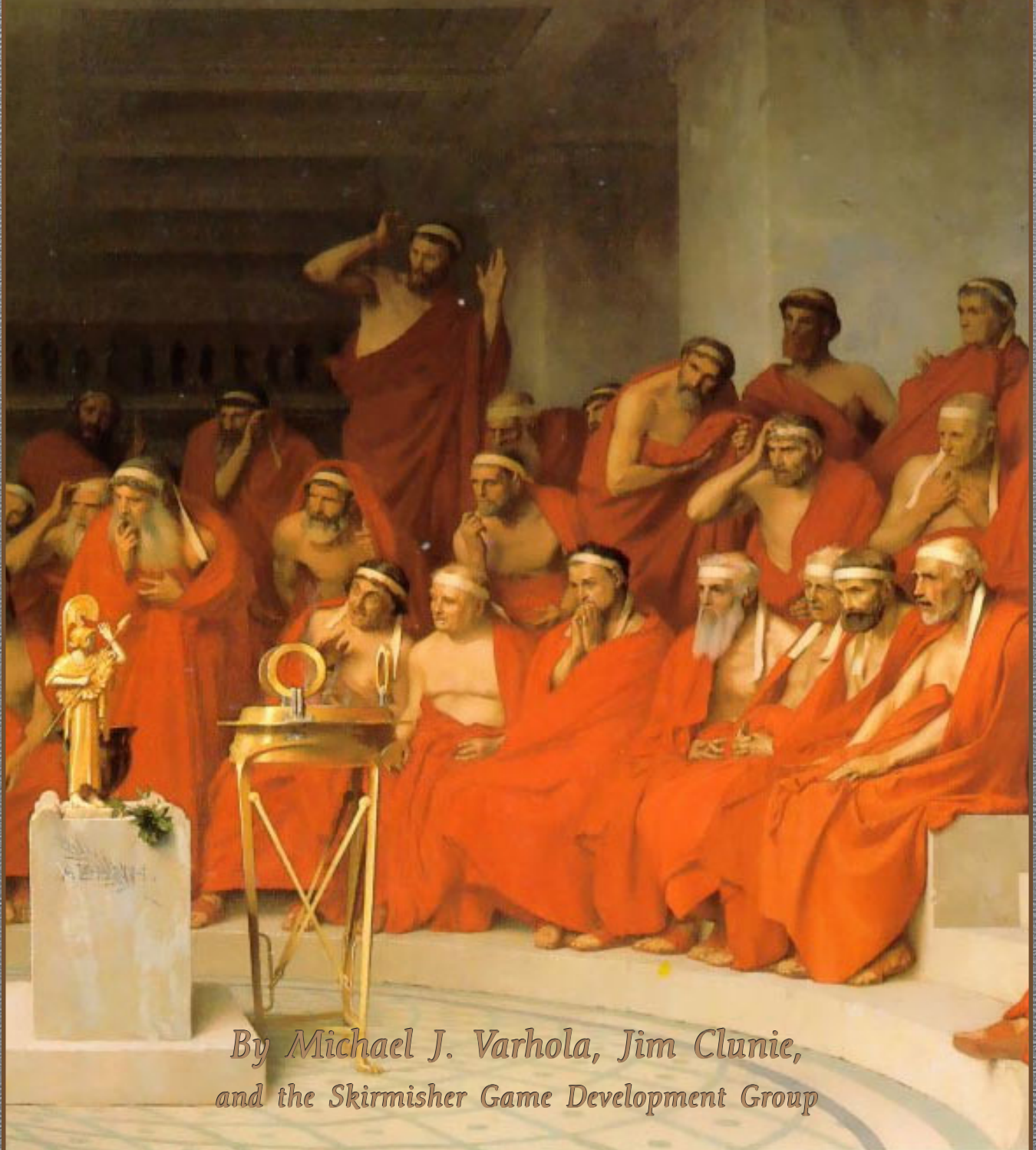


City Builder Volume 10:  
**GOVERNMENTAL PLACES**



*By Michael J. Varhola, Jim Clunie,  
and the Skirmisher Game Development Group*

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## Viewing This Book

This book has been designed to be as user-friendly as possible from both the perspectives of printing out for use in hard copy and viewing on a computer screen. It has been laid out like a traditional print book with the idea that each even-numbered page complements the odd-numbered page that it should face (e.g., the illustration of the audience in session on page 7 is set up to face and illustrate the Audience Chamber entry on page 6).



With the above in mind, the optimal way to view and enjoy this book would be to print it out and organize it in a binder so that the pages are arranged as described above. This is by no means necessary, however, for using and fully benefiting from *City Builder Volume 10: Governmental Places* and its contents.

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# Introduction

In addition to the quintessential marketplaces, inns, taverns, and other commercial places so familiar to characters, there are many sorts of public areas, buildings, and structures representing the government of the city or region that they might need to visit in the course of their urban adventures.

Communities of any size might have governmental places of some sort and these are usually imposing, purpose-built structures — often characterized by magnificent features like columns, domes, and ceremonial staircases — designed to project the grandeur and ethos of the state or community that has constructed them. Many have an iconography worked into their architecture and embellishments that exemplify the culture — or great deeds from its history — that they represent.

In small communities like villages, governmental places might include council halls, manors, or, if they exist in societies with strong central governments, departmental offices or police commanderies. Governmental places are likely to be less imposing in such settings, and might essentially be large versions of the rural structures described under “Buildings” in *City Builder Volume 1: Communities*. In less organized regions yet, single appointees or influential business folk, such as the proprietors of taverns or general stores, may fulfill many governmental functions by default and their premises might take the place of a clerk’s office or even a courthouse (e.g., the Jersey Lilly Saloon made famous by Judge Roy Bean).

Larger communities, especially capital cities and metropolises, might have neighborhoods or entire wards where governmental places are located near each other (e.g., the *agorae* of ancient Greek city states, which were used as civic centers and central locations for government buildings, temples, trade, and political, religious, and social gatherings of all sorts). In addition to buildings, such precincts also often include features like fountains, monuments to local heroes, official markers (e.g., declaring the spot as the center of the state in question), and clocks (e.g., the *clepsydrae* water clocks of many ancient Greek cities).

Visits to governmental places can be as challenging in their own ways as any other sorts of expeditions. Such ventures can give characters the chance to roleplay and use skills that might not turn up in the course of normal adventurers — such as diplomacy, or knowledge of subjects like royalty and aristocracy — and GMs the opportunity to insert appropriate adventure hooks.

Governmental places that characters might have to visit in the course of their adventures could include audience chambers, city garrison barracks, courthouses, guardhouses, harbor masters’ offices, local jails, official manors, palaces, prisons, and workhouses, all of which are described in this volume.

Other sorts of governmental and civic places that might be typical in an ancient, medieval, or fantasy community — and which player characters might visit before, during, or after their adventures — include forums, a common feature in democratic or republican states, which are used as gathering places for activities like speeches, debates, official proclamations, and voting; legislatures, used as meeting places for councils of elders, senates, oligarchies, or other bodies of elected or appointed governing officials that have authority over the communities in question; mints, used for the storage of precious metals and the creation of official coinage; schools that might include everything from military academies to universities; storehouses maintained by governments to offset shortages during times of famine or other hardship; and military structures that might include keeps, castles, grand halls, chambers for confidential meetings, offices, temporary quarters for visiting commanders, stables, armories, and parade grounds.

Most communities will not have all of these elements, and game masters should pick and choose among them as needed, based on the government and culture of a particular city’s inhabitants. Forums for debate would be common in a democratic society, for example, but palaces might not be. Places designed for the free expression of ideas would be much less common in a dictatorship, however, but prisons would be much more prevalent.

Depending on the needs and ethos of the community or nation using them, any of the listed structures might exist in conjunction with a temple, a fortification, or one another. For example, in a society like ancient Athens, the municipal mint might be situated next to the temple of the city’s patron deity on the acropolis. In a state where policing of the population is a constant concern, a jail, courthouse, and archive of criminal records might all be grouped together in a special judicial complex.

In addition to anything else they might contain, governmental places almost always include libraries of regulations and other pertinent books, and archives for

# City Builder Volume 10

the storage of official records specific to their areas of responsibility (e.g., laws, decrees, lawsuits, birth certificates, titles to land, criminal records).

Security is usually significant at governmental places, many of which are built like fortresses. This is generally not a coincidence, as in many societies major public buildings are designed to serve as strongpoints during times of civil or political unrest. Defensive elements are likely to include thick stone walls, a lack of windows on ground floors, bars on the windows of upper floors, and solid metal doors that can be both locked and barred. Such places also usually have full-time complements of guards assigned to them, or even permanent garrisons of troops who live at the site.

## About This Series

This is the tenth volume in a series of 11 books designed not just to provide Game Masters with concrete information about how to create places essential to their own role-playing campaigns, but also to inspire them to develop ones that are believable, colorful, and exciting for their players' characters to visit.

*City Builder Volume 10: Governmental Places* examines venues associated with and controlled by the ruling powers of a community or state. Characters might decide to visit such places for any number of reasons, but might also find themselves summoned or unwillingly taken to some of them. Specific places of this sort described in this book include Audience Chambers, Barracks, Courthouses, Guardhouses, Harbors and Harbormasters' Offices, Jails, Manors, Palaces, Prisons, and Workhouses.

While it is a universal resource not keyed to a particular system of rules, *City Builder Volume 10: Governmental Places* has also been written so as to be fully compatible with the various Skirmisher Publishing LLC d20 publications, including *Experts v.3.5*, *Tests of Skill*, and *Warriors*.

## Using This Book

Each section in this book contains a description of the place to which it is devoted. This description includes such things as the kinds of communities in which the place might be found, the kinds of leaders, proprietors, and staff associated with it, and the sorts of goods, services, or other things that characters might visit the place to obtain.

Following the description are two or more adventure hooks that are designed to describe interactions beyond the normal operations of the place that might concern player characters and turn any particular one into a venue for adventure.



# Audience Chamber

**A**udience chambers are places designed to hold formal meetings between heads of states, ruling nobles, major religious figures like high priests, or other important personages and those they have invited to meet with them. Such an invitation is sometimes in response to a request for a meeting from the other party; sometimes to proclaim to the attendees an honor that the state wishes to bestow on them in person or a service demanded of them (seldom phrased as a request in such overbearing surroundings); and sometimes a standing custom, especially in the form of public sessions to settle disputes or receive pleas for assistance. Anytime player characters receive a commission from a noble or approach a similar personage with some petition, it is likely that their official interactions will take place in some sort of audience chamber.

The main figure associated with an audience chamber is usually a secular or religious aristocrat of significant stature, likely with the rank of earl or greater, although such a personage might be of any rank if he is also the head of an independent or quasi-independent state. There are places essentially conforming to the characteristics of audience chambers, of course, used by officials of much lower rank or prestige. (For more information about aristocratic ranks, see Chapter 5: Society in *Gary Gygax's Nation Builder*.)

Staff associated with audience chambers typically includes guards, advisors to the noble, various lords-and-ladies-in-waiting, and a wide variety of servants (including those tasked with briefing visitors on the proper way to behave while in the audience chamber). Such personnel are usually of the highest perceived loyalty and, in the case of major nobles like kings, might even all be at least minor aristocrats themselves.

Etiquette, dress code, and other forms of propriety are extremely important to the functionaries of audience chambers, and those who fail to fulfill such prerequisites will likely simply be refused an audience with the noble in question. In a society where a certain color or type of apparel is reserved for members of the ruling house, for example, a commoner will not be allowed to present himself before a ruler while accoutered in such an item (and might be subject to other censures as well). Membership in a certain race, social class, or vocation might also be a prerequisite or a discriminator for entry into an audience chamber (e.g., an Elven king might by tradition only grant audiences to other Elves, while a Dwarven noble might be prohib-

ited by an equally ancient code from granting audiences to Orcs or Goblinoids, leaving such interactions as are necessary to underlings in less august settings).

Audience chambers are usually impressive and sumptuous in appearance and variously intended to impress or intimidate visitors and to project through their design, furnishings, décor, and iconography the ethos and importance of the state in question. Such places are also designed so as to subtly or overtly, as appropriate, give their owners a psychological advantage over those with whom they are meeting. One of the simplest and most common examples of this is the placement of an impressive chair or throne upon a dais before which supplicants are required to prostrate themselves. Regardless of their configuration or appearance, audience chambers are only rarely self-standing buildings, and are usually integrated into larger structures or complexes, such as palaces (q.v.) or temples (q.v.).

In addition to the audience chamber proper, other features of such places typically include one or more waiting rooms, where petitioners can await their turns to meet with the luminary with whom the place is associated, and which might include wardrobes for those who have been granted audiences but are improperly attired; guard rooms where security personnel can remain ready to intercede against attempts on the person of their lieges; and perhaps even secret areas from which visitors can be observed and into which the person associated with the place can be spirited in case of danger.

Security — especially with regard to the person for whom the place exists — is of paramount importance at audience chambers, and the most stringent measures available will be employed, likely with no regard for cost. Magical wards, to include protective and perhaps even illusory effects, will almost definitely be employed if they are available in the milieu in question.

## Adventure Hook

\* The player characters stumble by chance across threads of a plot to destroy the audience chamber where a council of the greatest nobles of the region holds court, using a device that summons a ravenous devouring force from another dimension. The plotters intend to strike at a time when the majority of the group is expected to convene, such as a seasonal opening of the council's deliberations or a royal address.





# Barracks

**B**arracks are facilities used to house military and paramilitary troops of various sorts, including soldiers, marines, and city guardsmen (this term is also often used to refer to the individual buildings used to quarter personnel). Some of the earliest examples of barracks were those built by the Roman armies for their legionaries and little has changed in either the form or function of such places in the last two millennia.

Barracks might be found in communities of almost any size — including villages, towns, cities, or specialized complexes such as monasteries — or in separate military bases of various sorts, depending on the needs of the military organizations they serve. Presence of a barracks might even encourage civilian settlement and the establishment of an adjacent hamlet geared toward providing services to it and the personnel assigned to it.

Exactly where barracks can be found is a function of the needs and ethos of the state that establishes them. The national army of a state that tries to maintain strict control over its population, for example, might maintain garrisons in barracks of varying sizes located in communities of town size or larger throughout the country. A military force more concerned about foreign invasion, however, is more likely to locate barracks in fortified military bases along its threatened frontiers. Communities of any size where barracks are located are often referred to as “garrison towns.”

Barracks complexes are especially characteristic of highly organized states or communities with standing military forces. Besides Humans, such places are maintained by the most structured demihuman and humanoid peoples, especially Dwarves and Goblinoids.

It is possible in some military establishments — especially guard, militia, or reserve units — that barracks are only used at certain times, such as periodic training or when alerted, and that they are otherwise unoccupied. It is also possible that military personnel above a certain rank be allowed to maintain private residences and only dwell in barracks for short periods or in times of crisis.

Barracks are almost always very plain and utilitarian and constructed of materials that are both cheap and readily available locally. The form of individual barracks buildings can range in configuration and size from small wooden huts designed to hold the members of a single squad (e.g., eight to 12 men) to large stone buildings that house hundreds of troops in large

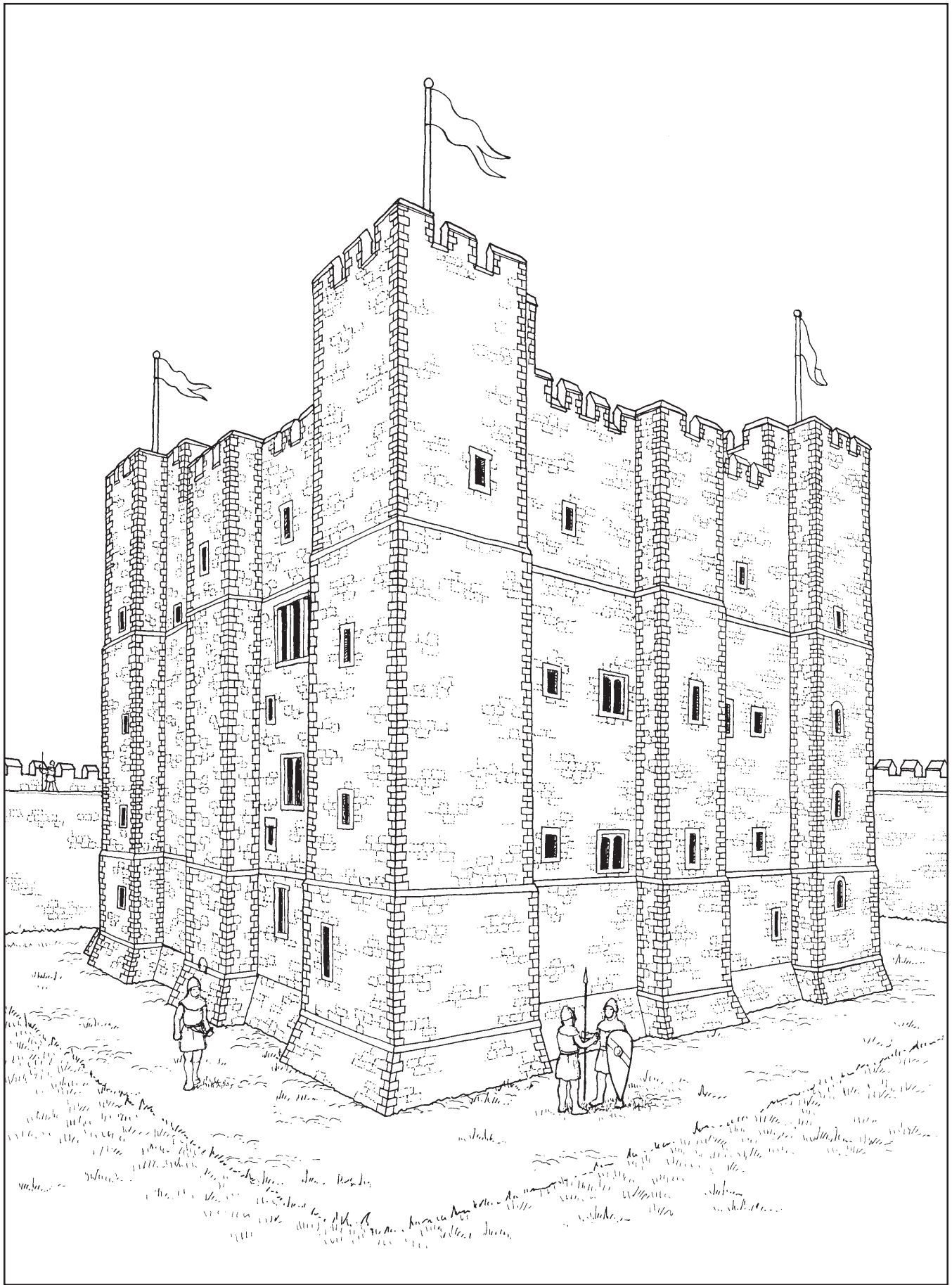
open bays, rooms, or a combination of the two (e.g., open bays for common soldiers, shared rooms for non-commissioned officers, and small individual rooms for officers). In military organizations in which both men and women serve, barracks will usually be segregated along gender lines. In some military organizations, barracks — as well as units and perhaps even military specialties themselves — may also be segregated by race as well.

In addition to sleeping quarters, barracks will usually also include features like “day rooms” where military personnel can engage in recreational activities during their off-duty hours, guard rooms, offices for unit officers and administrators, arsenals, and storage rooms. Other features that might be part of, adjacent to, or in the same complexes as barracks include dining facilities (often called mess halls, refectories, or canteens), training areas, gymnasiums, bathhouses, stables, and workshops related to the weapons, armor, and other equipment used by the military personnel housed in the barracks. (See also “Military Bases” in *City Builder Volume 1: Communities*.)

Security is important at barracks, and individual buildings will either be sturdy enough to serve as strongpoints or, if relatively flimsy, located in secure walled compounds or stockades. Security is also usually important from the point of view of maintaining discipline and regulations will likely prohibit visits by people other than those assigned to the barracks — especially civilians — or limit them to certain areas or times of the day. Measures are likely to include locking down the facility at night, posting guards at entrances to both the complex and individual buildings, and armed patrols. Magical measures may also be used if spellcasting personnel are associated with a military unit in question.

## Adventure Hook

\* The presence of barracks in a particular community makes it likely that military personnel affiliated with it will be frequently encountered in the surrounding area, especially places like taverns, gymnasiums, and the like. The results of meetings between adventurers and such troops could vary widely based on such things as the role of the military organization in the area in question and the demeanor and appearance of the player characters.



# Courthouse

**C**ourthouses are places that house local courts of law and, under some governmental systems, also serve as the main administrative offices for the local government. Activities performed at such places might include trials of criminal cases, hearings for civil lawsuits, filing of official paperwork with the authorities, performance of activities like secular marriages, and research into local laws and past rulings.

Most communities of town size or larger contain courthouses, which are generally responsible for administering legal procedures for both the community in question and the surrounding country, to include dependent towns, villages, and hamlets. Very large cities might have multiple courthouses, such as one for criminal and one for civil cases, or one for cases of all sorts with annexes for activities like applying for licenses and filing other sorts of paperwork. In the case of municipalities that are also independent city-states, courthouses might serve as the high courts of the land as well and — depending on how the nation is constituted — as the seats of branches of national governments. In the case of larger nations with strong central governments, courthouses might contain facilities affiliated with the national government, or be run by its agents rather than by local authorities.

Courthouses can vary widely in size and appearance depending on the affluence and ethos of the communities where they are located, and might range from relatively modest buildings with just a few rooms in provincial towns to immense edifices in major metropolitan areas. The appearance of such places will say a lot about the beliefs the local community and what its government wishes to project about the law (e.g., in Western society up through the 20th century, courthouses were often designed to look like classical temples).

Personnel typically affiliated with courthouses include judges, some of whom might have various areas of specialization; magistrates, who handle things like minor judicial matters and preliminary hearings; clerks, who process paperwork, perform background research, assist judges, and oversee archives, libraries, and other sections of courthouses; advocates employed by the government, including both prosecutors and public defenders; and guards who see to the security of the place.

Features of courthouses are likely to include courtrooms, judges' chambers, clerks' offices, records archives, law libraries, offices for clerks and other court-

house staff, guardrooms for security personnel, and short-term holding cells for people accused of crimes. Various other sorts of buildings might also be built near courthouses, such as jails (q.v.) or guardhouses (q.v.), and all such structures might be organized into large judicial complexes (which may or may not also be walled).

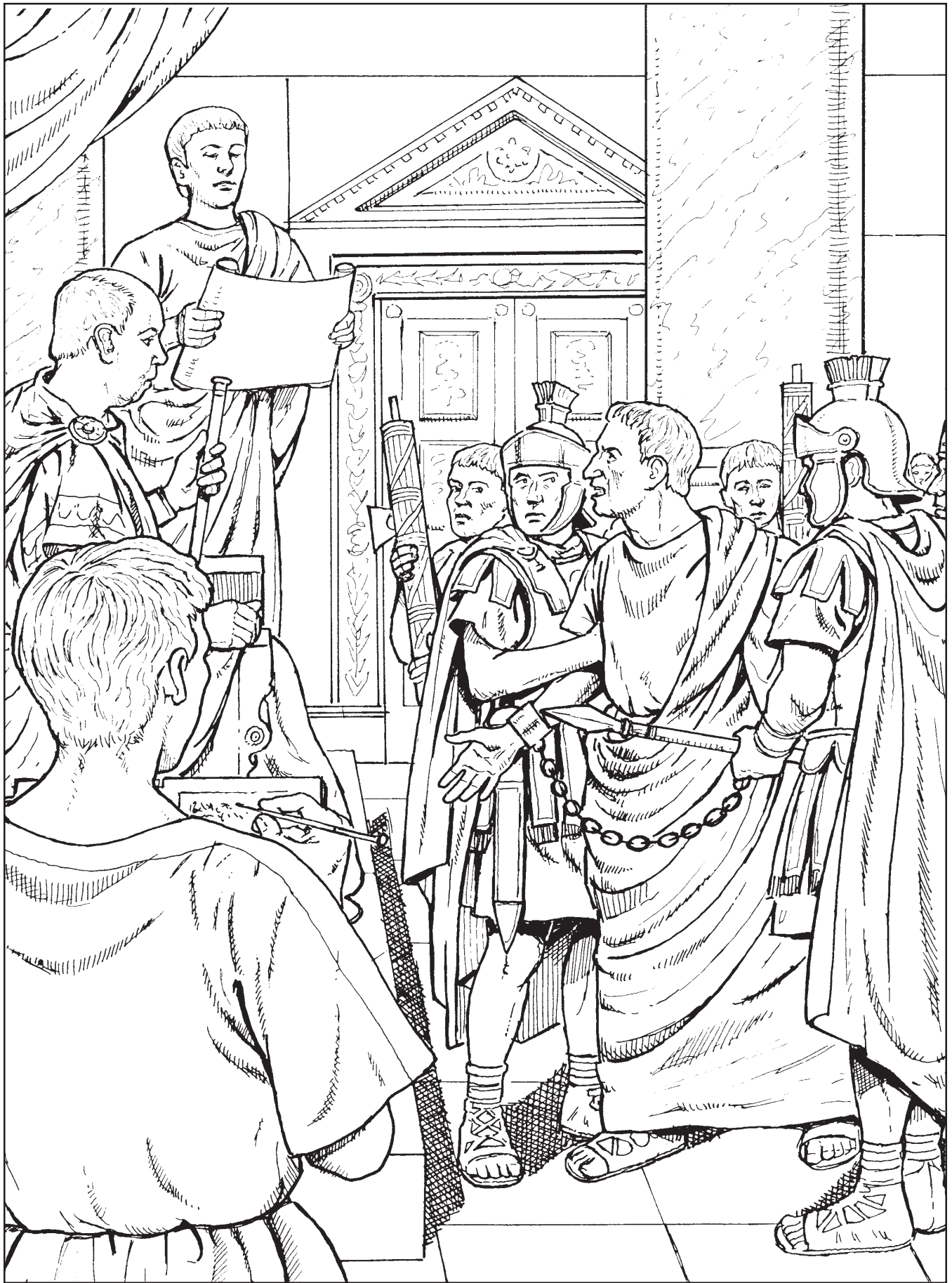
Security is usually stringent at courthouses — where dangerous criminals, dissatisfied litigants, angry mobs, and the like all present constant sources of danger — and can be increased dramatically when a particularly controversial case, or one that concerns organized criminals or members of other armed groups, is being heard. Measures might include the presence of armed guards; multiple security checkpoints where people entering a courthouse are searched to a lesser or greater extent; and heavy, locking interior and exterior portals. In societies where weapon ownership is widespread, security measures at local courthouses are likely to be especially strict. To the extent that magical means exist in the milieu to subdue or constrain troublemakers, they will likely be employed at courthouses.

## Adventure Hooks

\* Adventurers visiting a foreign city might inadvertently violate local ordinances that do not exist in their home communities and find themselves hauled into the local courthouse as a result. Penalties for such crimes might also seem bizarre or inappropriate to strangers — and might even be more severe for them in especially xenophobic or conservative areas.

\* Player characters might sometimes find it useful to seek work as bounty hunters. Notices of rewards for return of criminals who have failed to appear for trial, or have skipped out on similar obligations to the courts, might be posted at the local courthouse.

\* Player characters might find it expedient at some point to undertake some action in court (e.g., filing a lawsuit, assisting a defense counsel), and preparing for and then participating in such an event could make for an interesting variant adventure. Preparations associated with such a venture might include finding and interviewing witnesses, doing research at local libraries or governmental offices, and meeting with judges, other court officials, and opposing lawyers.



# Guardhouse

**E**stablished at critical spots throughout cities, guardhouses are used as secure strongpoints by watchmen, guardsmen, and other sorts of military or paramilitary troops. Such places are variously known as watch-houses, substations, constabularies, and commanderies — playing a somewhat similar role to modern police stations — and the troops or militia assigned to them are generally responsible for patrolling and maintaining the security of a specific section of a community. Many towns have separate facilities for the guard — armed soldiers who defend the gates, walls, civic buildings, and officials — and the watch, who patrol the streets to discourage burglary and affray.

Guardhouses can take a great variety of forms, from temporary wooden structures erected in marketplaces, to sturdy stone towers, to small walled forts. In any event, most such places are not overly large, and are generally sufficient to hold just one or two dozen watchmen (i.e., one or two patrols' worth). One thing they almost always have in common is sturdy construction and features like reinforced doors and barred windows that can provide a modicum of security to their occupants. A guardhouse might also be integrated into a community's defenseworks, or established, with a separate entrance, within a larger public structure.

Areas within a guardhouse typically include an arsenal where — depending on the force's usual equipment — armor and both lethal and non-lethal weapons are kept in between patrols and in case additional personnel need to be equipped on short notice; a small office for the officer-in-charge; possibly a holding cell or interview room where malefactors can be kept temporarily; and perhaps a public area or vestibule where people can come to lodge complaints, seek help, pay fines, or purchase permits for various activities.

Most guardhouses also include bunkrooms where guard or watch personnel can sleep and day rooms where they can relax in between their patrols or other duties. Such places are almost never permanent homes for the troops who use them, however, watchmen generally returning to their private homes and guardsmen to their barracks when their tours of duty at a guardhouse is completed. Guard tours generally range from one day to a week but possibly as long as a month, with the watchmen or guardsmen typically patrolling or standing guard for a specific amount of time followed by a rest period in the guardhouse (e.g., six hours on and six hours off).

Certain city guard units recruit from the old respected families and gentry of their communities — in which event, while equipped with the finest of uniforms and trappings, their duties are likely to be more ceremonial than martial — but the social position of working law enforcers tends to be low, ranging from that of hired muscle tasked with the dirty work of the merchant class to mercenaries or even slave soldiers. The watch or guard might be further divided between uniformed patrolmen and investigative agents, or might include special units or divisions such as mounted troops, animal-handlers, or water patrols on any rivers or canals that pass through the city. Some states might even have a separate secret police echelon with wide-ranging coercive powers to suppress particularly heinous or treasonous acts, or a patrol force tasked with enforcing moral, religious, or political strictures rather than preventing actual criminality.

Command responsibility for each guardhouse reflects the lower to mid-rank structure of the force assigned to maintain public order and security as a whole, and thus might fall either to a career soldier from the ordinary ranks or to an officer of a higher social stratum who obtained his commission by means other than military experience, such as collegial training, social position, or purchase.

## Adventure Hooks

\* Characters with a criminal or unscrupulous bent might be tempted to break into or infiltrate a guardhouse to obtain any number of useful things, including weapons, uniforms, passes, and the like.

\* In some cities, the most dangerous leaders of the criminal class are those who take advantage of their position as officers of the watch to protect lawbreakers for pay, extort those who refuse to pay, or deliver their rivals to the city's justice. Characters who make an enemy of such a corrupt watch officer must thereafter fear both underworld thugs and the forces of the law.

\* Characters assigned to a guardhouse might find it expedient to secretly keep a guest in them for a specific period of time (e.g., a visiting brother for a week, a lover until she can find lodgings elsewhere). Such an attempt could involve all sorts of stealth and subterfuge, to include sneaking, bluff, and disguise.



# Harbor and Harbormaster's Office

Natural, manmade, and augmented harbors of all sorts, which provide places for ships to berth or drop anchor where they are sheltered from bad weather, are both the lifeblood and *raison d'être* of many coastal communities. Presence of a harbor can make an appropriately situated community strategically critical as both a center of trade and a military strongpoint. Historic examples of communities with these characteristics include Alexandria, Egypt; Halifax, Nova Scotia; and St. George, Bermuda. Adventurers often take an interest in things or people on board ships berthed in the local harbor — particularly vessels from dubious foreign lands, or those rumored to be equipped and crewed more for privateering than ordinary commerce — or seek passage on seagoing vessels to promising locales in other lands.

In civilized societies with complex economic systems, traffic in and out of harbors and activities within them are regulated and monitored by government officials called harbormasters. Harbormasters themselves are often experienced sailors or lighthouse keepers, and many also have military or administrative backgrounds.

Responsibilities of a harbormaster and the staff assigned to his office might include giving vessels permission to enter or leave the harbor district and assigning them places to berth; maintaining harbor facilities; patrolling and performing various police functions in the harbor district; inspecting the cargoes of incoming ships and assessing and levying appropriate taxes, tariffs, and other fees on them; confiscating cargoes considered contraband by the local government; identifying plague ships and turning them back, quarantining their crews and passengers, or otherwise dealing with them; inspecting and monitoring the seaworthiness of vessels; attempting to predict weather and publicizing information pertaining to it through various means (e.g., flying signal flags); helping to successfully guide ships into the harbor by providing pilots, who are ferried out in launches to incoming vessels; and rescuing the crews and passengers of nearby ships in distress.

Infrastructure maintained by a harbormaster's office generally includes breakwaters, jetties, wharves, piers, seawalls, and particularly lighthouses, uninterrupted operation of which ensures safe navigation and arrival with their profitable goods of vessels from numerous foreign ports. Other facilities associated with the area, but possibly under the control of other offices, businesses, or individuals, might include shipyards, boat-

houses, and drydocks. All such places and structures are subject to the full force of the elements and must be maintained with the same consistency and regularity accorded to ships. A harbormaster's office might also have one or more vessels under its control for the conduct of its official business, such as tugs, pilot and patrol launches, maintenance tenders to work on waterside structures, and cargo lighters to offload large freighters for which the docks are inadequate.

A harbor's first line of defense is frequently the reefs and other natural obstacles guarding its approaches. In such cases, the precise locations and characteristics of such features are generally highly classified information, kept secret by the organization of pilots permitted by the harbor's rulers to guide friendly shipping into the port. Additional security at harbors is as likely to be geared toward controlling the passage of vessels as of individuals. Typical measures of the former sort include barriers like chains, or other obstacles, that can be deployed to keep ships from entering a harbor or prevent them from leaving it. Those of the latter sort will likely be similar to those employed at any government-controlled facilities, and include secure entrances to sensitive areas like lighthouses, checkpoints, patrols, and a requirement for passes or appropriate identification.

## Adventure Hooks

\* Adventurers of unscrupulous ethics (or opposed to the local rulers) hoping to smuggle goods or passengers into a particular port or coast — whether for purposes of evading taxation, importing contraband, or infiltrating criminals, rebels, spies, or other sorts of people that the authorities prefer to exclude from the territory — may have to deal with the officials affiliated with the local harbor district. Sailing skill, ability to hide or disguise cargo, guile, and possibly even force might all come into play during such an undertaking.

\* Harbors are prime strategic targets for foreign spies and saboteurs, who might carry out operations to compromise the defenses of a vital port as a prelude to a sudden invasion. Player characters who happen to pass the naval docks or watchtowers at an unusual hour could stumble upon such activities or otherwise become aware of them. How they decide to respond to such revelations is, of course, up to them.





# Jail

Jails are facilities used to temporarily incarcerate miscreants, prisoners awaiting trial, and those convicted of misdemeanor offenses for which short terms of confinement are appropriate. Such places have been depicted in many books, television shows, and other media, including the films *Rio Bravo*, *Assault on Precinct 13*, and *Ghosts of Mars*.

Unlike prisons (q.v.), which are designed for the long-term internment of convicted criminals, troublemakers are usually confined to a jail for relatively short periods of time (e.g., overnight after being rounded up for being drunk and disorderly, a month for participating in a riot that got out of hand and resulted in significant injury and destruction of property). Most inmates are released once the disturbance in which they were arrested has subsided or after they have been held a suitable — if sometimes arbitrary — period of time, paid a fine, or received some punishment (e.g., 10 lashes in the public square). And, while prisons for the protracted incarceration of offenders tend to be rare in ancient, medieval, and other pre-industrialized societies, jails are usually relatively commonplace.

Adventurers, with the lack of respect for community ordinances many of them frequently display, are especially likely to end up in local jails from time to time. Most communities have no interest in bearing the burden of such characters for protracted periods of time, however, and, if they are non-natives, will generally seek to punish or fine them as quickly as possible — or simply eject them from the local jurisdiction — rather than attempt to reform them or hold them indefinitely.

Communities of almost any size from village on up are likely to have some sort of local jails and these will typically be of a size commensurate with their populations. A good rule of thumb in a traditional game milieu is probably that a particular community is capable of jailing, in one or more jails, one prisoner for every 200-or-so people in the population as a whole. Such places tend to deal with many different problems and might at any given time hold those charged with a wide diversity of offenses.

Depending on specific local needs, jails can assume a great variety of forms. The smallest and simplest in a traditional game milieu will likely be combined with a small guardhouse or office used by whatever passes for local law enforcement and contain one or two cells, each large enough to hold one to four prisoners. Features of larger facilities of this sort might include doz-

ens or even hundreds of cells; holding areas designed to hold larger numbers of prisoners temporarily; sections where especially dangerous criminals or those at risk of attack can be kept isolated from more run-of-the-mill inmates; walled yards used as holding or recreational areas; guard towers; interrogation rooms; areas where various sorts of punishment can be meted out and perhaps demonstrated to witnesses or the public at large (e.g., floggings, hangings, confinement in stocks or pillories); and less elaborate equivalents of measures employed in prisons, such as light industry or other activities intended to keep inmates busy and to expend some of their energy.

Many jails — especially large ones set in areas like cities — are part of complexes that might include, depending on the organization and ethos of the community in question, courthouses (q.v.), guardhouses (q.v.), police barracks (q.v.), or workhouses (q.v.).

Means of confinement at most jails will be limited to traditional measures like walls, cells, reinforced doors, locks, bars, and perhaps manacles. These might be augmented by other measures if experience or local conditions call for them, of course. Magical means of pacifying or confining criminals, to the extent that they are available in the campaign setting in question, are not likely to be common at jails, but this rule might also have exceptions based on local conditions, the abilities of the jailers, and the capabilities of typical prisoners. Conversely, security might be very light at some facilities, especially those where inmates are expected to serve short sentences as the price for being allowed to return to normal society.

Depending on their length of incarceration, detainees might also be expected to give up their personal clothing and wear some sort of uniform. Jailers might confiscate certain items of clothing, such as shoelaces and holy symbols, even from prisoners held for short periods, where they could potentially be used as weapons, a means of escape, or suicide implements.

Guards at most jails, depending on the way local law enforcement is organized, will likely be members of the municipal watch or guard. Especially large urban jails might have one or more dedicated jailers helped by as many watchmen or guardsmen as are either available or deemed necessary. In any event, a jail will usually have on duty at any time one guard for every three or more inmates the facility can accommodate.

# City Builder Volume 10

## Adventure Hooks

\* During the course of any particular misadventure, player characters might find themselves temporarily incarcerated in a local jail. While there, they might meet members of the local underworld and have interactions with them that are friendly, hostile, or merely neutral. These interactions might have effects that go beyond the walls of the jail, however, and — depending on their nature — lead to offers of employment following their release, attempts on their lives, or anything else the GM deems appropriate.

\* Jails are often the scene of wretched and violent deaths and, as a result, the spirits that haunt particular cells or entire cell-blocks are often particularly fearsome in nature, whether as a result of their evil nature in life or the anguish and perceived injustice of their ends. Player characters who have some competence or reputation in the field might be called upon to exorcise ghosts at a jail. Or, characters who are locked up there might be confined in a haunted cell, perhaps as a punishment for insolence or troublemaking, or because the jailers have some other particular reason to dislike them.



# Manor

**M**anors are large, usually-fortified dwellings that have traditionally served as the basis and central features of estates and are typically the homes of wealthy families, often feudal lords or land-owning planters (depending on the economic system of the milieu in question). This term is also sometimes applied to relatively small country houses belonging to well-born families, grand stately homes, and minor castles designed more for show than for defense. Other sorts of dwellings conforming to the essential characteristics of this description include those variously referred to as châteaux, manoirs, maison-fortes, villas, haciendas, mansions, and halls.

The central feature of a manor is, in fact, its great hall, which originally served as a multi-purpose audience chamber (q.v.) and venue for the day-to-day activities of the lord and his retinue, and the earliest versions of such places often consisted of little else. Other features are likely to include smaller living and entertaining areas such as parlors, libraries, and galleries; private chambers or apartments for the owners of the place; womens' quarters, if appropriate in the culture in question; smaller, much more modest living areas for servants; kitchens designed to feed numerous inhabitants; and storage rooms and pantries. Many manors — especially those in rural areas — will also have a number of outbuildings associated with them. These might include stables (q.v.), blacksmithies (q.v.) or other sorts of workshops, dovecotes, storage buildings, and chapels.

Manors are most commonly located in rural areas, either as self-standing structures or as the central components of self-contained complexes. Others might be located in thorps, hamlets, or even villages which, in such cases, probably grew up around the manors. A manor might, in fact, be the center of a small community conforming to the characteristics of a plantation or commune (see *City Builder Volume 1: Communities* for more information). In Bronze Age or tribal settings, buildings much like manors, with their surrounding towns, may form the capitals of entire states. Manors are almost always economically self-sustaining, and might actually be essentially self-sufficient. Nobles may also maintain homes of a similar size and description within towns or cities.

Manors will often be surrounded by affiliated tracts of land, which are typically used for agriculture or orchards. Depending on local resources, some of a par-

ticular manor's territory might also be used for activities like logging or quarrying. Such places could also have some sort of related industry associated with them, such as viticulture, brewing, distillery, oil pressing, cheese-making, or milling.

Owners of manors are almost always members of a particular society's upper class, and include nobles, high-ranking government or religious officials, non-hereditary aristocrats like baronets, knights, and squires, and mayors, judges, and major guild masters. (For more information about aristocratic and other ranks, see Chapter 5: Society in *Gary Gygax's Nation Builder*.) Such places might also be owned by various sorts of nouveau riche characters, of course, including successful merchants or lucky adventurers. In any event, the size and significance of a particular manor will depend on the affluence of its owner; while a country squire may have a comfortable, five-bedroom manse with a few associated gardens and orchards, a prince might have a sprawling mansion surrounded by hundreds of acres of parks, finely manicured gardens, and rich farmland.

Staff for places of this sort will usually include stewards, butlers, gardeners, coachmen, cooks, and maids. Those in especially dangerous areas might have a resident contingent of guards, soldiers, or armed retainers. Large manors might also be home to various sorts of artisans or tradesmen, especially blacksmiths, farriers, carpenters, and millers.

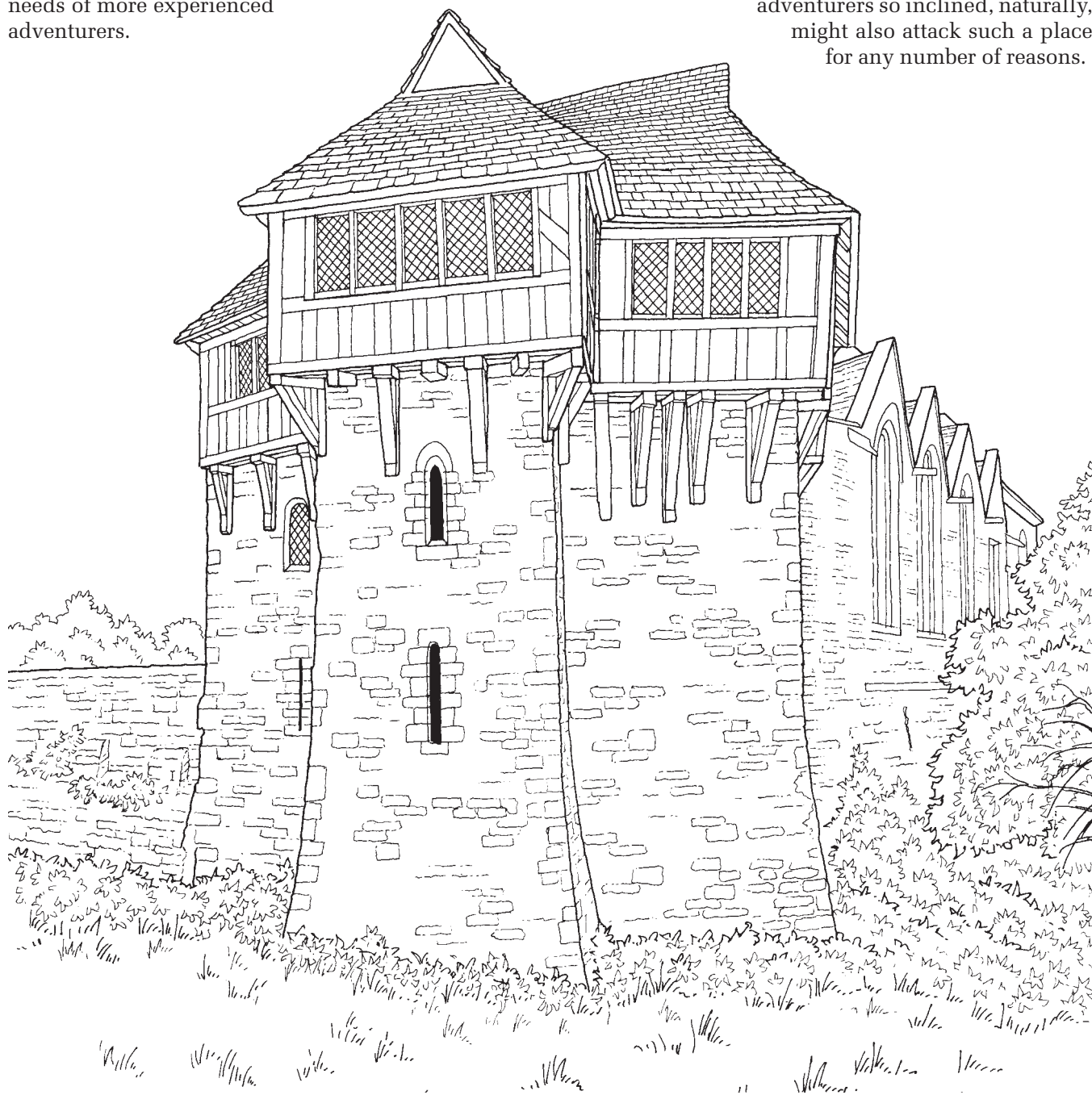
Security at manors — which are sometimes located in wild, dangerous, or at least isolated areas — is usually significant and they are often partially fortified. Typical measures might include heavy, reinforced exterior doors that are kept locked at night; light curtain walls, perhaps augmented with towers and gatehouses, around courtyards or the entire complex; and an absence of windows on ground floors, or only ones that are barred or too small to fit through. Surrounding palisades, ditches, or even moats are also sometimes present or might be added in times of unrest or if the occupants expect attack. Manors are also frequently occupied by people with arms, armor, and experience in battle, and they might form such a place's most formidable line of defense. While such places are not as militarily strong as castles and might not be able to serve as strategic strongpoints against invading armies, they are usually more than adequate to withstand the depredations of bandits or marauding humanoids.

# City Builder Volume 10

## Adventure Hooks

\* Adventurers might regularly encounter manors in the course of their adventures, and such places could be the homes of either enemies or allies. They might also serve as venues for exploration or investigation, especially if found ruined, abandoned, or occupied by monsters, brigands, or other creatures. Characters may, of course, ultimately seek to acquire their own manors, which ideally suit many of the needs of more experienced adventurers.

\* The relative isolation of a country manor allows those who contemplate violence against its occupants, and who have suitable resources, to gather armed bands and make an open assault on the place with little fear of immediate interference or discovery by the forces of law and order. Characters visiting a manor could find themselves in the position of helping to defend the place — with some assistance from the retainers and prepared defenses of the manor — against a large-scale attack by brigands or pirates. Those adventurers so inclined, naturally, might also attack such a place for any number of reasons.



# Palace

**P**alaces are the large and usually extravagant homes of heads of state, high-ranking public and religious figures, and sometimes other wealthy or powerful individuals. In states where — in fact or ethos — individuals do not generally own such structures, the term “palace” might nonetheless be applied to various sorts of public structures (e.g., a Palace of Justice). Likewise, in states that have radically shifted in their governmental forms, places originally constructed as palaces for kings, emperors, and other nobles might see continued usage as legislatures, museums, and the like.

While the term “palace” is used somewhat broadly here, it bears mentioning that in some cultures it has had a very narrow usage (e.g., in England the term is applied only to the official residences of royalty and certain bishops, while in France it refers only to urban structures, the term “chateau” being used for similar places located in rural settings).

Famous examples of great palaces include the Palace of Knossos in Crete, the Forbidden City in China, the Chateau de Versailles, the Louvre, and the Palace of the Popes in France, the Apostolic Palace in Vatican City, and, of course, the great Palatine Hill palaces of imperial Rome (from which the very word “palace” is derived). Palaces and their day-to-day activities have also been described in numerous works of literature, never more effectively perhaps than in the “Judge Dee” mystery novels of Robert van Gulik.

Official palaces are especially characteristic of states with centralized governments, particularly monarchies and empires, and have been built by such societies throughout the world. Far from simply being the homes of ruling heads-of-state, such places quite often also contain the offices and perhaps even the residences of advisors, clerks, bureaucrats, and other officials. They are thus frequently also the de facto capitols and political — and possibly religious — nerve centers of the states in which they are located and emblematic of their regime of governance. Official palaces, as opposed to those that are merely lavish private residences, are usually constructed and maintained from public treasuries.

Palaces might be found in communities of almost any size. In the cases of those located in conjunction with thorps, hamlets, or even villages, such smaller communities have likely been established solely for the purposes of providing support for the palace. In some

cultures, such as that of Minoan Crete or ancient Egypt, the basic form of community was, in fact, a fortified palace complex surrounded by farms, workshops, temples, barracks, and all other necessary structures and facilities.

Palaces are almost always constructed of the best materials available. Likewise, they are also usually furnished lavishly, often with features and amenities that go far beyond what is available to people in the society as a whole, including an array of subsidiary uses described elsewhere in this volume or the City Builder series overall (e.g., audience chambers, libraries, museums, chapels, bathhouses). As visible symbols of the majesty and strength of the ruling dynasty, their public facades, too, are lavish in scale and materials, with features designed for the rulers to display themselves and address large gatherings of citizens in suitable pomp and style, such as public squares, grand stairways, and large balconies.

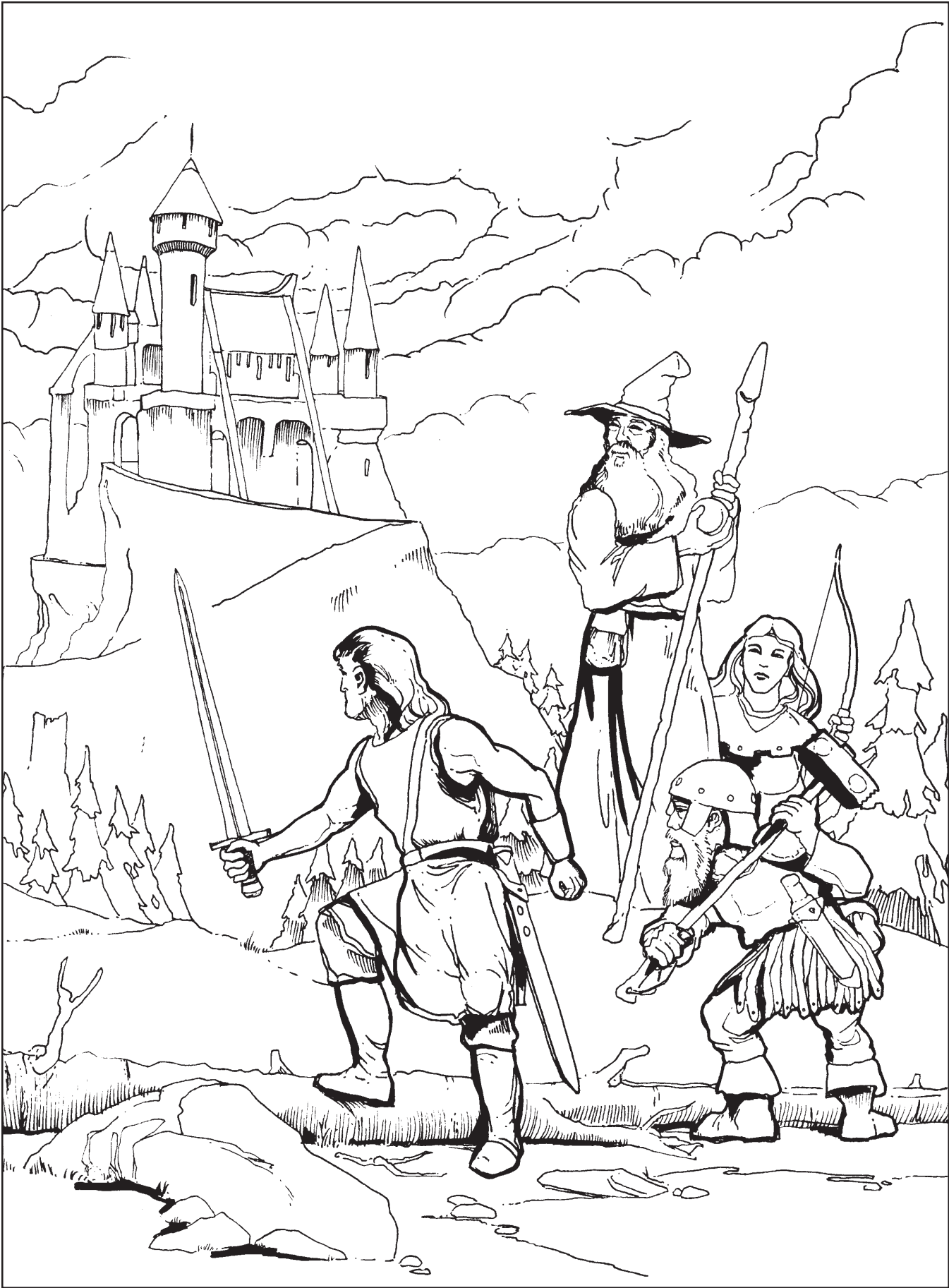
Because palaces are often critical to the functioning of their states — or at the least the residences of people that likely have many enemies — security at them is usually extremely rigorous. Measures likely include dedicated guard forces, often composed of elite troops, and the best physical safeguards available (e.g., reinforced doors, barred windows, excellent locks, surrounding walls).

## Adventure Hooks

\* In the course of their adventures, a group of player characters discover a sprawling, lavish palace, complete with decorative gardens and all sorts of other exotic diversions. Mysteriously, it appears to have been completely abandoned by its original inhabitants — and to possibly be plagued with any number of hazards, or haunted by weird and sinister usurpers.

\* For whatever reasons, to include espionage, theft, or assassination, one or more player characters might need to infiltrate a palace complex, evade the various security measures, and find their way both in and out of the mazelike place to accomplish their mission.

\* A suspicious figure has been seen lurking about a palace complex and has eluded any attempts at question or capture, leading to a resourceful player character being approached to investigate.



# Prison

Most organized societies have prisons of some sort, secure places where they can incarcerate their most dangerous, antisocial, or undesirable members and prevent them from having contact with the free populace. A broad variety of examples from history (e.g., Alcatraz, Devil’s Island, Soviet gulags, the dungeons of Venice), literature (e.g., Philip Jose Farmer’s *World of Tiers* series, Alexander Dumas’ *The Count of Monte Cristo*), television shows (e.g., *The Prisoner*, *Prison Break*) and movies (e.g., *The Last Castle*, *Fortress*, *Escape from New York*) are available as models for game masters interested in including such institutions in their campaign settings. Prisoner-of-war camps, concentration camps, penal colonies, gladiator training centers, and some boarding schools all fall, more-or-less, into this broad category of institution.

In ancient, medieval, and other pre-industrialized societies, prisons tend to be rarer, smaller, and much less widespread than in the modern world. Legal systems in such societies often regard imprisonment only as a preparation for trial or an extra-legal solution to keep troublemakers out of circulation, rather than as a legitimate means of punishment or reform. In any event, a society’s attitudes toward law and chaos tend to have a much greater impact on the numbers and sorts or prisons and inmates it has than do any beliefs it has about good and evil.

Depending on the prevalence of the crimes it is intended to suppress and the resources of its owner, a prison might house anywhere from a handful of prisoners to several hundred or more. Prisoners might be incarcerated for any number of reasons, and often everyone held in a particular prison will be there for similar classes of crimes (e.g., criminals, heretics, political dissidents, prisoners of war, overthrown aristocrats). Particularly ugly situations, possibly for both prisoners and their captors, can arise when groups confined for one sort of infraction are mixed with those incarcerated for another (e.g., political prisoners mixed in with hardened criminals).

Prisons can be of almost any size and, historically, have ranged from a single secure room at one end of the spectrum to entire islands and even a small continent — Australia — at the other. In a fantasy milieu, of course, the possibilities are even greater, and penal facilities might even be extended into extra-dimensional space or other planes of existence more conducive to

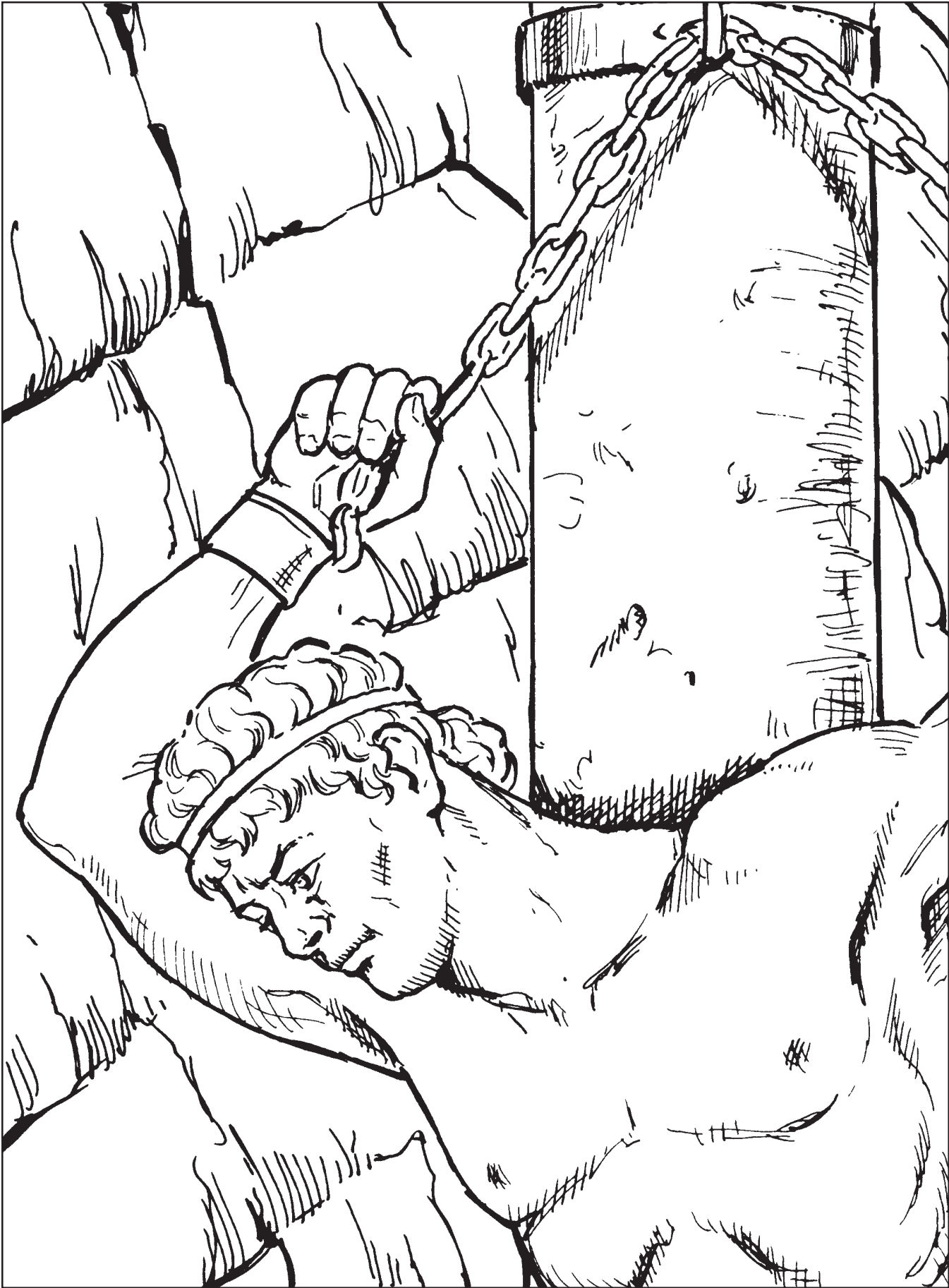
handling the most dangerous and unmanageable prisoners (e.g., Dante’s *Inferno* describes what is, in essence, a prison for the souls of those condemned for their iniquity).

Prisons can also assume a wide variety of forms, from towers to walled building complexes to labyrinthine underground networks. At a glance, many prisons appear to be fortresses of a sort, and share with them characteristics like high walls, tall towers, and sturdy gates. Unlike fortresses, however, which are designed to keep people out, prisons are primarily designed to keep them in, to protect guards from prisoners and prisoners from each other, and to keep their inmates within a particular confined area and cut off from normal society as a whole.

While walls, cells, bars, and shackles are the most well-known means of confinement in real-world prisons, they are not the only devices that have been employed historically and are by no means the only ones that could be employed in the context of a fantasy campaign setting. Bodies of water, dense jungles, impassable mountains, and trackless arid wastelands can all serve to confine people just as well. Indeed, in some cases, especially isolated areas, such as islands, might be used as “open prisons” with no walls at all. And in a fantasy milieu, the possibilities are endless, and could include such things as labyrinths with neither entrance nor exit into which prisoners are magically teleported, death runes inscribed directly on their bodies that are activated if they leave a specific area, or magical reduction of their size or abilities.

In addition to actual means of incarceration, prisoners might also be identified — and thus impeded in their activities should they escape — by specific types of clothing, tattoos, or ritual mutilations like branding.

Real-world prisons are generally guarded by Humans, often with the assistance of animals like dogs. In a fantasy world, of course, guards might be of some other race altogether, whether humanoid or not. One way or another, a prison will generally have a ratio of at least one guard to every three comparable prisoners — although the presence of nonhuman creatures or magic could change both these proportions and the definition of “a guard” considerably (e.g., guards who are spellcasters and can employ magical means to suppress trouble). And it is certainly possible for a prison to have no guards at all, particularly if there is little or no fear of prisoners escaping and no one much cares





# Prison

what they do anyway.

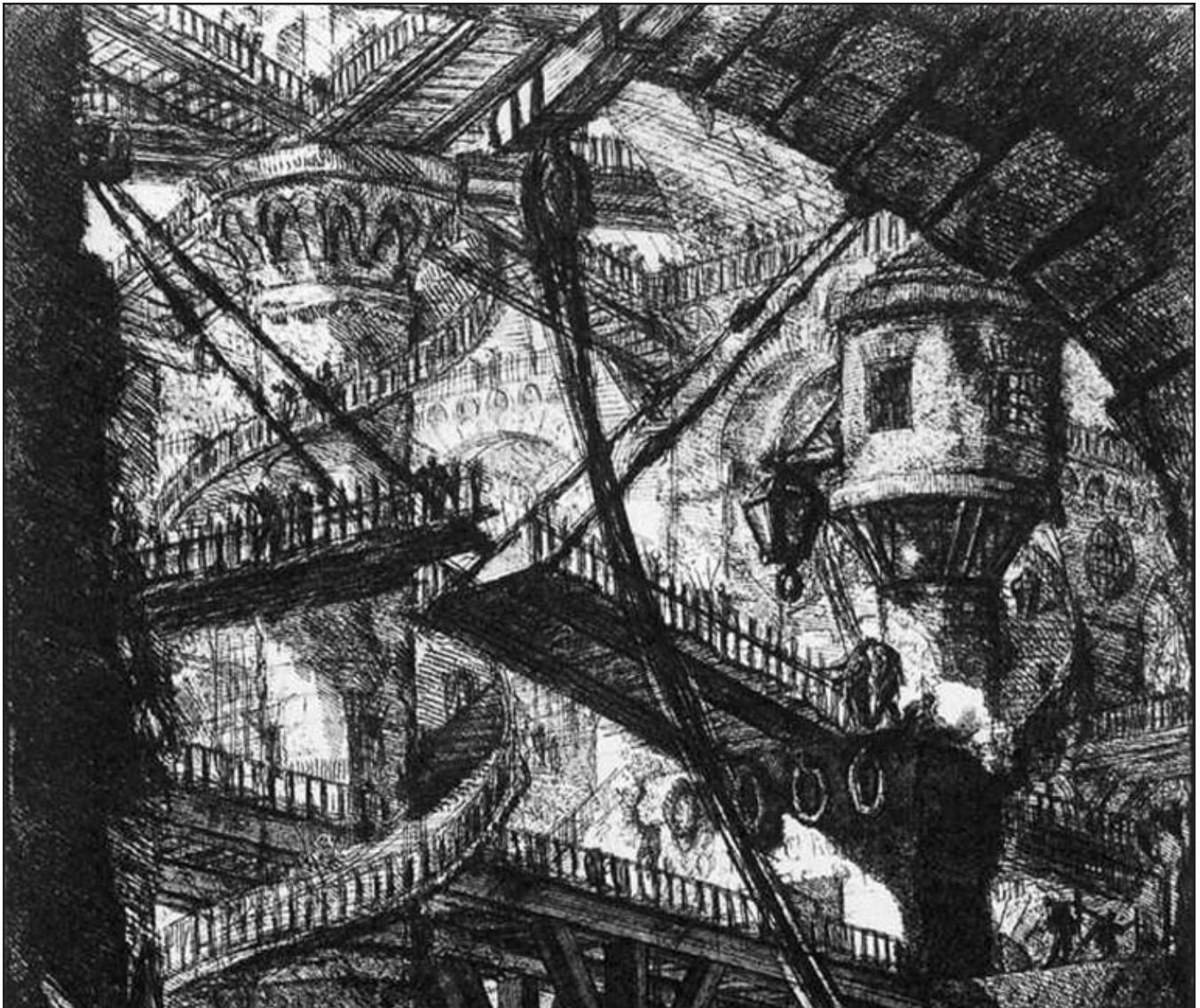
Guards are generally equipped both for nonlethal control of prisoners and for rapid access to deadly force when required, and have any required gear to maintain an advantage of movement over the prisoners (e.g., mounts if a prison is in open country, boats if it is surrounded by water).

Many prisons also have some sort of industry associated with them, used either to occupy the prisoners, to punish them, or as a means of using them to support themselves or earn a profit. Such industries are likely to be very labor intensive, low-skilled, and at least somewhat hazardous, and typically include mining, quarrying, logging, farming, road-building, and simple manufacturing.

## Adventure Hooks

\* For whatever reasons, one or more player characters end up incarcerated in a prison and — if they wish to resume urgent business in the world at large or avoid the oblivion and hazards of prison — must endeavor to escape. Such an attempt may be with or without the possible assistance of characters on the outside.

\* A player character party is approached in some way with an offer of great reward — or possibly dire consequences if they refuse — to rescue a prominent prisoner from an especially secure prison. Rewards of success for the rescuers could be great, but the consequences of failure could be equally profound and include death or their own imprisonment.



# City Builder Volume 10

Workhouses are places where people who are unable to support themselves can go to live and work, and many of the indigent inmates of such places include the mentally or physically infirm, widows, orphans, abandoned wives, and the aged. Debtor's prisons largely conform to the characteristics of workhouses — differing from them mainly in that they tend to be somewhat more severe and in that those owing money can be sentenced to terms in them until their debts have been repaid — as do orphanages and homeless shelters. These sorts of institutions are unflatteringly described in many stories, including George Orwell's *Down and Out in Paris and London* and many novels by Charles Dickens (e.g., *Oliver Twist*, *Little Dorritt*) and, for the most part, were regarded with dread by those relegated to them.

Historically, institutions of this sort have existed in many societies around the world, but the most famous are those that began to evolve in England in the 17th century and persisted as an institution until 1930. Such places had their official origin in the Elizabethan Poor Law of 1601, which both stated that “materials should be bought to provide work for the unemployed able-bodied” and proposed construction of housing for the “impotent poor,” including the elderly and chronically sick. Various forms of non-residential relief for the poor had existed in England and elsewhere on an as-needed basis long before this, however, and workhouses were founded as a way to provide such assistance more consistently and economically.

Workhouses of some sort might exist in any community of village size or larger, but are much more likely to be found in sprawling urban areas, with more informal means of charity being practiced in smaller communities. Such places might be run directly by a municipal government, be contracted out by it to a third party, or be run by another sort of agency altogether (e.g., a local temple). Destitute people are generally allowed to enter at will and leave with a period of appropriate notice (e.g., a half day).

Conditions can vary widely at workhouses but — despite grudging bourgeois condemnations of some as “pauper palaces” that coddle the poor — usually range between grim and execrable and are reminiscent of actual prisons. And, while such places are not considered to be venues for punishment as such, they are usually operated with the ideas that they should be as unpleasant as possible to discourage their usage by

anyone but the absolutely desperate; that their inmates deserve to be embarrassed and degraded; and that anyone who can should leave them as soon as they are able. Workhouses are usually cold in the winter and sweltering in the summer and their residents are generally treated harshly, given the minimum of care needed to keep them alive, and subjected to all sorts of physical or emotional abuse by other inmates and the staff alike. Partly as a consequence, residents of such places often suffer from various physical or mental maladies (e.g., sickness, injuries, malnutrition, depression).

Whatever the conditions at a particular workhouse, they are likely an indicator of the dominant society's attitudes toward the poor (e.g., in a culture where a religion-based work ethic is prevalent, poverty is likely to be perceived as a moral taint that its victims have courted through bad acts, immorality, laziness, incompetence, a lack of faith, or substance abuse). Able-bodied poor might not be admitted to workhouses in some societies — for fear that this might destroy their desire for honest labor — but might be provided with the opportunity to work or do odd jobs for food or a pittance.

Most workhouses are governed by a severe series of petty and exacting rules covering every aspect of life, including diet, dress, and redress of grievances, and will likely include systems of punishments and rewards designed to promote order, discipline, and conformance. Penalties for infractions of house rules might include expulsion, corporal punishment, unfavorable job assignments, incarceration, or reduction in rations. Relations between workhouse inmates and staff are, in consequence, often very bad. And, despite the stifling regulations, workhouses are nonetheless often very rowdy.

Workhouse residents are generally required to give up their own clothing and wear distinctive uniforms. Men, women, and children are usually segregated, even in cases where this splits up parents and children or aged couples who have been together for decades. Parents are often considered to have forfeited rights to their children by entering a workhouse.

Food at workhouses tends to be poor, monotonous, and un-nutritious and, like every other aspect of such places, intended to discourage anyone but the absolutely destitute. A typical breakfast or lunchtime meal might consist of a hunk of bread and bowl of gruel or thin soup, with the same for dinner augmented with a bit of cheese. Inmates might also be required to dine in

# Workhouse

silence and may not be provided with utensils.

Work assigned to workhouse residents tends to be monotonous and degrading and designed primarily to keep them busy (e.g., crushing stones into gravel, picking oakum). Time-consuming rituals are also likely to be typical (e.g., converting sleeping areas into work areas in the morning, converting them back into sleeping areas at night, cleaning the entire workhouse from top to bottom every day).

Children often receive some sort of education at workhouses — perhaps in conjunction with labor or apprenticeship programs — but this is often mediocre or administered by other inmates.

Staff of workhouses are usually poorly remunerated and equally poorly qualified, with many of them being drunks, bullies, or incompetents just a step up in the social order from the people for whom they are responsible. In the context of a game set in a typical ancient, medieval, or fantasy milieu, the sorts of characters drawn to administer such institutions will likely include cashiered military non-commissioned officers, former city guardsmen, and all sorts of humanoids, especially Orcs, Goblins, and Hobgoblins (although humanoid societies overall are not likely to themselves support workhouses). Cooks, physicians, chaplains, teachers, and the like — to the extent that they are present at workhouses — are also usually second-rate, inadequate, or illiterate. Many such administrators and staff members are even inclined to steal their institutions' limited assets (e.g., food, operating funds, blankets) to the detriment of the residents. There might be notable exceptions to these rules, however.

Physically, workhouses are similar in appearance to prisons, barracks, and other institutional structures and might otherwise be located either in purpose-built or recycled buildings. Inmates might be housed in anything from rooms of four or more, to open bays holding

dozens of people, and be provided with bunks, hammocks, or pallets for sleeping.

Security at workhouses might include the presence of guards, surrounding walls, barred windows, main doors that are locked during hours of darkness, and perhaps even measures like confining inmates to their rooms at night.

Despite their grim conditions, in societies where workhouses exist they will likely still provide better relief for the destitute than anything else available and might save their residents from death by starvation, exposure, or other conditions of the outside world. And depending on the philosophies and ethos of the societies where they exist, such places might also be somewhat better than those that have been the norm in our culture.

## Adventure Hooks

\* Adventurers who end up on the skids might find it necessary — or convenient — to temporarily repair to a workhouse until they can line up some new opportunities for themselves. It is certainly possible that during the course of such a sojourn they might decide to investigate or address especially heinous conditions at the institution (e.g., regular murder of inmates by staff).

\* Characters who work to improve the conditions of life for the poor require great personal compassion and faith. Their efforts, however, are not always appreciated by those who hold power over the venues where they work, such as landlords, aristocrats, rebel leaders, crime bosses, officers of the city watch, or officials of state-run workhouses. Such figures, suspicious of the influence that charity workers exert over their charges and the ideas that they may impart to the local people, might arrange for such a person to be harassed or even attacked or kidnapped, leading the player characters to investigate.

\* Player characters who have committed some relatively minor offense against civic ordinances (e.g., damaging public property), might be sentenced to community service in a local workhouse, where they are charged with performing various chores, serving meals, cleaning the place, and the like. Besides taking players out of their comfort zone, this could lead to further encounters and even adventures.





S. J. GRANDVILLE.

ANDREW



**C**ity Builder Volume 10: Governmental Places is the tenth in a series of some 11 complementary books designed to help guide Game Masters create exciting and compelling urban areas and places within them for their campaigns. It is a universal game resource that is not specific to any particular system and is intended to be compatible with the needs of almost any ancient, Dark Ages, Middle Ages, Renaissance, or fantasy milieu. Its contents include:

- \* An Introduction that describes the series and how to use the material in this volume;

- \* Sections devoted to Audience Chambers, Barracks, Courthouses, Guardhouses, Harbors and Harbormasters' Offices, Jails, Manors, Palaces, Prisons, and Workhouses; and,

- \* One to three Adventure Hooks tying in with each described sort of place.

