three men are posted here in the temple on guard duty. Adjust their statistics if necessary, if they were injured by the PCs.

Dantral (67 EP): CE Brandobian human fighter 1, HP 26, Init +3, Spd 7 (6), Rch 2', Atk +2, Dmg 2d6p+2, Def +4, DR 2, ToP 9/ 5

Disease: The Wrack - minor effect

Notable Skills: language (Brandobian) 74, listening 9, observation 17, resist persuasion 14

Possessions: leather armor, small shield, short sword, clothing, boots, cloak, small pouch with 4 trade coins, 5 cp and 4 sp

Eltrin (67 EP): CE Brandobian human fighter 1, HP 26, Init +3, Spd 9 (7), Rch 3', Atk +2, Dmg 2d8p+2, Def +4, DR 2, ToP 9/ 5

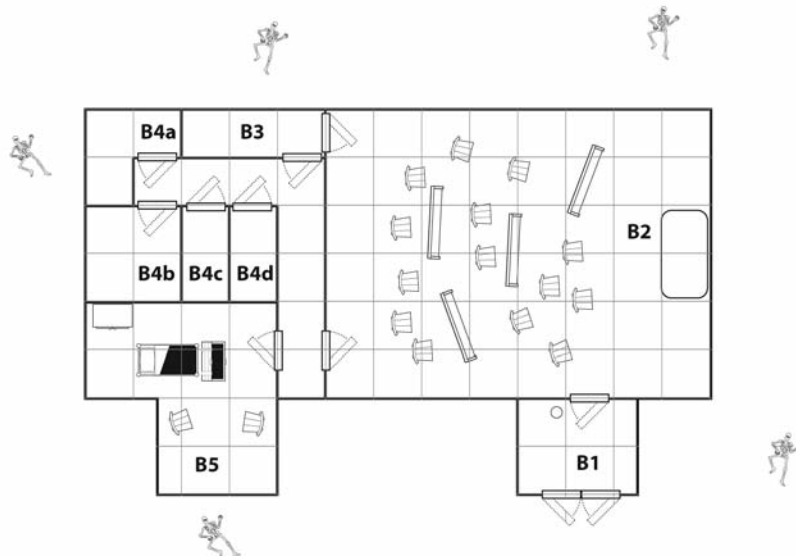
Disease: The Wrack - minor effect

Notable Skills: language (Brandobian) 68, listening 9, observation 9, resist persuasion 9

Possessions: leather armor, small shield, longsword, clothing, boots, cloak, small pouch with 13 trade coins, 6 cp and 5 sp

Vrastin (67 EP): CE Brandobian human fighter 1, HP 27, Init +3, Spd 7 (6), Rch 2', Atk +2, Dmg 2d6+2, Def +4, DR 2, ToP 9/ 5

Disease: The Wrack - minor effect



Chandler's Workshop

□ 5 feet

Notable Skills: language (Brandobian) 71, listening 9, observation 13, resist persuasion 12

Possessions: leather armor, small shield, short sword, clothing, boots, cloak, small pouch with 9 trade coins, 2 cp and 4 sp

B3: Storage Room

Potential Yield: 1,164 candles (9.7 cp value), carpentry tools (6 sp value)

This appears to be a storage room. Crates, boxes and bags litter the floor, making movement difficult. An open crate seems to contain hundreds of candles, no doubt the remains of the once great Vorguld candle workshop.

This room once served as a storage room for candles before they were sent to market. Ryeth has left this room largely untouched. Inside the characters can find many dozen candles all stamped with the Vorguld logo (a wolf's head). If taken and sold wholesale far from Cosolen, these could fetch one trade coin per dozen (or 1 cp per gross), but anyone selling the candles might need a plausible excuse for how they came into ownership of so many. After all, what treasure seekers consider a pittance might be a nice sum of money for a commoner.

Even if Eldon is exposed as a traitor and murderer, it is still illegal to have stolen his candles (the crown will wish to confiscate all property). Some local merchants may not care, but would certainly use this as a bargaining chip to gain a lower price. Selling bulk candles may also attract the attention of the Golden Alliance, which could be too much trouble for less than 1 silver.

A search of the room also uncovers a leather bag containing carpenter's tools. These are worth 6 sp.

B4a-d: Prison Cells

These rooms served as offices and storage until Ryeth converted them to cells. The door to each room is unlocked, but the prisoners are chained to the walls.

Three of the rooms (a, c & d) hold the captive Merry Muses (Transdril, Formin and Bransel). The men were captured by Ryeth's followers after confronting

Dantral, Eltrin and Vrastin in Eastpeg. Ryeth infected them with the Wrack and left them to contemplate the end of their existence. Anyone coming into physical contact with the priests must check for communicability of the Wrack. Performing First Aid certainly exposes the care giver. Furthermore, Ryeth severed Transdril and Formin's left hands as sacrifices to the Rot Lord. Without proper medical care, these wounds became infected, much to Ryeth's delight. Bransel remains in relatively good health but he knows that eventually his fate will mirror that of his brothers.

The fourth cell is empty.

► Rescuing the prisoners without the key requires a Feat of Strength against the locked manacles or the chain (*vs. d20p+18*). The manacles (Good locks) can also be opened with a Lock Picking skill check or by the use of an Unlock Spell. Given carpentry tools, the manacles may also be pulled from their bond with the wall by anyone with novice or better mastery in Carpentry/Woodworking.

The priests are anxious to tell the PCs about a plot they heard Ryeth laughing about. They don't know any specific details about it but they have serious concerns and hope that Ryeth can be stopped. The priests implore the characters to alert their temple to what has happened here. This is their most urgent concern, even above receiving treatment for their injuries. If the guards are dead, the priests instruct the characters to mask haste back to Cosolen insisting they can make it home on their own.

The Muses say that to put an end to the Rotlord cult, they must locate and capture Ryeth before he simply recruits new followers. None are yet aware that Ryeth is a wererat.

Transdril and Formin are in serious condition and require assistance to walk. [The Wrack](#) has greatly debilitated them and their wounds are severely infected. Though healers may not understand modern terminology such as infection and parasites, they do know that the wounds need to be cared for.

► A successful First Aid check (Average) is sufficient to treat the priests' wrist wounds. This involves cutting away necrotic flesh, bleeding the pus, preparing a salve and bandaging it. A failed check means the wound is improperly treated and the priest continues to lose a further 1 Hit Point per day. An untreated or improperly treated wound requires that a subsequent

First Aid check (Difficult this time) be made within three days or the priest dies from his wounds on the fourth day. Magical healing may restore Hit Points, but does not stop the progress of the infection.

Even if the priests survive the infection to their amputated limbs, they still may die from the Wrack.

If given their divine icons from the manor house ([A5: Eldon's Room](#)), the priests may receive new spells after communing with their god.

Bransel: CG Brandobian human cleric 2; HP 23 (27); Init +2; Spd 10; Rch 0'; Atk 0; Dmg per weapon; Def +3; DR 0; ToP 9/ 6

Disease: The Wrack - major effect

Spells: none

Notable Skills: acting 26, current affairs 30, language (Brandobian 71, Kalamaran 35), religion (Raconteur) 34, resist persuasion 15

Equipment: filthy rags

Formin: CG Brandobian human cleric 2; HP 5 (26); Init +2; Spd 10; Rch 0'; Atk -1; Dmg per weapon; Def +2; DR 0; ToP 9/ 5

Spells: none

Notable Skills: artistry (sculpting) 31, disguise 34, language (Brandobian 79), religion (Raconteur) 29, resist persuasion 16

Equipment: filthy rags

Transdril: CG Brandobian human cleric 1; HP 9 (25); Init +2; Spd 10; Rch 0'; Atk 0; Dmg per weapon; Def +2; DR 0; ToP 9/ 5

Typical Spell: 1: alleviate trauma

Notable Skills: artistry (painting) 29, history (ancient) 31, language (Brandobian 82), religion (Raconteur) 37, resist persuasion 14

Equipment: filthy rags

B5: Ryeth's Room

Encounter: 15 giant rats (180 EPs)

Potential Yield: 31 cp, 142 sp, clothing (20 sp)

This room once served as the supervisory chandlers' offices. When Ryeth arrived he chose the space as his quarters. Ryeth splits his time between here and his home, and so hasn't had time to improve this room. He keeps the temple's wealth hidden here.

This large room appears to be the bed chamber of someone of importance. Dark drapes of putrid brown conceal the windows and a large four-poster bed rests in the center of the room, the bed shrouded in a similar colored covering. A wardrobe resides in one corner and a footlocker rests at the end of the bed. A large rusted metal symbol depicting a worm-eaten head hangs from the wall.

Suddenly rats crawl out from the floorboards and attack!

Ryeth has trained a group of giant rats to serve as guards for his room. They attack anyone on whom they do not smell the overwhelming scent of decay. Unfortunately for Ryeth, these guardians permit Eldon free access to the room and he has exploited this loophole to engage in mischief.

Note that these rats are carriers of [Rat Bite Fever](#). Check for communicability any time a PC is bitten by a rat.

15 Giant Rats (12 EP ea): HP 9 each, Init 0, Spd 10, Rch Short, Atk 0, Dmg 1d4+1, Special Atk *any bite subjects victim to Rat Bite Fever*, Def -1, DR 1, ToP 10/ 3, Size S, Move 5 ft./sec.

Ryeth's room is surprisingly simple and uncluttered. The wardrobe contains five sets of filthy clothing and one set of fashionable attire (worth 20 sp). In addition, there are three sickly green robes that have a crude needlework symbol of a rotting, worm-eaten head on them. The footlocker contains several disgusting items. Anyone inspecting it may detect a faint smell of death. Inside they find a maggot and fly-infested container. Opening the footlocker allows the vermin to escape.

▶ Anyone with the Appraisal (textiles) skill can tell that the fashionable attire is valuable.

On the bottom the PCs lie 10 vials containing congealing blood, pus, bile and excrement, and two small wooden boxes. Inside each box is a decomposing rat. This all serves as material that Ryeth uses to breed disease and plague, in religious ceremonies and to infect

new priests to the order. There is no value to any of the materials or equipment here and cleaning them at this point is virtually impossible. Anyone touching the dead animals must check communicability or contract [Flesh Rot](#).

Hidden inside one of the four posts on Ryeth's bed is the temple's remaining treasury of 31 cp and 142 sp. (Eldon secretly stole some of it and used it for his own purposes.) The coins are hidden in a sack and stuffed down into the top of the post. The top of the post, or cap, is easily removed if discovered.

- ▶ A successful Observation check (Difficult) notices the loose post top, still slightly askew from Ryeth's last visit.

G: Beehives

Scattered across the grounds are numerous beehives. Even though Eldon discontinued the manufacturing of candles, thousands of bees still remain. Before the candle shop closed, farmers used to pay to come and harvest the honey from the hives. Now honey overflows from the hives, hardening on the sides. Bees in the thousands are everywhere here, buzzing through the air and within the hives.

Anyone spending time around a beehive (including passing near it) will probably be stung. Being stung won't hurt a character significantly (unless the character has the flaw [Allergies: Insect Stings](#)), but could cause enough commotion to alert the guards.

Conclusion

While the characters are investigating the Conventicle of Affliction, Ryeth is completing his final preparations for an attack on the Theatre of the Arts.

This attack coincides with the PCs' return to Cosolen.

Story Awards for Act 3:

- ❑ Killing or driving off all the servants of the Conventicle of Affliction (600 EP)
- ❑ Freeing the Merry Muses (200 EP)
- ❑ Determining that Transdril and Formin cannot walk on their own and insisting, despite their protestation, on assisting them back to Cosolen (100 EP)
- ❑ Deconsecrating the Rotlord's Temple (This could be accomplished by systematically removing all the horrid trophies and thoroughly cleaning the building. Alternatively, burning the structure down serves the same purpose in that it is cleansed by fire.) (400 EP)

ACT FOUR

Tragedy at the Theater of the Arts

Ryeth's Final Solution

Never a logical man, Ryeth has become so incensed over the course of actions occurring in this adventure that he's decided to strike at what he believes to be the source of all his troubles, namely the Theatre of the Arts. He's gathered the remnants of his followers for a climatic assault on this temple. The fact that this action is so crazy and outlandish has ironically contributed to its success, in that no one could contemplate a daylight attack on a major temple in Cosolen. Thus, the Merry Muses were completely surprised and unprepared.

Ryeth instructed his accomplices to wait individually or in groups of two in the square until the noon bell rang, then to casually stroll to the back door (which he unlocked after slipping into the building in the form of a giant rat). Once inside, Ryeth and his band of murderers killed all the priests they could find, including Thespian Dendrela. They then locked the front door with Dendrela's key and set the place afire. They lingered long enough to loot the building and now plan to make their escape.

When the players return to Cosolen, they notice the first streams of smoke rising from the Theatre of the Arts. If accompanied by Bransel, Formin and Transdril, the priests immediately inform them that their temple is on fire. They obviously suspect Ryeth, based on his macabre taunting of them with his 'secret plan' while they were incarcerated.

Upon arriving at the temple, the characters find the doors are locked. Knocks go unanswered and every indication is that the building is empty. In truth, the only people alive in the building are Ryeth and his allies plus a pair of Acolytes that hid from the Rotlord's agents.

▶ Characters may opt to attempt a Current Affairs skill check (in essence, asking people viewing the fire what's going on). A successful check (average difficulty) garners the following key information:

- Only a few clerics actually live in the temple.
- It is unusual for the doors to be locked at this time of day.
- Someone has been poking around the temple recently, hanging around and acting suspicious but no one got a good look at him.

Characters can decide what course of action they wish to take at this point. Alerting the city watch is a fine idea but one likely to already have been undertaken by dozens of other people. Immediate action is required for the longer they wait, the worse the situation is to become.

Inside the Temple

The Theatre of the Arts is not overly large, though it can seat up to 300 people during a performance. Unless the PCs are successful, it may never see another performance, for Ryeth and his men slaughtered the priests and intend to burn down the temple.

Characters that hesitate to long trying to decide what course of action to take will finally notice smoke pouring from the roof. Other people in the street soon gather and point at the temple, and cries of "Fire!" erupt.

- ▶ Forcing open an outer door requires a Feat of Strength check (vs. d20p+14 for the front door or vs. d20p+18 for the rear door). The temple has no easily accessible windows. A character can make a Climbing skill check (difficulty varies but without

the use of a rope it is an Average skill check) and attempt to smash his way through, but this requires a successful Feat of Strength check (vs. d20p+10). Smashing a window or a door has a 60% chance of altering Ryeth or his associates to their presence.

▶ The front door may also be opened by means of Lock Picking. Breaking into the temple will not cause people in the marketplace to take any action – in fact they will consider those doing so to be heroic. An Unlock spell works only on the front door as the back door is barred and thus not affected.

Assuming the characters act in time, read or paraphrase the following text as they enter the temple.

A curved room descends at a gentle slope to a wooden stage, flanked by two of the many saints whose stone images decorate the walls. The one on the right seems to be a female caught in mid-song, while the other looks like some sort of warrior-poet, with one mace held at an angle across his chest.

Wooden benches ring the room in a semi-circular pattern to allow viewing during times of mass or performances. Above, a catwalk follows the curve of the stage and continues along the far wall to your right. To your left, a wooden door stands open allowing access into another part of the temple.

Yet, of all these details, your attention is drawn to the stage's large, heavy curtain. It is on fire and is quickly turning into a massive blaze that threatens to consume the room and then the temple itself.

▶ When the characters first enter the temple, each should be allowed an Observation skill check (Difficult) to notice that the warrior-poet statue holds his empty hand in the same position as the hand with the weapon. Clever players may deduce that one of the statue's two maces is missing.

Upon seeing the characters, Ryeth decides he must kill them as well since they are directly responsible for all the troubles he's recently endured. He commands his allies to join him in ambushing the party when they come up the stairs. In the meantime, he orders any of his crossbow-armed followers (if any escaped from

City Encounter 7: Ambush!) to shoot at the characters from above, using the catwalk as a firing point before the blaze grows out of control. Ryeth is aware that there is an access ladder to the roof from which he can escape but fleeing is the last thing on his mind right now.

It is important that they see Ryeth as a half-man/half-rat at this point. His henchmen are all wearing rodent headdresses as well, which could lead one to the conclusion that as many as six wererats stand against them. Once battle begins, the humans discard the cumbersome headgear.

▶ An Observation check (Easy) identifies the headdresses as identical to the one in Eldon's room (Act 3, room A5) – assuming the observer saw it there.

If any of Bransel, Formin or Transdril accompany the characters, they cry out, "Blessed Loremaster! Do I behold a half-dozen ratmen arrayed against us?" If queried about 'ratmen', they answer that only silvered weapons may surely harm these lycanthropes. They suggest employing the two silvered maces from the statue of warrior-poet Skald Guldstern.

If the PCs point out that there is only one such weapon, the priests appear shocked at the desecration. Once the PCs discover the bodies near the stairwell, however, they should realize that Dendrela already took one of the weapons in order to defend the temple.

Your eyes take in the scene of a large blaze consuming the curtain — and beginning to spread to the stage — when you notice movement on the catwalk above.

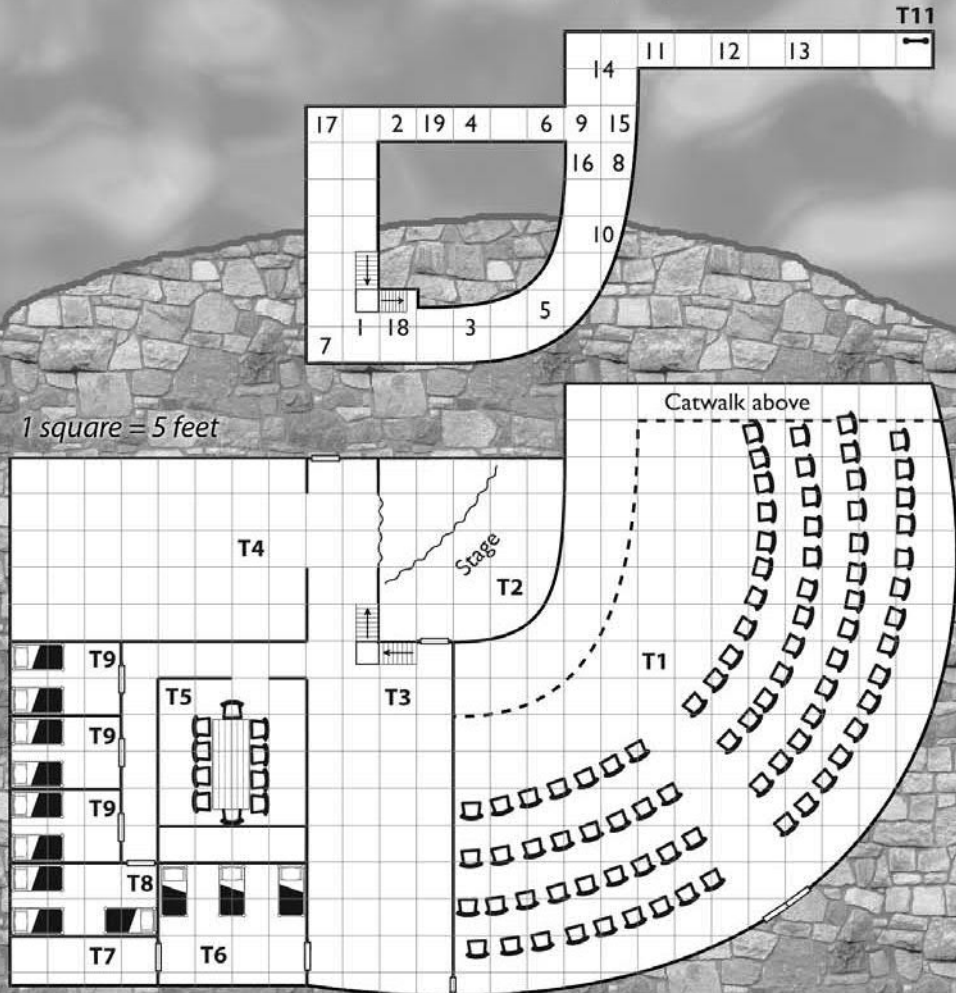
(GM: The following may require paraphrasing, based on the number of allies Ryeth mustered.)

From the catwalk above, a number of men can be seen training their crossbows at you.

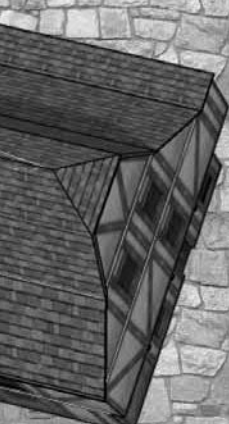
Roll for Initiative, then continue:

A second of confusion passes until, suddenly, a (fifth) figure emerges. Shorter than the rest, he appears to still be wearing the rodent headdress. He is armed with a short sword and a shield and he shouts above the roar of the fire. "Kill them!" The men immediately shoot their weapons.

Theatre of the Arts: Catwalk (T10)



The Theatre of the Arts



Dealing with the Fire. If the PCs run for help, they can rally the city watch and local citizenry to put the fire out with minimal damage. In doing so, they will permit Ryeth to escape. Once on the roof, he assumes rat form and discreetly sneaks away from the building. His followers, however, are not as fortunate. They are penned in by the gathering swarm of people and trapped between a burning building and an angry mob. All will be captured, incarcerated and promptly executed.

Attacking Ryeth and ignoring the fire allows the PCs a fair chance of killing or capturing him thus achieving their principal objective. This does, however, have the potential to allow the fire to grow out of hand. If Bransel, Formin or Transdril accompany the characters, their labor combating the ensuing inferno greatly lessens this possibility.

Unless the fire is extinguished within five minutes, it grows to such a size that it becomes uncontrollable and consumes the temple. Fortunately, the wind outside is still, and the Cosolenites outside band together with buckets quickly enough to prevent the fire from spreading beyond another building or two.

If the PCs decide to split their force (designating some to fight the fire and others to fight), it takes a single PC eight minutes to extinguish the fire on his own. Reduce this time by two minutes per additional firefighter. Thus a minimum of three people are required to devote their efforts to fire fighting if the temple is to be spared. The fire is relatively easy to control at this point because it has not yet spread beyond the curtain. Once it does, there's no saving the building.

- ▶ A successful Fire-Building skill check (Average) indicates that the firefighter knows how best to extinguish the blaze, further reducing the time required by at least one minute, (an additional 30 seconds is gained for every 10 points he rolled over his mastery when making the skill check). Regardless of what happens, it takes at least 30 seconds to extinguish the fire.

Where There's Smoke. The theater has already begun to fill with smoke and it will have a dramatic effect in the fighting to come. To represent that, characters that fight in Areas T1, T2, T3 and T10 must deal with special circumstances to represent the smoke and chaos involved while the fire burns.

- ▶ If characters (including adversary NPCs) remain in these areas, whether to battle the fire or to engage in battle, they must make a special check in order to simulate the detrimental effect the smoke filling up in the room has. For every 30 seconds spent in these rooms, each PC or NPC must make a Constitution check (d20p vs. their CON score).

A roll greater than the character's CON score means he has begun to suffer from smoke inhalation. Assess a -1 penalty to Attack, Defense and Damage. Subsequent failures are cumulative. If a character accumulates penalties of -10, he dies. Exiting the smoke permits one to reverse penalties at the rate of +1 per 5 minutes. All NPCs have a CON score of 10.

T1: Temple Hall

The room description for Area T1 is provided above. Characters in this room are subject to attacks from Ryeth's crossbow equipped men (if any) from their vantage point in the catwalk (Area T10).

T2: Stage

Note: this read-aloud text does not account for the curtain being afire and is best read after it is extinguished.

Raised roughly five feet from the temple floor, the wooden stage has been worn smooth over the years. A heavy curtain separates the audience from backstage. A wooden door and a large opening covered by another curtain exit the stage. Above, rope and pulleys offer a means to add scenery or effects to any performance.

As with Area T1, characters entering Area T2 are subject to missile attacks from Ryeth's followers in the catwalk above.

T3: Backstage

Potential Yield: Silvered mace

A set of steep, narrow stairs ascends to the catwalk. More props and backdrops are stored here, some attached to ropes rising to the catwalk. The ropes loop overhead and come back down, many of them attached to sandbags to allow control of the props.

At the base of the stairs lies the corpse of the acolyte Vrasil with three massive wounds to his torso. Against the wall you also find the body of Thespian Dendrela, dressed in her clerical vestments. Her left leg has been severed and from all appearances she bled out. Clutched in her hand is a mace with a lustrous warhead.

Ryeth's followers looted these bodies but Ryeth instructed them to leave the silvered mace, wanting nothing to do with the weapon. The PCs can use this silvered weapon to deal greater damage to Ryeth.

T4: Storeroom

Potential Yield: Exceptional costumes (3 uses)

Props, backdrops, wigs, costumes, rope, and other such implements clutter this large yet still amazingly cramped room.

Over the years this room became so congested that during the days of a show most items here are moved to the bedroom and kitchen area in order to allow the performers access to items they require. Searching this room reveals a variety of costumes and clothing.

- ▶ A larcenous character with the Disguise skill can select the best quality clothing, makeup and wigs (enough for three future Disguise checks). These provide a 10% bonus to Disguise skill checks when using them.

Two acolytes, Dolmin and Tronven, hid in here after they witnessed Dendrela and Vrasil's brutal murders. Given the extreme amount of clutter in this room it is unsurprising that the hasty murderers missed them. If they see the party (whom they recognize from their initial time spent at the theater), they call out for assistance.

Dolmin: CG human male; cleric of Raconteur 1; HP 25), Init 1, Atk +3, Spd 10, Dmg d6p+d4p, Def +2, DR 0, ToP 8/ 6, Hon 12

Spells: 1st – alleviate trauma, cure trifling injury

Notable Skills: artistry (music composition) 29;

Profs: mace, club

Equipment: club

Tronsven: CG human male; cleric of Raconteur 1; HP 24, Init 0, Atk +2, Spd 7 (5), Dmg 1d6, Def +3, DR 0, ToP 8/ 6, Hon 15

Spells: 1st – cure trifling injury, purify water

Notable Skills: artistry (singing) 40, musician 35

Equipment: knife

These two priests can fill roles left vacant if the PCs are not accompanied by the priests held in the Conventual of Affliction. They relate that Dendrela was butchered by a lycanthropic ratman as she attempted to slay him with the mace of Skald Guldstern. They sheepishly admit they do not live up to the warrior ideals of the great skald but will do what they can to assist.

T5: Kitchen and Dining Area

This room appears to be a kitchen and dining area. Corroded metal pipes travel down from the roof to connect to the iron wood-burning stove. A wooden table is cluttered with dirty dishes and the remnants of a meal that appears to be a day old. Small cabinets line the far wall. There are also three large wooden barrels.

The kitchen and dining area was the only gathering place for the clerics on duty at the temple. The room contains a wide variety of implements and kitchen utensils as well as dishes and herbs. The three sealed barrels contain salt, ale and water.

T6: High Priests' Quarters

The door to this room is shorn from its hinges and lies on the floor. The room may once have been tastefully appointed but it is now a chaotic mess of torn linens and clothing, smashed furniture, broken sculpture and ripped paintings. A door on the opposite wall appears to have been chopped open with an axe.

This room serves as quarters for Danasan of Napalido, the head of the order, as well as his more senior subordinates. Despite the relatively small size of the room (given that up to three priests may dwell here), the room is remarkably well designed and maximizes the space through an ingenious use of cabinetry.

T7: Temple Treasury

Potential Yield: 2 Minor Healing Potions & 1 Healing Potion

What wealth the temple had was stored here. Ryeth and his men hacked the door down then looted this room. All that was stored here is currently in large sacks being carried by his followers on the catwalk. Secreted in a hidden compartment within the only furniture present (a large mahogany desk) is a porcelain box containing three flasks of liquid.

▶ This compartment can be discovered with a successful check for secret doors. If any temple priests accompany the PCs, they are aware of the secret compartment and immediately check to see if it was looted. The cache consists of two Minor Healing potions and a standard Healing potion. No priest objects to the characters using them (they will, in fact, urge their use). They will not permit the PCs to simply pocket them for future contingencies.

T8: Female Priest Quarters

The door to this room stands open and the body of a woman lies dead in the entrance with her head staved in. A pool of congealing blood surrounds her upper body. Beyond the room appears to be some sort of small bedchamber. Three cots and footlockers occupy this room. From all appearances the room appears to have been ransacked. Bloody bootprints cover the stone floor and even portions of the hallway.

This room served as the bedchamber for Dendrela and two other female Thespians – one of whom is currently traveling with Danasan and the other being the corpse at the door. They were responsible for the upkeep of the building and were required to be here at all times to aid worshipers in whatever manner they might require. Anything of value has been taken from this room.

T9: Priest Quarters

The door to this room is propped open with the bloody corpse of a young man. Beyond this grizzly display you can see that the meagerly-adorned room contains two cots with an open footlocker at the end of each. Red robes and personal clothing are strewn about the room.

These rooms serve as the bedchambers for the priests that choose to live on the temple grounds. Anything of value has been added to the stash of goods carried by Ryeth's men. The corpses are those of the theater's acolytes.

T10: Catwalk

Encounter: Ryeth Olm (450 EPs), 0-5 followers (EPs vary)

Potential Yield: Short Sword +2, small shield, sundry items carried by followers, loot stolen from temple

The catwalk system is used primarily during performances. Comprised of wooden platforms suspended thirty feet in the air, this is a dangerous place to engage in combat.

While it is unlikely someone will simply trip and tumble off, anyone suffering a knock-back has good reason to fear falling. See the sidebar "On Knock-Backs" for appropriate rules.

On Knock-Backs

For a right-handed attacker, scoring a knock-back forces his opponent back in the following direction* (from the point of view of the attacker) as determined by rolling a d12:

- 1 = knocked right (90°);
- 2 = knocked right (45°);
- 3-7 = knocked straight back;
- 8-10 = knocked left (45°);
- 11-12 = knocked left (90°)

* *subject to space constraints - if the rolled direction is unavailable (such as it being solid space) use the closest feasible direction. If being knocked back propels a character (or villain) off the edge of the catwalk, they fall to the main floor and sustain 3d12p damage from the 30 foot fall.*

For southpaws, reverse the terms left and right.

Battle Tactics:

Ryeth is accompanied by a variable number of followers. In theory, he could be alone. If so, the PCs have earned themselves an easier battle by systematically eliminating his support base through the course of the adventure.

Although uncharacteristic for a wererat, for any number of reasons (hatred of the PCs for meddling in

his affairs, the need to demonstrate his authority to his followers or simply sheer arrogance), Ryeth will engage in melee in support of his followers or possibly alone. He is confident in his ability to withstand even the harshest blows (and indeed may, if the weapons are not silvered).

Once the PCs enter the main hall, he orders any of his followers with crossbows to begin firing at them. Their targets of choice are anyone fighting the fire. Drelmin, Jarglan and Krant are experienced fighters and know better than to vainly shoot at individuals crouched behind shields.

The stairs up to the catwalk are narrow and permit two defenders to gang up on a single attacker. Ryeth will be one defender and one of the non-missile armed followers will be the other. Those with crossbows plug away at the mass of players stuck waiting on the stairs.

If the players break through, he orders the balance of his followers to circle around take the party from the rear so as to assault them on two fronts.

If Ryeth is wounded such that he has fewer than 20 HP remaining, he will flee for his life seeking to gain access to the ladder at [T11](#). Should he flee, the rest of his followers fail morale and begin looking for any escape route. At this point none of them have any particular loyalty to the others so one individual holding off the PCs while the rest scurry up the ladder behind him is not an option.

Note that no cultist surrenders. If Ryeth is compelled to flee, he must assume rat form to make good his escape given the presence of the crowd outside. In so doing, he is forced to abandon his equipment (of particular interest to the PCs are his **short sword +2** and pouch of coins). These can be found at the base of the ladder in [Area T11](#).

Fire Rules

If the fire continues to blaze, characters that engage in combat on the catwalk may eventually be subject to damage from the flames as the fire rises up the curtain and begins to engulf the catwalk (in addition to the smoke effect described earlier).

During the combat, roll a d12 every 30 seconds and consult the following text to determine what additional effects (if any) take place during the fight. For every minute that the fight lasts, add an additional 1-point penalty to the roll.

1-8. No effect

9. Flames rise through the catwalk, potentially causing damage to those engaged in combat. Each PC and NPC should roll a saving throw (*vs. d20p+5*) if engaged in combat on the catwalk. Failure indicates the recipient suffers d4p points of fire damage.

Flames rise through the catwalk, licking at your boots and legs.

10. A sudden influx of smoke and ash forces all PCs and NPCs to make an additional check against smoke inhalation.

A sudden blast of smoke and ash wafts up through the air, obscuring your vision and forcing you to cough.

11. Flames burn through the ropes, dropping a sandbag. If combat is taking place below the catwalk, randomly determine a participant (enemies included) to see whom the bag might hit.

You hear a snap as several ropes burn through below. Suddenly, sandbags drop from above!

Roll a d20p attack roll for the sandbag. If a defender has a shield, they may attempt to block the projectile using normal cover rules. Anyone hit by a sandbag suffers 3d4p crushing damage.

12+. A portion of the catwalk burns away, tumbling to the lower level below. To determine what portion falls away, roll a d20 and consult the numbers listed on the catwalk section of the map; on a 'nat 20' roll twice. Any squares that the number touches (1, 2 or possibly 4 five-foot sections) should be removed from the map by darkening them out. Anyone standing on one of these sections when it gives way may attempt a Dexterity check to leap to an adjacent square. Those unlucky enough to fall drop 30 feet to the ground below and sustain 3d12p damage. (Assume Ryeth & Jelena have 14 DEX and the others 11).

Ryeth is a middle-aged man with dark eyes and hair that is quickly turning gray. He stands 5½ feet tall but is often hunched over. Ryeth wears putrid green robes, stained with dirt and blood. He rarely bathes and upon first inspection many people take him for a beggar.

Under no circumstances does Ryeth bite the characters. He views lycanthropy as a gift from his lord and he would consider it blasphemy to grant such a reward to a non-believer.

Ryeth Olm (450 EP): CE Wererat cleric of Mangrus 4, HP 50; Init -2 (uses 2 die types lower), Spd 7 (6), Rch 2', Atk +9, Dmg 2d6p+2, Def +6, DR 13 (if struck by silvered weapons his DR is 3), ToP 8, Size M, Move 15 ft./sec

Quirk: superstitious (cats are unlucky)

Typical Spells: 1: Moderate Emotion: Cause Fear, 2: Aggravate Pain, Moderate Elemental Damage, 3: Safe Haven, 4: Contagion

Notable Skills: botany 53, divine lore 38, hiding 48, language (Brandobian 82) [literate], resist persuasion 48, religion (the Rotlord) 42, sneaking 57

Possessions: **Short Sword +2**, small shield, pouch with 31 cp, 41 sp, Dendrela's keys (for the front door of the temple and the treasury)

Ryeth is accompanied in this murderous onslaught by whatever followers remain alive from previous encounters (though they may be better armed than when previously encountered). This can include Dorguld (from *City Encounter 2: Too Many Questions*), Jelena (from *City Encounter 6: A Plea for Help*) and Drelmin, Jarglan and Krant (from *City Encounter 7: Ambush!*). If any of these individuals were killed or captured, they are not here. In addition, if they were wounded in previous encounters with the PCs, they still bear those wounds.

All of these individuals feel not only a loyalty to the wererat but an obligation to defend him. Most of these people aspire to be leaders in the church (or at least live an easier life than they currently live) or wish to be granted the gift of lycanthropy. Whatever their reason, they prove loyal and refuse to flee unless Ryeth is killed or flees.

Dorguld (34 EP): CE human brigand, HP 21, Init +5, Spd 9, Rch 3', Atk +2, Dmg 2d8p-1, Def +4, DR 3, ToP 9/ 5

Disease: The Wrack - minor effect

Notable Skills: current affairs 23, hiding 34, language (Brandobian 59), listening 22, observation 22, resist persuasion 8, sneaking 25, survival: urban 30

Possessions: studded leather armor, small shield, scimitar, knife

Jelena (133 EP): CE Brandobian human female thief 2, HP 25, Init 0 (-1 die), Spd 9, Atk +3, Dmg 2d8p-2, Def +4, DR 2, ToP 8/ 5, Luck Points 15

Disease: The Wrack - minor effect

Quirk: superstitious (unlucky number 12)

Notable Skills: acting 29, hiding 31, identify trap 24, listening 32, observation 39, resist persuasion 9, sneaking 19

Possessions: leather armor, small shield, scimitar, clothing, pouch with 14 sp and 15 cp

Drelmin (67 EP): CE Brandobian human fighter 1, HP 27, Init +4, Spd 10 (8) (longsword) or 20 (lt. crossbow), Rch 3½', Atk +2, Dmg 2d8p+2 (sword) or 2d6p (lt crossbow), Def +4, DR 4, ToP 9/ 5

Disease: The Wrack - minor effect

Flaw: pocking

Notable Skills: hiding 16, language (Brandobian 70), listening 9, observation 9, resist persuasion 17

Possessions: ringmail armor, medium shield, longsword, light crossbow with 12 bolts, knife, clothing

Jarglan (67 EP): CE Brandobian human fighter 1, HP 26, Init +4, Spd 10 (8) (longsword) or 20 (lt. crossbow), Rch 3½', Atk +2, Dmg 2d8p+2 (sword) or 2d6p (lt crossbow), Def +4, DR 4, ToP 9/ 5

Disease: The Wrack - minor effect

Quirk/Flaw: paranoid, facial scar

Notable Skills: hiding 20, language (Brandobian 67), listening 9, observation 20, resist persuasion 9

Possessions: ringmail armor, medium shield, longsword, light crossbow with 12 bolts, knife, clothing

Krant (67 EP): CE Brandobian human fighter 1, HP 28, Init +4, Spd 10 (8) (longsword) or 20 (lt. crossbow), Rch 3½', Atk +2, Dmg 2d8p+2 (sword) or 2d6p (lt crossbow), Def +4, DR 4, ToP 9/ 5

Disease: The Wrack - minor effect

Quirk: glutton

Notable Skills: hiding 19, language (Brandobian 73), listening 9, observation 9, resist persuasion 9

Possessions: ringmail armor, medium shield, longsword, light crossbow with 12 bolts, knife, clothing, small pouch filled with chocolates

In addition to their personal effects, these villains are carrying large bags containing the loot from the temple*. Once combat starts they drop the bags on the catwalk and take up arms. If that portion of the catwalk collapses, the bag falls and its contents are strewn about below. There is a 15% chance a bag may be kicked off by combat in its area. If the priests are with the PCs, they insist all the items and money in these bags belongs to the temple. Anyone taking such (or keeping the silver weapons) is stealing from the temple.

*The loot is dispersed amongst Ryeth's allies. It consists of: 2,051 cp, 653 sp, 28 gp, 4 silver candlesticks (50 sp each), a **Mace +1**, set of embroidered red robes (20 sp), moleskin gloves inlaid with pearls (10 sp), 7 pewter mugs (1 cp each), various dining utensils (25 sp), ledger of tithing records for the last year (no value), 4 short swords (10 sp each), 2 jeweled daggers (15 sp each but effectively a -1 weapon as these are not designed to be used in combat)

Note: All Ryeth's followers are infected with [the Wrack](#). Appropriating their armor necessitates a communicability check to see if the wearer contracts this disease.

T11: Ladder to Roof

Here a ladder rises 12 feet to a wooden hatch that opens onto the roof.

It was via this hatch that Ryeth was able to sneak into the temple without anyone noticing.

Conclusion

If any priest of Raconteur survives the ordeal (that is, if Eldon Vorguld did not escape his encounter with the PCs and murder the captives held in the Chandler's Workshop (see [Act 3, The Manor House](#) and the two priests hiding in the storeroom (area T4) were not killed in confronting Ryeth), these individuals will vouch for the players. Characters without the priests to vouch for them could find themselves in a world of trouble, particularly if Ryeth escapes and the party kills all his men.

If Ryeth escapes, the characters made an enemy for life, especially when he discovers what they did to his temple. Ryeth makes a good long-term villain for the characters and goes to the ends of the world to hunt

them down. Like all [clerics of Mangrus](#), he wants to infect them rather than kill them outright. Ryeth has shown patience and the ability to capture family members, and will use all his skills to make the PCs suffer.

Once released, the Merry Muses confront the PCs should they be in possession of loot stolen from the temple by Ryeth and his men. Not only is it morally wrong to keep this treasure (thus potentially impacting any Honor award for playing one's alignment), it is also the only capital the temple has with which to begin the rebuilding process. Should PCs insist on retaining these items, the priests seek retribution via the city watch. Should it come to this, the best bad option is for the PCs to flee the city before they are apprehended.

Reward: Any surviving priests do not know the details of any bargain that Thespian Dendrela made with the party. Given the circumstances that have befallen the temple, they refuse to pay out any bounty. If pressed, they insist that they do not have this authority (they are, after all, underlings). However, Artiste Danasan will return to Cosolen in a fortnight and he should be consulted.

When Danasan returns, he is appalled at what has happened to his temple. He is a man of honor though and, assuming the players have been cooperative, chides his subordinates for withholding a reward for these people that clearly performed a great service for the theater. He immediately procures 30 gold coins and presents these to the PCs as a token of his gratitude for their assistance.

Where the characters go from here is up to them. Some of the characters may be suffering from effects of the Wrack or even become infected with lycanthropy. As GM, you may provide new opportunities for them in Cosolen or let them move on to greener pastures.

Story Awards for Act 4:

- Killing or capturing Ryeth (1000 EP)
- Preventing the destruction of the Theatre of the Arts (500 EP)

APPENDICIES

Disease in HackMaster

Diseases and plagues are common in medieval realms such as the Kingdoms of Kalamar. Poor sanitation, lack of knowledge of the methods of disease transmission and simple ignorance all add up to very deadly factors.

Clerics of Mangrus exist for one purpose: to spread disease and the horrors that it causes as far and wide as possible. In so doing they have created and unleashed diseases that have extirpated whole tribes and cities. The diseases they create are usually remarkably resistant to natural and magical cures. Fortunately, the worst diseases tend to be rare, as they kill off the entire afflicted population and then die off when they have nowhere else to go. However, some of the most advanced diseases can lie dormant for decades (or even centuries) while waiting for a living victim. Thus, disease can strike anywhere at any time on Tellene.

Use of Diseases in Play

Perhaps because disease is something everyone can relate to (certainly more so than sorcery or dragons), there has always been a trend to mimic real-world pathology when incorporating contagions into a RPG. The results have usually been unworkably complex with the net result being underutilization except in the case of those specific to a monster.

While such efforts have been admirable, they fall prey to a couple of key conceptual flaws. First is the fact that any RPG is by its very nature an abstraction. Player characters are never so detailed as would be required to perform a proper immunological study. The simple Constitution score does not reflect all the nuances (endocrinology, genetic susceptibility or resistance, etc) required to 'realistically' determine the progression of a disease. Attempting to do is comparable

to precisely cutting a beam to a sixteenth of an inch tolerance with a woodsman's axe. The tools available don't support the job.

The second flaw is that the very concept of pathology is an anachronism. Disease agents, vectors of transmission and inoculations are completely unknown concepts. Cities did not have proper sanitation methods and even the use of soap for personal hygiene is centuries off. Much as with guns, the building blocks to implement these modern concepts are present but neither the knowledge nor the methodology (*i.e.*, Francis Bacon's concept of scientific inquiry that today we take for granted) is present.

Disease should therefore take on more folksy nomenclature ('the shakes' versus 'acute nervous system disorder'). Their method of transmission cannot be systematically determined (and is undoubtedly wrongly ascribed by the afflicted population).

Infection: Catching Diseases

As a GameMaster, you should view disease as another tool in your kit with which to challenge your players. As such, it should be knowingly placed into a scenario with the same care you would position a monster or a poison needle trap. For example, a village the players may travel to could be noted as having the plague. If they enter the village they are exposed. It simply isn't necessary to denote that the plague is transmitted by flea bites, contaminated drinking water or an airborne retro-virus. It's an area effect and if they enter the area – they're affected.

Similarly, a specific well, offal pit or even an entire monster lair can be listed as containing disease X. The presence of the disease becomes another challenge.

Disease Stats

Diseases have 2 baseline characteristics: *communicability* and *severity*.

Communicability represents the ease with which a person exposed to the disease may become infected. Severity is a measure of how difficult it is for the victim to withstand the disease.

When exposed to the disease, a character (or the GM secretly on his behalf) rolls d20p and adds his Constitution score while the GM rolls a competing d20p adding the disease's *communicability* rating. If the GM's roll exceeds the player's, the PC has contracted the disease.

If a disease is contracted, the PC must repeat this process with the GM rolling d20p + the disease's *severity* score. If the GM exceeds the PC's roll, that character suffers the full effect of the disease [denoted as Major Effect in the disease listing]. If the PC matches or exceeds the GM's roll, he still contracts the illness but only suffers the Minor Effect of the disease. These effects are listed under the specific disease listings.

Note that while the diseases mention stages in their effect, this is for illustrative purposes only.

Death from Disease

While some diseases are explicitly terminal, others may prove fatal to the weak and elderly. If a disease causes a penalty to an ability score that lowers said score to zero, the victim dies from the illness.

Treating Disease

A PC with Advanced mastery in First Aid can attend to a sick victim and permit a +1 bonus to his d20p roll versus severity. A master allows +2.

Specific Diseases

BRAIN FEVER

Communicability: 5

Severity: 6

Where is the disease found? Brain fever is a waterborne disease. Communicability should be checked if one drinks from a water source contaminated with the disease.

Minor Effect: A day after contracting the disease, the character develops a severe migraine. This causes the temporary loss of 1 point of Intelligence and Charisma, a -1 penalty to Attack and Defense rolls and a 10% handicap on all skill checks.

The disease persists for 1d3p months during which time the symptoms become worse affecting mood, sleep patterns and concentration. The patient incurs an

additional -1 penalty to Intelligence, Charisma, Attack and Defense (and 10% handicap to skill checks) per month.

Once the disease has run its course, ability scores and combat effectiveness are restored at a rate of 1 per week. Skill check penalties lessen at 10%/week.

Major Effect: As above, however the disease progresses until either Intelligence or Charisma reaches 0 and the victim dies. Victims of brain fever are often completely unable to work (because of skill check penalties) long before they die.

FLESH ROT

Communicability: 10

Severity: 8

Where is the disease found? Flesh rot is typically found in conditions of filth – particularly excrement. Communicability should be checked if anyone searches filth or excrement containing the disease or physically handles items so coated.

Minor Effect: Beginning 3d4p hours after contracting flesh rot, the victims may notice a brownish discoloration where the contagion contacted the skin. This discoloration spreads over the next 24 hours until its effects become somewhat debilitating. The victim initially suffers -1 to both Dexterity and Looks. The disease persists 1d3p weeks during which time an additional -1 penalty to Dexterity and Looks is applied per week. Once the disease has run its course, ability scores are regained at a rate of 1 point of Dexterity and Looks per week.

Full Effect: As above, however the disease persists 2d4p weeks.

PLAGUE (A.K.A. THE KISS OF MANGRUS)

Communicability: 15

Severity: 9

Where is the Disease Found? Plague is found throughout Tellene. It is one of the most potent diseases due to its high communicability and severity. It is most common in urban areas, especially large cities and towns. Communicability should be checked if entering a village or town in which the disease is present.

Minor Effect: Beginning 1d6p days after infection the victim manifests symptoms including fever and itching and blackened skin around the lymph nodes. This persists for 2d4p days after which the patient begins feeling tired and dizzy with heightened fever

and swollen lymph nodes. (Characters suffer -1 to Strength and Intelligence and -5% to all skill rolls for the next 1d6p days). The fever then breaks and all penalties are removed.

Full Effect: As above, however the fever does not break. For the next d3p days, the victim is bedridden with symptoms including continued high fever and chills; severe, bloody cough; large, painful pus-filled buboes; blackened, infected lymph nodes and swollen glands. (Character disability increases to -3 Strength, Constitution and Intelligence. Spell casters cannot cast spells). Following this stage, the symptoms become far more painful and ugly. (Character disability increases to -6 Strength, Constitution and Intelligence and -3 to Dexterity, Wisdom and Charisma. Spell casting is impossible.) Within 4d6p hours the patient expires.

RAT BITE FEVER

Communicability: -2

Severity: 7

Where is the Disease Found? Certain rats are carriers of this disease. Communicability should be checked if bitten by a diseased rat.

Minor Effect: Within d3p hours of contracting this disease, a rash appears around the wound. Within an additional hour, this spreads over the entire body. For the next 24+3d12p hours, the victim suffers -1 to Attack, Defense and damage rolls. The rash then begins to dissipate.

Major Effect: As above, however the rash grows more severe and irritating. For 3d3p days, the victim suffers -3 to Attack, Defense and damage rolls. The rash then begins to dissipate.



THE SHAKES

Communicability: 6

Severity: 7

Where is the disease found? The shakes is a disease found on wild edible plants. Humans and other intelligent beings (dwarves, elves, halflings and the 'monster' races such as kobolds, goblins, orcs, hobgoblins, gnoles and bugbears) infected with the disease may also be carriers. Communicability should be checked if one eats contaminated food (which incidentally will appear no different from unaffected varieties though a difficult Botany check will reveal its presence) or physically touches an infected victim.

Minor Effect: Two days after contracting the disease, the character develops a twitch in some part of his body. This increases in severity for the next three days until muscle spasms are frequent. The character is then assessed a -1 penalty to Dexterity. Symptoms persist for an additional 1d4p weeks during which time the character is beset by muscular tremors (leading to this disease being called 'the shakes'). An additional -1 Dexterity penalty is added for each week the disease rages. Once it dissipates, lost Dexterity is restored at 1 point/day.

Major Effect: As above, however the disease persists for 2d4p weeks.

THE WRACK

Communicability: 5

Severity: 5

Where is the Disease Found? The Wrack is thought to have originated in Cosolen, the capital of Cosdol. It is unknown how widely the disease is dispersed. It is believed to spread by person-to-person contact though prolonged contact with clothing worn by an infectious individual is also known to be a disease vector. Communicability should be checked whenever bodily contact is made with a contagious person or when garments or bedding used by that person are worn or slept in.

Minor Effect: Beginning 1d6p days after infection the victim manifests symptoms including fever, open sores and blackened skin around the lymph nodes. This persists for 2d4p days after which the patient begins feeling tired and dizzy with heightened fever and swollen lymph nodes. (Individuals suffer -1 to Strength and Intelligence and -5% to all skill rolls for the next 1d3p days). The fever then breaks and all penalties are removed.

Major Effect: As above, but the fever does not break. For the next d3p days the victim suffers heavy and bloody congestion, continued high fever, chills and swollen glands. (Disability increases to -2 Strength, Constitution and Intelligence and -10% to skill rolls for 1d6p days).

Following this stage, the symptoms worsen (increases to -4 to Strength, Constitution and Intelligence and -2 to Dexterity, Wisdom and Charisma. Skill checks are made at -25% and spell casting becomes impossible). Effects last for 4d4p days at which point the patient must attempt a Constitution check. Failure to roll under Constitution score results in d4p points of Constitution loss and requires a second Constitution check in d6p days. Checks continue until one is made or the victim dies when his Constitution reaches 0. Lost Constitution returns slowly over the course of 1 point per day once a successful check is made.

Repeated Exposure: Unlike many diseases, one apparently cannot develop partial immunity to the Wrack. If a character suffering from the Wrack's minor effect is exposed to it again, a severity check must be made to determine if the disease progresses to the major effect. If the exposed individual resists the disease's severity, nothing happens. If failed, the major effect ensues. If one already suffers from the Wrack's major effect, additional exposure has no additive effect.

WASTING

Communicability: 0

Severity: 7

Where is the disease found? Wasting is a disease carried by humans and other intelligent beings (dwarves, elves, halflings and the 'monster' races such as kobolds, goblins, orcs, hobgoblins, gnoles and bugbears). Communicability should be checked if one has close contact with an infected victim (e.g. normal speaking distance).

Minor Effect: A week after contracting the disease, the victim begins to feel tired and run down (and is penalized -1 to Strength and Constitution). The disease persists for 1d4p months during which time the patient gets progressively more lethargic, loses weight and his hair begins to fall out. Each month the victim loses 2.5% of his initial body weight and an additional point of Strength and Constitution.

Once the disease has run its course, ability scores are restored at a rate of 1 per week. Body mass also returns to normal at 1%/week assuming an adequate diet.

Major Effect: As above, however the disease progresses until either Strength or Constitution reaches 0 and the victim dies.

Note: Clerics of Mangrus are often afflicted with wasting.

Clerics of Mangrus (a.k.a. The Rotlord)

Alignment: Chaotic Evil

Spheres of Influence: Disease, plague and vermin

Tenets of the Faith: The vile, revolting physical appearance of a Pestilent One is but a small glimpse of the evil that festers in his heart and mind. All clerics of Mangrus are infected with a contagious, terminal disease. Those not already afflicted with such a malady are secretly contaminated during initiation. Aside from the obvious intent of spreading pestilence in the name of the Rotlord, this infecting ceremony serves a very important purpose: it insures obedience and loyalty throughout the ranks of the church (the Conventicle of Affliction). Lower level clerics must show proper devotion to the Bringer of the Plague and do the bidding of their superiors or they will not be cured of their affliction when it becomes life-threatening.

Lycanthropy (wererat) is very common within higher ranks of the Conventicle of Affliction. It is rumored that the Malignant One grants lycanthropy only to loyal followers who have done some outstanding deed or service. To be so inflicted is considered a great honor among the Pestilent Ones, thus, a cleric of the Rotlord will never willingly spread this disease.

The Pestilent Ones travel the lands inflicting disease on others. They typically dwell in large cities where they inhabit the sewers. There, they set up foul altars and spread their maladies among rats and other sewer vermin. Ultimately, the Pestilent Ones will strive to gain access to and contaminate the city's water sources.

Clerics of the Lord of the Putrid avoid open confrontations, instead preferring to weaken their enemies by contaminating food and water supplies or spreading disease in the camp of their foes. When they do enter personal combat, they vastly favor attacks of a more cowardly nature, from ambush, with greatly superior numbers or with ranged attacks.

Clerics of the Bringer of the Plague are often people who have been shunned by society because of an already present malady. They seek out the priesthood for various reasons: in hopes of being cured, to find companionship among others with similar disorders or, most often, to exact some measure of revenge on those who have rejected them.

Preferred Weapon: none

Other Weapons Permitted: Any size S or M Hacking or Piercing melee weapon; all ranged weapons are permitted

Armor Permitted: Any (High level priests, upon receiving the gift of lycanthropy, may only wear light armor)

Holy Icon: Piece of rotting flesh. (This is by its very nature impermanent and must be periodically replaced with new consecrated flesh stripped from a sacrifice.)

Bonus Skills: Botany, Literacy, Sneaking

Bonus Talent: Blind-Fighting



Restrictions: The Pestilent Ones, in part owing to their perpetual afflictions, utilize a d6 for hit points instead of a d8. Use of silver weapons and knowledge of First Aid are an anathema to their religious practices. Additionally, Mangrus strongly discourages use of healing spells. While not absolutely forbidden, their employment should be limited to critical situations such as the need to revitalize the cleric and his followers' fighting strength when facing an imminent threat.

Powers: Command Undead; Once per day, a cleric of the Rotlord may injure an individual with his merest touch. This causes damage equivalent to the cleric's level and is not ameliorated by natural or body armor; Pestilent Ones may cast Contagion (see hereafter) as a 4th level spell.

At greater levels of experience these clerics gain the ability to summon swarms of rats and eventually wererat lycanthropy.

About the Conventicle of Affliction

Priesthood: The Pestilent Ones

Symbol: A rotting, worm-eaten head

Colors: Drab yellow and sickly green

Place of Worship: Sewers, dunghills, dumps and refuse piles

Holy Days: Varies regionally

Sacrifice: Healthy individuals or animals every waning quarter moon (all moons). The sacrifice is typically tortured, then horribly disfigured and finally inflicted with a rotting disease and left to decompose in a cell.

Raiment: Clerics may wear any garb they like, but it must be dirty, rotting and covered with offal. Higher level clerics prefer drab yellow or sickly green colored robes.

Deity's Appearance: The Lord of the Putrid takes many forms, but his body is always covered with festering sores, oozing boils and the like.

Advancement: Varies from cult to cult. The Pestilent Ones' main ceremony of advancement requires them to be cured of all diseases and then infected with at least one new one. Pestilent Ones have

no rank designations among themselves, and their name varies from region to region and race to race. In all cults, however, a Pestilent One must possess, have survived or been cured of a number of different diseases equal to the rank he wishes to attain.

When Pestilent Ones advance within the Conventicle, their superiors cure them of their maladies and inflict them with new diseases. If a cleric does not advance fast enough or please his superiors, he will eventually die of his disease. Because of this situation, novice Pestilent Ones are among the most fanatical clerics found on Tellene.

Many of these ailments are outwardly visible, often causing large boils and open, oozing sores. The mere sight of some of the higher level Pestilent Ones inspires fear and revulsion.

Sayings: *A plague on your household. - Feel my disease. - A pox on you and your kindred. - When the King of Affliction has smothered Tellene in pestilence, he will remember his flock and he will grant the Pestilent Ones the power to control all who would choose to live.*

Clerics of Raconteur

Alignment: Chaotic good.

Spheres of Influence: The Arts (e.g., painting, sculpture, poetry, music, theater, humor, etc.).

Tenets of the Faith: Also known as the Eternal Bard or Loremaster, Raconteur is the patron god of the Arts. The church calls itself the Theatre of the Arts, while its clerics are known as Merry Muses.

Members of the Merry Muses must be knowledgeable of both modern and ancient culture. Their preaching promotes acceptance of differing races and cultures. This is a source of conflict with many governments, particularly in Eldor.

Merry Muses are typically jolly souls that love to perform and bring joy to others. But they are far more than simple jesters. Clerics of the Loremaster are also serious performers and artists who enjoy performing tragedies, dramas, ballets, symphonies and operas. Merry Muses have been known to demand a joke, rhyme or story as payment for the casting of spells or other services — as long as there is no dire need.



Clerics of the Loremaster, while generally popular among commoners, are frequently at odds with the local government. This is because their artwork often takes the form of political satire, and leaders often perceive their work slanderous or even seditious. Entire churches have been banished in some kingdoms after the telling of one too many ribald jokes at the king's expense.

Typically associated with bards, communities respect these clerics for their entertainment and cultural contributions to society. The Merry Muses are knowledgeable historians who dramatically and/or humorously relate legends to the masses. They have the ability to place the troubles of the present into perspective through allegories.

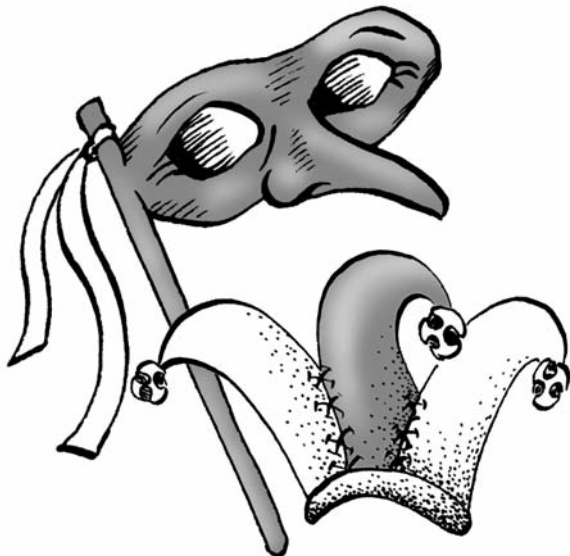
Preferred Weapon: none

Other weapons permitted: Axe (throwing), Dagger (throwing), Knife (throwing), Mace, Scimitar, Staff, Short Sword

Armor permitted: Studded leather or other comparable of lighter armors (those with no movement class penalty)

Divine Icon: A small theatrical mask

Skill Bonuses: The following skills represent the core competencies these clerics: Acting, Artistry, Current Affairs, Disguise, History (ancient), Language, Literacy, Musician and Riddling. Acolytes of the Loremaster receive one purchase (at no BP cost) in each of these skills (though they are permitted to chose two subspecialties in Artistry).



At each subsequent level, he receives (at no BP cost) one roll of the mastery die in any two of the core Merry Muse skills. Note that one and only one roll of the mastery die may be taken in a particular skill during advancement. However, a cleric may opt to make additional purchases in their core skills with BPs gained from their initial allotment or during advancement.

Furthermore, when a cleric of Raconteur purchases any of these skills, the mastery die roll is modified by +3 (or the skill's relevant ability score modifier, whichever is better).

Powers: Turn Undead; Clerics of Raconteur can also provide a +1 bonus against charm effects to allies by actively countering the charmer with wit.

Ability Restrictions: To become a Merry Muse, a character must have a minimum 12 Intelligence and 14 Charisma scores.

About the Theatre of the Arts

Priesthood: Merry Muses

Symbol: A theatrical mask or jester hat

Colors: Red and gold

Place of Worship: Merry Muses worship in theaters or public forums. A prayer is often said with the audience before or after the performance.

Holy Days: The clergy holds a festival celebrating the fine arts in late spring.

Sacrifice: Each week, clerics must create and tell a song, poem or joke in honor of the Eternal Bard. Annually, the required sacrifice is a physical work of art.

Raiment: All clerics wear clothes appropriate to the art in which they are working. For instance, a painter might don a painter's smock, a jester might wear a jester's costume, and so forth. Merry Muses also wear a necklace bearing various charms appropriate to any arts they have already mastered (for instance, a master sculptor and painter could bear tiny chisel and brush charms).

Deity's Appearance: Raconteur appears in many different forms, but he always appears as a performer or artist. His apparel is always appropriate to his performance medium.

Advancement: Advancement within the church is through demonstrated excellence in a particular art form (e.g., sculpting, painting, poetry, acting, speech making, jesting, conducting, dancing, singing, music composition, novel writing). Once the cleric advances to the next temple rank, he receives a small charm that signifies the mastered art form. These charms are worn on a necklace. A Merry Muse may gain mastery of the arts in any order that she chooses. An Artiste is a Merry Muse that has mastered each of the art forms.

Sayings: *A rapier wit can slice the toughest armor. – Laughter is the best way to resolve a conflict. – Music is the language of the gods. – Perform every day as if it were your last. – The pen is mightier than the sword. – To bring a smile to sad lips is to give a gift greater than gold. – Laugh and the world laughs with you; cry and the world laughs at you.*

New Clerical Spell

Contagion

Level 4 (exclusively for Clerics of Mangrus)

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 5 seconds

Range: Touch

Area of Effect: Creature touched

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Negates

By means of this spell, the cleric infects his victim with a magical disease instantly causing pus-ridden boils to erupt all over his body. They are disfiguring, painful and irritating resulting in the temporary loss of 2 points of Strength, Dexterity and Looks. In addition, the target suffers a -2 Attack penalty (which may compound with a lessened Attack Bonus from reduced Dexterity).

Because the disease is magical in origin, it is not communicable and affects only the target (though anyone viewing the character will not be aware of this and will likely shun him for fear of catching this contagion). Recovery requires 1d3p continuous weeks of complete bed rest.

Note: This spell is available at 4th level only for priests of the Rotlord.

New Skills

Worshippers of Raconteur favor certain skills, presented here for any character to learn.

Artistry (specify type)

Relevant Ability: Dexterity and Wisdom

Cost: 2 BP

Universal: No

Prerequisite: Literacy 26 or better (poetry or written story telling)

Materials/Tools: Yes; varies by type

This skill covers the arts; select one type (i.e., sculpting, painting, poetry, acting, speech making, jesting, dancing, singing, story telling or music composition) in which the character is proficient.

Artists can attempt to create works of art by performing a skill check. Success determines the quality, while a failed check indicates that the artist cannot meet his artistic ideal, or otherwise becomes frustrated and throws his failed attempt in the trash. Characters must have tools and materials appropriate to their chosen art; a painter must have paint and brushes, a sculptor needs stone and chisel, and so forth.

Literacy is required for poetry and enhances story telling to encompass scripted works.

Musician (specify voice or an instrument)

Relevant Ability: Wisdom

Cost: 3 BP

Universal: No

Prerequisite: Literacy 26 or better (required for transcription only)

Materials/Tools: Yes

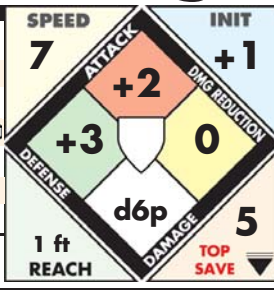
Characters with this skill can sing or play a specific musical instrument (often fiddles, flutes, dulcimers, lutes and recorders). Of course, the musician must have the instrument in order to utilize this skill.

Transcribing musical notation to parchment requires a certain mastery of the Literacy skill plus appropriate materials.

Use for Starting
Option #5:
A pox on the Pox

Pox Thug

Size: M/150 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CN
Tenacity: Nervous -4
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: -1
SAVES Phys: 0 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1



ATTACK NOTES:
Flee from any credible threat

WEAPON: Knife

DEFENSE NOTES:

HITPOINTS: 24
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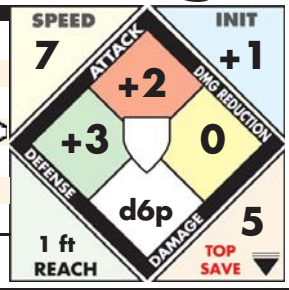
CARRIED:
2d6 cp, knife

TOP CHECK @: 8 HP

EPV: 34

Pox Thug

Size: M/150 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CN
Tenacity: Nervous -4
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: -1
SAVES Phys: 0 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1



ATTACK NOTES:
Flee from any credible threat

WEAPON: Knife

DEFENSE NOTES:

HITPOINTS: 24
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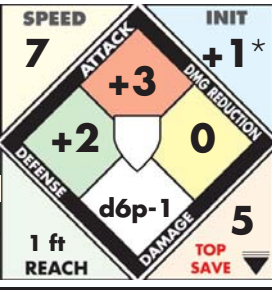
CARRIED:
2d6 cp, knife

TOP CHECK @: 8 HP

EPV: 34

Pox Thief

Size: M/150 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CN
Tenacity: Nervous -4
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: -1
SAVES Phys: +1 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1



ATTACK NOTES:
* 1 init die size less, Flee from any credible threat

WEAPON: Knife

DEFENSE NOTES:
12 luck points, 7 honor

HITPOINTS: 22
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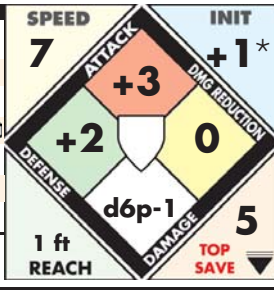
CARRIED:
2d6 cp, knife

TOP CHECK @: 7 HP

EPV: 67

Pox Thief

Size: M/150 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CN
Tenacity: Nervous -4
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: -1
SAVES Phys: +1 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1



ATTACK NOTES:
* 1 init die size less, Flee from any credible threat

WEAPON: Knife

DEFENSE NOTES:
12 luck points, 7 honor

HITPOINTS: 22
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CARRIED:
2d6 cp, knife

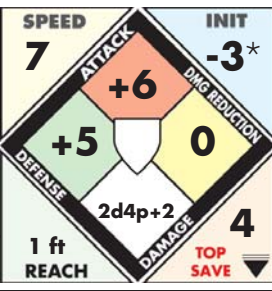
TOP CHECK @: 7 HP

EPV: 67

Use for City
Encounter 4:
Confronting the Pox

Gulda

Size: M/130 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CN
Tenacity: Steady 0
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Bright
Fatigue Factor: 1
SAVES Phys: +5 Mental: +5
Dodge: +5



ATTACK NOTES:
* -1 initiative die type, flees if wounds total 18hp

WEAPON: Dagger +2

DEFENSE NOTES:
19 luck points, 30 honor

HITPOINTS: 32
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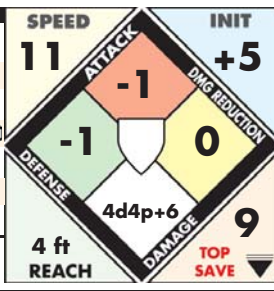
CARRIED:
42 cp, 55 sp, dagger +2

TOP CHECK @: 11 HP

EPV: 242

Olmved

Size: M/307 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CN
Tenacity: Fearless +2
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Slow
Fatigue Factor: -6
SAVES Phys: +3 Mental: +3
Dodge: +3



ATTACK NOTES:
will fight until incapacitated

WEAPON: Battle Axe

DEFENSE NOTES:
33 honor

HITPOINTS: 44
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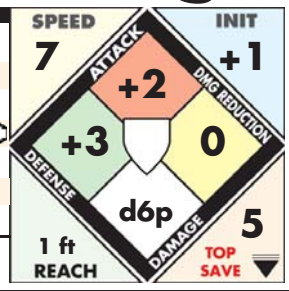
CARRIED:
battle axe

TOP CHECK @: 16 HP

EPV: 167

Pox Thug

Size: M/150 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CN
Tenacity: Nervous -4
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: -1
SAVES Phys: 0 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1



ATTACK NOTES:
Flees if Gulda incapacitated or 10 Poxers incapacitated

WEAPON: Knife

DEFENSE NOTES:

HITPOINTS: 24
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CARRIED:
2d6 cp, knife

TOP CHECK @: 8 HP

EPV: 34

Pox Thug

Size: M/150 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CN
Tenacity: Nervous -4
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: -1
Saves: Phys: 0 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1

SPEED 7	ATTACK +2	INIT +1
DEFENSE +3	DMG REDUCTION 0	DAMAGE 5

1 ft REACH | d6p | TOP SAVE

WEAPON: Knife

HITPOINTS: 24
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TOP CHECK @: 8 HP

EPV: 34

Pox Thug

Size: M/150 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CN
Tenacity: Nervous -4
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: -1
Saves: Phys: 0 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1

SPEED 7	ATTACK +2	INIT +1
DEFENSE +3	DMG REDUCTION 0	DAMAGE 5

1 ft REACH | d6p | TOP SAVE

WEAPON: Knife

HITPOINTS: 24
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TOP CHECK @: 8 HP

EPV: 34

Pox Thug

Size: M/150 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CN
Tenacity: Nervous -4
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: -1
Saves: Phys: 0 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1

SPEED 7	ATTACK +2	INIT +1
DEFENSE +3	DMG REDUCTION 0	DAMAGE 5

1 ft REACH | d6p | TOP SAVE

WEAPON: Knife

HITPOINTS: 24
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TOP CHECK @: 8 HP

EPV: 34

Pox Thug

Size: M/150 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CN
Tenacity: Nervous -4
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: -1
Saves: Phys: 0 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1

SPEED 7	ATTACK +2	INIT +1
DEFENSE +3	DMG REDUCTION 0	DAMAGE 5

1 ft REACH | d6p | TOP SAVE

WEAPON: Knife

HITPOINTS: 24
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TOP CHECK @: 8 HP

EPV: 34

Pox Thug

Size: M/150 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CN
Tenacity: Nervous -4
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: -1
Saves: Phys: 0 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1

SPEED 7	ATTACK +2	INIT +1
DEFENSE +3	DMG REDUCTION 0	DAMAGE 5

1 ft REACH | d6p | TOP SAVE

WEAPON: Knife

HITPOINTS: 24
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TOP CHECK @: 8 HP

EPV: 34

Pox Thug

Size: M/150 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CN
Tenacity: Nervous -4
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: -1
Saves: Phys: 0 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1

SPEED 7	ATTACK +2	INIT +1
DEFENSE +3	DMG REDUCTION 0	DAMAGE 5

1 ft REACH | d6p | TOP SAVE

WEAPON: Knife

HITPOINTS: 24
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TOP CHECK @: 8 HP

EPV: 34

Pox Thug

Size: M/150 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CN
Tenacity: Nervous -4
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: -1
Saves: Phys: 0 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1

SPEED 7	ATTACK +2	INIT +1
DEFENSE +3	DMG REDUCTION 0	DAMAGE 5

1 ft REACH | d6p | TOP SAVE

WEAPON: Knife

HITPOINTS: 24
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TOP CHECK @: 8 HP

EPV: 34

Pox Thug

Size: M/150 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CN
Tenacity: Nervous -4
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: -1
Saves: Phys: 0 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1

SPEED 7	ATTACK +2	INIT +1
DEFENSE +3	DMG REDUCTION 0	DAMAGE 5

1 ft REACH | d6p | TOP SAVE

WEAPON: Knife

HITPOINTS: 24
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TOP CHECK @: 8 HP

EPV: 34

Pox Thug

Size: M/150 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CN
Tenacity: Nervous -4
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: -1
Saves: Phys: 0 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1

SPEED 7	ATTACK +2	INIT +1
DEFENSE +3	DMG REDUCTION 0	DAMAGE 5

1 ft REACH | d6p | TOP SAVE

WEAPON: Knife

HITPOINTS: 24
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TOP CHECK @: 8 HP

EPV: 34

Pox Thug

Size: M/150 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CN
Tenacity: Nervous -4
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: -1
Saves: Phys: 0 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1

SPEED 7	ATTACK +2	INIT +1
DEFENSE +3	DAMAGE d6p	DNG REDUCTION 0
1 ft REACH	TOP SAVE 5	

ATTACK NOTES:
Flees if Gulda incapacitated or 10 Poxers incapacitated

WEAPON: Knife

HITPOINTS: 24

DEFENSE NOTES:

CARRIED:
2d6 cp, knife

TOP CHECK @: 8 HP

EPV: 34

Pox Thief

Size: M/150 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CN
Tenacity: Nervous -4
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: -1
Saves: Phys: +1 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1

SPEED 7	ATTACK +3	INIT +1*
DEFENSE +2	DAMAGE d6p-1	DNG REDUCTION 0
1 ft REACH	TOP SAVE 5	

ATTACK NOTES:
* 1 init die size less, Flees if Gulda incapacitated or 10 Poxers incapacitated

WEAPON: Knife

HITPOINTS: 22

DEFENSE NOTES:
12 luck points, 7 honor

CARRIED:
2d6 cp, knife

TOP CHECK @: 7 HP

EPV: 67

Pox Thief

Size: M/150 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CN
Tenacity: Nervous -4
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: -1
Saves: Phys: +1 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1

SPEED 7	ATTACK +3	INIT +1*
DEFENSE +2	DAMAGE d6p-1	DNG REDUCTION 0
1 ft REACH	TOP SAVE 5	

ATTACK NOTES:
* 1 init die size less, Flees if Gulda incapacitated or 10 Poxers incapacitated

WEAPON: Knife

HITPOINTS: 22

DEFENSE NOTES:
12 luck points, 7 honor

CARRIED:
2d6 cp, knife

TOP CHECK @: 7 HP

EPV: 67

Pox Thief

Size: M/150 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CN
Tenacity: Nervous -4
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: -1
Saves: Phys: +1 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1

SPEED 7	ATTACK +3	INIT +1*
DEFENSE +2	DAMAGE d6p-1	DNG REDUCTION 0
1 ft REACH	TOP SAVE 5	

ATTACK NOTES:
* 1 init die size less, Flees if Gulda incapacitated or 10 Poxers incapacitated

WEAPON: Knife

HITPOINTS: 22

DEFENSE NOTES:
12 luck points, 7 honor

CARRIED:
2d6 cp, knife

TOP CHECK @: 7 HP

EPV: 67

Pox Thief

Size: M/150 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CN
Tenacity: Nervous -4
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: -1
Saves: Phys: +1 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1

SPEED 7	ATTACK +3	INIT +1*
DEFENSE +2	DAMAGE d6p-1	DNG REDUCTION 0
1 ft REACH	TOP SAVE 5	

ATTACK NOTES:
* 1 init die size less, Flees if Gulda incapacitated or 10 Poxers incapacitated

WEAPON: Knife

HITPOINTS: 22

DEFENSE NOTES:
12 luck points, 7 honor

CARRIED:
2d6 cp, knife

TOP CHECK @: 7 HP

EPV: 67

Pox Thief

Size: M/150 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CN
Tenacity: Nervous -4
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: -1
Saves: Phys: +1 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1

SPEED 7	ATTACK +3	INIT +1*
DEFENSE +2	DAMAGE d6p-1	DNG REDUCTION 0
1 ft REACH	TOP SAVE 5	

ATTACK NOTES:
* 1 init die size less, Flees if Gulda incapacitated or 10 Poxers incapacitated

WEAPON: Knife

HITPOINTS: 22

DEFENSE NOTES:
12 luck points, 7 honor

CARRIED:
2d6 cp, knife

TOP CHECK @: 7 HP

EPV: 67

Pox Thief

Size: M/150 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CN
Tenacity: Nervous -4
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: -1
Saves: Phys: +1 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1

SPEED 7	ATTACK +3	INIT +1*
DEFENSE +2	DAMAGE d6p-1	DNG REDUCTION 0
1 ft REACH	TOP SAVE 5	

ATTACK NOTES:
* 1 init die size less, Flees if Gulda incapacitated or 10 Poxers incapacitated

WEAPON: Knife

HITPOINTS: 22

DEFENSE NOTES:
12 luck points, 7 honor

CARRIED:
2d6 cp, knife

TOP CHECK @: 7 HP

EPV: 67

Use for City Encounter 5:
City Quarters
and possibly for Act 3:
The Conventicle of Affliction
(room B2)

Dantral

Size: M/172 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CE
Tenacity: Steady 0
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: 0
Saves: Phys: +1 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1

SPEED 7	ATTACK +2	INIT +3
DEFENSE +4	DAMAGE 2d6p+2	DNG REDUCTION 2
2 ft REACH	TOP SAVE 5	

ATTACK NOTES:

WEAPON: Short Sword

HITPOINTS: 26

DEFENSE NOTES:
8 honor, infected with The Wrack

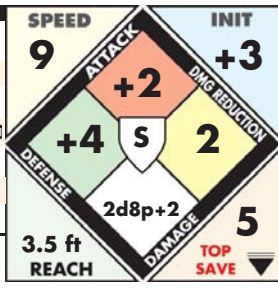
CARRIED:
4 tc, 6 cp, 4 sp, short sword, sm. shield, leather armor

TOP CHECK @: 9 HP

EPV: 67

Eltrin

Size: M/167 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CE
Tenacity: Steady 0
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: 0
SAVES: Phys: +1 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1



ATTACK NOTES:

WEAPON: Longsword

HITPOINTS: 26
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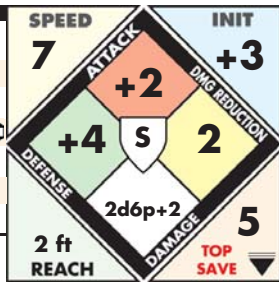
DEFENSE NOTES:
 9 honor, infected with The Wrack

CARRIED:
 13 tc, 6 cp, 5 sp, longsword, sm. shield, leather armor

TOP CHECK @: 9 HP
EPV: 67

Vrastin

Size: M/161 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CE
Tenacity: Steady 0
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: 0
SAVES: Phys: +1 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1



ATTACK NOTES:

WEAPON: Short Sword

HITPOINTS: 27
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DEFENSE NOTES:
 7 honor, infected with The Wrack

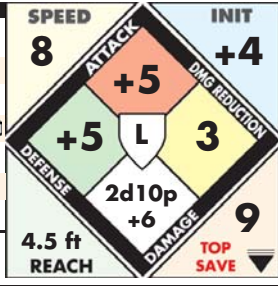
CARRIED:
 9 tc, 2 cp, 4 sp, short sword, sm. shield, leather armor

TOP CHECK @: 9 HP
EPV: 67

Use for City Encounter 7: Ambush!
 and possibly again in Act 4 (humans only)

Hurgle (Ogre)

Size: H/574 lbs
Move: 10/15/20/25
Alignment: CE
Tenacity: Steady 0
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Obtuse
Fatigue Factor: -1
SAVES: Phys: +8 Mental: +2
Dodge: +4



ATTACK NOTES:

WEAPON: Huge Club

HITPOINTS: 51
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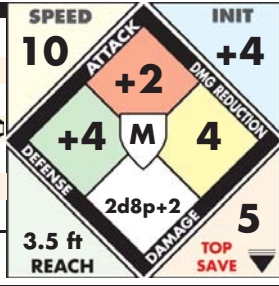
DEFENSE NOTES:
 naked

CARRIED:
 huge club, ersatz shield

TOP CHECK @: 21 HP
EPV: 242

Drelmin

Size: M/165 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CE
Tenacity: Steady 0
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: 0
SAVES: Phys: +1 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1



ATTACK NOTES:
 has lt. crossbow (+1 ATK bonus, 2d6p DMG)

WEAPON: Longsword Lt. Crossbow

HITPOINTS: 27
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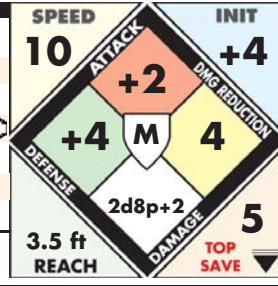
DEFENSE NOTES:
 9 honor, infected with The Wrack

CARRIED:
 ringmail armor, med. shield, longsword, lt. crossbow, dagger

TOP CHECK @: 9 HP
EPV: 67

Jarglan

Size: M/162 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CE
Tenacity: Steady 0
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: 0
SAVES: Phys: +1 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1



ATTACK NOTES:
 has lt. crossbow (+1 ATK bonus, 2d6p DMG)

WEAPON: Longsword Lt. Crossbow

HITPOINTS: 26
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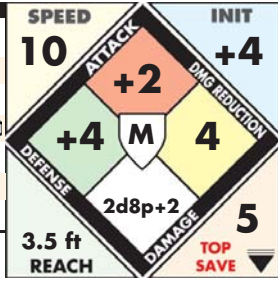
DEFENSE NOTES:
 9 honor, infected with The Wrack

CARRIED:
 ringmail armor, med. shield, longsword, lt. crossbow, dagger

TOP CHECK @: 9 HP
EPV: 67

Krant

Size: M/189 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CE
Tenacity: Steady 0
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: 0
SAVES: Phys: +1 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1



ATTACK NOTES:
 has lt. crossbow (+1 ATK bonus, 2d6p DMG)

WEAPON: Longsword Lt. Crossbow

HITPOINTS: 26
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DEFENSE NOTES:
 6 honor, infected with The Wrack

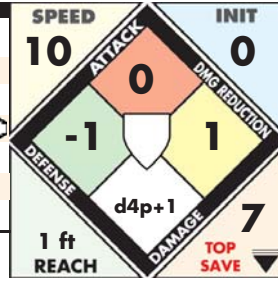
CARRIED:
 ringmail armor, med. shield, longsword, lt. crossbow, dagger

TOP CHECK @: 9 HP
EPV: 67

Use for City Encounter 9: Ryeth's House
 an identical pack appears in Act 3 (room B5)

Giant Rat

Size: S/20 lbs
Move: 1.25/2.5/5/7.5
Alignment: non
Tenacity: Cowardly -8
Vision: Poor
Int: Animal, High
Fatigue Factor: -3
SAVES: Phys: 0 Mental: 0
Dodge: +3



ATTACK NOTES:
 carrier of Rat Bite Fever (check communicability with each bite)

WEAPON:

HITPOINTS: 9
 □□□□ □□□□

DEFENSE NOTES:

CARRIED:

TOP CHECK @: 4 HP
EPV: 12

Giant Rat

Size: S/20 lbs
Move: 1.25/2.5/5/7.5
Alignment: non
Tenacity: Cowardly -8
Vision: Poor
Int: Animal, High
Fatigue Factor: -3
SAVES: Phys: 0 Mental: 0
Dodge: +3

SPEED 10	INIT 0
ATTACK 0	DMG REDUCTION 0
DEFENSE -1	DAMAGE 1
d4p+1	
1 ft REACH	TOP SAVE 7

ATTACK NOTES:
carrier of Rat Bite Fever
(check communicability with each bite)

WEAPON:

HITPOINTS: 9
□□□□ □□□

DEFENSE NOTES:

CARRIED:

TOP CHECK @: 4 HP
EPV: 12

Giant Rat

Size: S/20 lbs
Move: 1.25/2.5/5/7.5
Alignment: non
Tenacity: Cowardly -8
Vision: Poor
Int: Animal, High
Fatigue Factor: -3
SAVES: Phys: 0 Mental: 0
Dodge: +3

SPEED 10	INIT 0
ATTACK 0	DMG REDUCTION 0
DEFENSE -1	DAMAGE 1
d4p+1	
1 ft REACH	TOP SAVE 7

ATTACK NOTES:
carrier of Rat Bite Fever
(check communicability with each bite)

WEAPON:

HITPOINTS: 9
□□□□ □□□

DEFENSE NOTES:

CARRIED:

TOP CHECK @: 4 HP
EPV: 12

Giant Rat

Size: S/20 lbs
Move: 1.25/2.5/5/7.5
Alignment: non
Tenacity: Cowardly -8
Vision: Poor
Int: Animal, High
Fatigue Factor: -3
SAVES: Phys: 0 Mental: 0
Dodge: +3

SPEED 10	INIT 0
ATTACK 0	DMG REDUCTION 0
DEFENSE -1	DAMAGE 1
d4p+1	
1 ft REACH	TOP SAVE 7

ATTACK NOTES:
carrier of Rat Bite Fever
(check communicability with each bite)

WEAPON:

HITPOINTS: 9
□□□□ □□□

DEFENSE NOTES:

CARRIED:

TOP CHECK @: 4 HP
EPV: 12

Giant Rat

Size: S/20 lbs
Move: 1.25/2.5/5/7.5
Alignment: non
Tenacity: Cowardly -8
Vision: Poor
Int: Animal, High
Fatigue Factor: -3
SAVES: Phys: 0 Mental: 0
Dodge: +3

SPEED 10	INIT 0
ATTACK 0	DMG REDUCTION 0
DEFENSE -1	DAMAGE 1
d4p+1	
1 ft REACH	TOP SAVE 7

ATTACK NOTES:
carrier of Rat Bite Fever
(check communicability with each bite)

WEAPON:

HITPOINTS: 9
□□□□ □□□

DEFENSE NOTES:

CARRIED:

TOP CHECK @: 4 HP
EPV: 12

Giant Rat

Size: S/20 lbs
Move: 1.25/2.5/5/7.5
Alignment: non
Tenacity: Cowardly -8
Vision: Poor
Int: Animal, High
Fatigue Factor: -3
SAVES: Phys: 0 Mental: 0
Dodge: +3

SPEED 10	INIT 0
ATTACK 0	DMG REDUCTION 0
DEFENSE -1	DAMAGE 1
d4p+1	
1 ft REACH	TOP SAVE 7

ATTACK NOTES:
carrier of Rat Bite Fever
(check communicability with each bite)

WEAPON:

HITPOINTS: 9
□□□□ □□□

DEFENSE NOTES:

CARRIED:

TOP CHECK @: 4 HP
EPV: 12

Giant Rat

Size: S/20 lbs
Move: 1.25/2.5/5/7.5
Alignment: non
Tenacity: Cowardly -8
Vision: Poor
Int: Animal, High
Fatigue Factor: -3
SAVES: Phys: 0 Mental: 0
Dodge: +3

SPEED 10	INIT 0
ATTACK 0	DMG REDUCTION 0
DEFENSE -1	DAMAGE 1
d4p+1	
1 ft REACH	TOP SAVE 7

ATTACK NOTES:
carrier of Rat Bite Fever
(check communicability with each bite)

WEAPON:

HITPOINTS: 9
□□□□ □□□

DEFENSE NOTES:

CARRIED:

TOP CHECK @: 4 HP
EPV: 12

Giant Rat

Size: S/20 lbs
Move: 1.25/2.5/5/7.5
Alignment: non
Tenacity: Cowardly -8
Vision: Poor
Int: Animal, High
Fatigue Factor: -3
SAVES: Phys: 0 Mental: 0
Dodge: +3

SPEED 10	INIT 0
ATTACK 0	DMG REDUCTION 0
DEFENSE -1	DAMAGE 1
d4p+1	
1 ft REACH	TOP SAVE 7

ATTACK NOTES:
carrier of Rat Bite Fever
(check communicability with each bite)

WEAPON:

HITPOINTS: 9
□□□□ □□□

DEFENSE NOTES:

CARRIED:

TOP CHECK @: 4 HP
EPV: 12

Giant Rat

Size: S/20 lbs
Move: 1.25/2.5/5/7.5
Alignment: non
Tenacity: Cowardly -8
Vision: Poor
Int: Animal, High
Fatigue Factor: -3
SAVES: Phys: 0 Mental: 0
Dodge: +3

SPEED 10	INIT 0
ATTACK 0	DMG REDUCTION 0
DEFENSE -1	DAMAGE 1
d4p+1	
1 ft REACH	TOP SAVE 7

ATTACK NOTES:
carrier of Rat Bite Fever
(check communicability with each bite)

WEAPON:

HITPOINTS: 9
□□□□ □□□

DEFENSE NOTES:

CARRIED:

TOP CHECK @: 4 HP
EPV: 12

Giant Rat

Size: S/20 lbs
Move: 1.25/2.5/5/7.5
Alignment: non
Tenacity: Cowardly -8
Vision: Poor
Int: Animal, High
Fatigue Factor: -3
SAVES: Phys: 0 Mental: 0
Dodge: +3

SPEED 10	INIT 0
ATTACK 0	DMG REDUCTION 0
DEFENSE -1	DAMAGE 1
d4p+1	
1 ft REACH	TOP SAVE 7

ATTACK NOTES:
carrier of Rat Bite Fever
(check communicability with each bite)

WEAPON:

HITPOINTS: 9
□□□□ □□□

DEFENSE NOTES:

CARRIED:

TOP CHECK @: 4 HP
EPV: 12

Giant Rat

Size: S/20 lbs
Move: 1.25/2.5/5/7.5
Alignment: non
Tenacity: Cowardly -8
Vision: Poor
Int: Animal, High
Fatigue Factor: -3
Saves: Phys: 0 Mental: 0
Dodge: +3

SPEED 10 **INIT** 0
ATTACK 0 **DMG REDUCTION**
DEFENSE -1 **DAMAGE** 1
d4p+1
TOP SAVE 7
REACH 1 ft

ATTACK NOTES:
carrier of Rat Bite Fever
(check communicability with each bite)

DEFENSE NOTES:

CARRIED:

WEAPON:

HITPOINTS: 9
□□□□ □□□□

TOP CHECK @: 4 HP
EPV: 12

Giant Rat

Size: S/20 lbs
Move: 1.25/2.5/5/7.5
Alignment: non
Tenacity: Cowardly -8
Vision: Poor
Int: Animal, High
Fatigue Factor: -3
Saves: Phys: 0 Mental: 0
Dodge: +3

SPEED 10 **INIT** 0
ATTACK 0 **DMG REDUCTION**
DEFENSE -1 **DAMAGE** 1
d4p+1
TOP SAVE 7
REACH 1 ft

ATTACK NOTES:
carrier of Rat Bite Fever
(check communicability with each bite)

DEFENSE NOTES:

CARRIED:

WEAPON:

HITPOINTS: 9
□□□□ □□□□

TOP CHECK @: 4 HP
EPV: 12

Giant Rat

Size: S/20 lbs
Move: 1.25/2.5/5/7.5
Alignment: non
Tenacity: Cowardly -8
Vision: Poor
Int: Animal, High
Fatigue Factor: -3
Saves: Phys: 0 Mental: 0
Dodge: +3

SPEED 10 **INIT** 0
ATTACK 0 **DMG REDUCTION**
DEFENSE -1 **DAMAGE** 1
d4p+1
TOP SAVE 7
REACH 1 ft

ATTACK NOTES:
carrier of Rat Bite Fever
(check communicability with each bite)

DEFENSE NOTES:

CARRIED:

WEAPON:

HITPOINTS: 9
□□□□ □□□□

TOP CHECK @: 4 HP
EPV: 12

Giant Rat

Size: S/20 lbs
Move: 1.25/2.5/5/7.5
Alignment: non
Tenacity: Cowardly -8
Vision: Poor
Int: Animal, High
Fatigue Factor: -3
Saves: Phys: 0 Mental: 0
Dodge: +3

SPEED 10 **INIT** 0
ATTACK 0 **DMG REDUCTION**
DEFENSE -1 **DAMAGE** 1
d4p+1
TOP SAVE 7
REACH 1 ft

ATTACK NOTES:
carrier of Rat Bite Fever
(check communicability with each bite)

DEFENSE NOTES:

CARRIED:

WEAPON:

HITPOINTS: 9
□□□□ □□□□

TOP CHECK @: 4 HP
EPV: 12

Use for Act 3: The Manor House (section A)

Eldon Vorguld

Size: M/152 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CE
Tenacity: Steady 0
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: 1
Saves: Phys: +2 Mental: +2
Dodge: +2

SPEED 8 **INIT** +1
ATTACK +2 **DMG REDUCTION**
DEFENSE +7 **DAMAGE** 2
2d6p
TOP SAVE 5
REACH 2 ft

ATTACK NOTES:
has 3 javelins (+2 ATK bonus, d12p DMG), spell use (see text), can cause 2 hp DMG w/ touch 1/day

DEFENSE NOTES:
13 honor, infected with The Wrack

CARRIED:
leather armor, sm. shield +1, short sword, 3 javelins

WEAPON: Short Sword
3 Javelins

HITPOINTS: 27
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TOP CHECK @: 9 HP
EPV: 133

Krevit

Size: M/162 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CE
Tenacity: Steady 0
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: 0
Saves: Phys: +1 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1

SPEED 7 **INIT** +3
ATTACK +2 **DMG REDUCTION**
DEFENSE 0 **DAMAGE** 2
2d6p+2
TOP SAVE 5
REACH 2 ft

ATTACK NOTES:
has lt. crossbow (+1 ATK bonus, 2d6p DMG)

DEFENSE NOTES:
6 honor, infected with The Wrack

CARRIED:
leather armor, short sword, lt. crossbow, 12 cp

WEAPON: Short Sword
Lt. Crossbow

HITPOINTS: 26
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TOP CHECK @: 9 HP
EPV: 67

Kolgrund

Size: M/168 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CE
Tenacity: Steady 0
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: 0
Saves: Phys: +1 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1

SPEED 7 **INIT** +3
ATTACK +2 **DMG REDUCTION**
DEFENSE 0 **DAMAGE** 2
2d6p+2
TOP SAVE 5
REACH 2 ft

ATTACK NOTES:
has lt. crossbow (+1 ATK bonus, 2d6p DMG)

DEFENSE NOTES:
14 honor, infected with The Wrack

CARRIED:
leather armor, short sword, lt. crossbow, 3 tc, 9 cp

WEAPON: Short Sword
Lt. Crossbow

HITPOINTS: 26
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TOP CHECK @: 9 HP
EPV: 67

Dolact

Size: M/172 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CE
Tenacity: Steady 0
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: 0
Saves: Phys: +1 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1

SPEED 8 **INIT** +4
ATTACK +2 **DMG REDUCTION**
DEFENSE +5 **DAMAGE** 3
2d8p+2
TOP SAVE 5
REACH 3 ft

ATTACK NOTES:

DEFENSE NOTES:
7 honor, infected with The Wrack

CARRIED:
studded leather armor, scimitar, med. shield, 5 tc, 6 cp, 1 sp

WEAPON: Scimitar

HITPOINTS: 28
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TOP CHECK @: 9 HP
EPV: 67

Use for Act 3:
The Chandler's
Workshop
(section B)

Skeleton

Size: M/25 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: non
Tenacity: Fearless
Vision: Standard
Int: non
Fatigue Factor: n/a
SAVES: Phys: +1 Mental: n/a
Dodge: +1

SPEED 9	ATTACK +1	DMG REDUCTION 0	INIT 0
DEFENSE +1	2d8p-1		DAMAGE 3*
3 ft REACH		TOP SAVE n/a	

ATTACK NOTES:

WEAPON: Scimitar

HITPOINTS: 33
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DEFENSE NOTES:
*+10 DR vs. piercing, +6 DR vs. hacking; Will Factor 1

CARRIED:
rusty scimitar

TOP CHECK @: NEVER

EPV: 67

Skeleton

Size: M/25 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: non
Tenacity: Fearless
Vision: Standard
Int: non
Fatigue Factor: n/a
SAVES: Phys: +1 Mental: n/a
Dodge: +1

SPEED 9	ATTACK +1	DMG REDUCTION 0	INIT 0
DEFENSE +1	2d8p-1		DAMAGE 3*
3 ft REACH		TOP SAVE n/a	

ATTACK NOTES:

WEAPON: Scimitar

HITPOINTS: 33
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DEFENSE NOTES:
*+10 DR vs. piercing, +6 DR vs. hacking; Will Factor 1

CARRIED:
rusty scimitar

TOP CHECK @: NEVER

EPV: 67

Skeleton

Size: M/25 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: non
Tenacity: Fearless
Vision: Standard
Int: non
Fatigue Factor: n/a
SAVES: Phys: +1 Mental: n/a
Dodge: +1

SPEED 9	ATTACK +1	DMG REDUCTION 0	INIT 0
DEFENSE +1	2d8p-1		DAMAGE 3*
3 ft REACH		TOP SAVE n/a	

ATTACK NOTES:

WEAPON: Scimitar

HITPOINTS: 33
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DEFENSE NOTES:
*+10 DR vs. piercing, +6 DR vs. hacking; Will Factor 1

CARRIED:
rusty scimitar

TOP CHECK @: NEVER

EPV: 67

Skeleton

Size: M/25 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: non
Tenacity: Fearless
Vision: Standard
Int: non
Fatigue Factor: n/a
SAVES: Phys: +1 Mental: n/a
Dodge: +1

SPEED 9	ATTACK +1	DMG REDUCTION 0	INIT 0
DEFENSE +1	2d8p-1		DAMAGE 3*
3 ft REACH		TOP SAVE n/a	

ATTACK NOTES:

WEAPON: Scimitar

HITPOINTS: 33
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DEFENSE NOTES:
*+10 DR vs. piercing, +6 DR vs. hacking; Will Factor 1

CARRIED:
rusty scimitar

TOP CHECK @: NEVER

EPV: 67

Skeleton

Size: M/25 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: non
Tenacity: Fearless
Vision: Standard
Int: non
Fatigue Factor: n/a
SAVES: Phys: +1 Mental: n/a
Dodge: +1

SPEED 9	ATTACK +1	DMG REDUCTION 0	INIT 0
DEFENSE +1	2d8p-1		DAMAGE 3*
3 ft REACH		TOP SAVE n/a	

ATTACK NOTES:

WEAPON: Scimitar

HITPOINTS: 33
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DEFENSE NOTES:
*+10 DR vs. piercing, +6 DR vs. hacking; Will Factor 1

CARRIED:
rusty scimitar

TOP CHECK @: NEVER

EPV: 67

Skeleton

Size: M/25 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: non
Tenacity: Fearless
Vision: Standard
Int: non
Fatigue Factor: n/a
SAVES: Phys: +1 Mental: n/a
Dodge: +1

SPEED 9	ATTACK +1	DMG REDUCTION 0	INIT 0
DEFENSE +1	2d8p-1		DAMAGE 3*
3 ft REACH		TOP SAVE n/a	

ATTACK NOTES:

WEAPON: Scimitar

HITPOINTS: 33
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DEFENSE NOTES:
*+10 DR vs. piercing, +6 DR vs. hacking; Will Factor 1

CARRIED:
rusty scimitar

TOP CHECK @: NEVER

EPV: 67

Use for Act 4

Dorguld

Size: M/153 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CE
Tenacity: Nervous*
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: 2
SAVES: Phys: 0 Mental: +1
Dodge: +1

SPEED 9	ATTACK +2	DMG REDUCTION +5	INIT +5
DEFENSE +4	2d8p-1		DAMAGE 3
3 ft REACH		TOP SAVE 5	

ATTACK NOTES:
*will not flee unless Ryeth does or is incapacitated

WEAPON: Scimitar Knife

HITPOINTS: 21
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DEFENSE NOTES:
infected with The Wrack

CARRIED:
studded leather, scimitar, sm. shield, knife

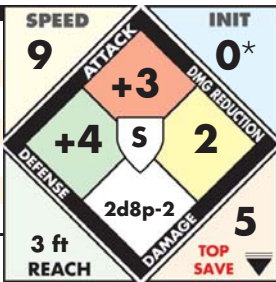
TOP CHECK @: 9 HP

EPV: 34

Jelena

Size: M/119 lbs
Move: 5/10/15/20
Alignment: CE
Tenacity: Nervous **
Vision: Standard
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: 0

SAVES Phys: +2 Mental: +2
Dodge: +2



ATTACK NOTES:
 * -1 initiative die type; **will not flee unless Ryeth does or is incapacitated

DEFENSE NOTES:
 15 luck points, 14 honor, infected with The Wrack

CARRIED:
 leather, sm. shield, scimitar, 15 cp, 14 sp

WEAPON: Scimitar

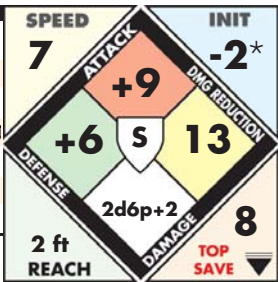
HITPOINTS: 25
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TOP CHECK @: 8 HP
EPV: 133

Ryeth Olm

Size: M/150 lbs
Move: 10/15/20/25
Alignment: CE
Tenacity: Nervous
Vision: Low Light
Intelligence: Average
Fatigue Factor: 0

SAVES Phys: +5 Mental: +7
Dodge: +10



ATTACK NOTES:
 * -2 initiative die type; spell use as 4th level cleric (see text); can cause 4 hp DMG w/ touch 1/day (no DR)

DEFENSE NOTES:
 25 honor, DR only 3 if struck by silvered weapons

CARRIED:
 short sword +2, small shield, 31 cp, 41 sp, temple keys

WEAPON: Short Sword +2

HITPOINTS: 50
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TOP CHECK @: 20 HP
EPV: 450



A mere year past Cosolen was a genteel city in which the arts flourished. A terrible natural disaster changed all this. Though spared the calamity, the city is inundated with hardscrabble refugees that have overwhelmed its ability to accommodate them. Crowded into squalid tenements or outlying shantytowns, the newcomers have become pariahs and transformed the city guard into reviled oppressors. In this tumultuous new social order the unwelcome specter of plague has made its first appearance. It is up to a determined group of outsiders to wrestle with the mysterious origins of the Plague of Cosolen before it tears the city apart.