

Thieves' Guild™ 9

# ESCAPE FROM THE ASHWOOD MINES



Gamelords, Ltd.



LOURET '83



## THE GUILDMASTER SPEAKS

By now, most of you clever rogues will have noticed the change in our cover title design. As we home in toward the first double-figure issue of **Thieves' Guild™**, it occurred to us that keeping the contents of our new issues straight was going to become increasingly confusing (for us as well as you) as the years go by. So, henceforth, each new issue of the Guild's chronicles will include both the TG issue number and the title of the feature scenario included therein. Hopefully, this will give you some idea of the fiendish delights you can expect to find inside — and keep your hungry little imaginations occupied until you've had a chance to plunk down your shekels on the local gamestore counter.

There's two other changes on the inside as well, both of which we lament the necessity of. The first of these is the elimination of the comprehensive Table of Contents which listed every rules section and scenario in proper sequence. With the release of TG 8, we finally hit our 1-page limit, so that further expansions would have been made at the expense of the scenarios. If possible, we will try to publish an annual update to the Table of Contents, with the first one appearing in TG11 or TG12.

As to the second change — Alas! — those of you who have already purchased copies of **Thieves' Guild 8** know that these thieffy chronicles have been reduced to 32 pages per issue. The bright side to this, however, is that the change was implemented so that TG would finally attain its long-hoped-for quarterly status. We also have some new regular features for the new format that will make each issue more useful to the GM (particularly those using the Free City of Haven, or other portions of the Ten Cities region as a campaign locale). More detail on these next issue.

In honor of the new format, Gamelords is announcing a bonus subscription offer!!! Until June 30, 1984, you can purchase a four issue subscription to **Thieves' Guild** (or an extension of an existing subscription) at the low price of \$18.00. That's a full 25% off the retail price, and two dollars off the regular subscription rate — a real steal, as I'm sure you'll recognize! Order today (using the address on the back cover) and take advantage of this crime of the century (you'll be glad you did!!)

Finally, we'd like to welcome aboard two new authors to the **Thieves' Guild Rogues Gallery**. Bob Traynor, author of **Escape from the Ashwood Mines**, is part of a promising group of young writers in the Boston area. We expect Bob to make contributions to the upcoming third volume of **HAVEN™**, **Intrigue on the North Bank**. Al Hopkins, principal designer of the two part **Secret of the Crystal Mountains**, is regularly involved in putting out the BART newsletter (those of you who attended the summer conventions may have encountered him selling memberships to this fast-growing Brotherhood). We hope you enjoy their first published scenario efforts, and look forward to their next submissions.

Well, my brethren of the cloak and dagger, that's all for now. Remember, though — the Guildmaster's always watching you — so let's get it right this time, eh?

## INDEX OF KEY ABBREVIATIONS

Throughout the **Thieves' Guild** series, as well as the accompanying books in the **Haven** series, certain abbreviations are commonly utilized. The meanings of these various abbreviations are summarized below.

- AC** - **Armor Class**: represents the protective value of armor, shielding, and skin carried by a character or NPC
- APP, AP** - **Appearance**: a measure of the character's personal beauty or comeliness
- BT** - **bits**: a small coin made of iron; 10 BT = 1 CP
- CD, CO** - **Coordination**: a measure of the character's dexterity, the ability to make correct deliberate physical movements
- CP** - **copper piece(s)**: a small coin made of copper; 5 CP = 1 SP
- D(300, 1DB, xDy, etc)** - **Die**: the number (x) of dice of (y) sides to be thrown while resolving a combat or particular situation
- DSC, DN** - **Discretion**: a measure of the character's common sense, memory, and ability to think clearly under pressure
- EAC** - **Effective Armor Class**: represents the total effect of skin or various armor devices used or worn by beings, plus - in the simple method for resolving combat - dodging ability
- FRP, G** - **Fantasy Role Playing (Game)**: any of a general class of games using constructed or randomly generated characters to adventure in a make-believe medieval land of high fantasy
- GM** - **GamesMaster**: the referee or moderator of an FRP game; considered to be the "god" of the particular universe s/he has created, in which players adventure
- GP** - **gold piece(s)**: a small coin minted from gold; coins usually weigh 100 to the pound; 1 GP = 10 SP = 50 CP = 500 BT
- ATK** - **Hits To Kill**: the amount of damage that a character can withstand before dying or becoming unconscious or comatose
- HAC0** - **Hits Armor Class 0 (Zero)**: number that must be equaled or exceeded on the roll of 1D20 to strike an unarmored foe; an enemy's EAC and dodging ability are added to HAC0 to get HP
- HP** - **Hit Probability**: the chances of striking an opponent
- INT, IQ** - **Intelligence**: a measure of the character's ability to learn and to profit from experience
- MA** - **Movement Allowance**: the number of hexes (normally 9 from side to side) that a character can move in one 15' melee round
- MAG, MG** - **Magnetism**: a measure of the character's charisma, attractiveness, sex appeal, personality, and/or leadership
- MGR, MR** - **Magic Resistance**: a measure of the character's innate ability to resist magic spells and other arcane effects
- mr** - **melee round**: 15 second span used to regulate the flow of play in combat; minutes and hours are used normally
- REF, RF** - **Reflexes**: a measure of the character's reaction speed, the time it takes to make instinctive movements
- SP** - **silver piece(s)**: a small coin minted from silver; 10 SP = 1 GP
- SR** - **Saving Roll**: an attempt to accomplish a feat extraordinary; this is usually tested by rolling 2D12 against a given requisite
- STM, SM** - **Stamina**: a measure of the character's ability to endure hardship or withstand wounds
- STR, ST** - **Strength**: a measure of the character's physical power, brute force
- TAL, TL** - **Talent**: a measure of the character's ability to use and/or understand magic

# *Thieves' Guild*<sup>™</sup> 9

by

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# Armed Robbery Scenarios and Pursuit Adventures

## D. The Secret of the Crystal Mountains

### Part Two: The Valley of the Ostrakonai

GM's Note: In this issue is presented Part Two of The Secret of the Crystal Mountains. Part One, Across the Golden Plateau, was published in Thieves' Guild™ 8. A synopsis of Part One follows, for the benefit of GMs who do not have that issue, or who wish to use Part Two as an independent adventure. Either part of The Secret of the Crystal Mountains is also well suited for a mixed party of adventurers of intermediate to veteran (3rd–8th) level.

#### Synopsis of Part One

While in the exotic city of Huy Lankh, the party made the acquaintance of Giles, a retired adventurer, who invited them to join him on a long and dangerous quest to the secret Valley of the Ostrakonai. There, he asserted, could be found powerful magic-enhancing crystals that could make them fabulously rich — if they could get the valuable gems away from the mages who mined and studied them, and past the sorcerous guardians of the valley. Giles offered to guide the players across the Golden Plateau, home of proud and potentially hostile nomad tribes, asking as a reward only a single Lissar crystal, an artifact made in the Valley.

During the course of the journey, amidst interesting encounters with nomads and the wildlife of the plains, their guide appeared to age before their eyes from middle-age to elderly, becoming white-haired, hard of hearing, bent with arthritis, and increasingly irritable and impatient with their progress. Finally the party approached their final obstacle — the Eregin Forest, an ancient wood reputed to be permeated with perilous sorcery. Pursued by hostile nomads, the party was able to flee into the shadow of the haunted woods, but even in their escape, tragedy struck — for Giles was fatally wounded by a nomad's arrow, leaving the players with only limited guidance on what to expect in the adventure yet to come.

#### Player's Information

During the journey across the Plateau, the players likely will have managed to gain some background information from their guide that may aid them in their quest. From Giles' tale of his former visit to the Valley, they know that the crystals can be found only in this one isolated valley, which is ruled by a council of mages. Giles and his roguish companions were at first treated hospitably by the mages of the valley, who spend much of their time in research and experi-

mentation with the crystals. The Eregin Forest is enchanted in such a manner as not to permit any of the crystals to pass through it; Giles only escaped by crossing over the rugged mountains to the south, at a place of three peaks known as the Dragon's Horns. If there is (or was) another way out of the valley, Giles never mentioned it.

### The Eregin Forest

The Eregin Forest is a place shrouded in mist and legend. A hundred miles long, but only twenty miles deep, the Forest is dark and forbidding, a maze of ancient, gnarled trees and the lingering magic of a forgotten race. Not even the shaman-priests of the Erekonai will enter its soul-chilling depths; only the Speaker-to-the-Spirits, the chief shaman of the tribe, dares to brave its shadows.

Nomad legend (encouraged and embellished by the Ostrakonai) depicts the Forest as the dwelling place of powerful spirits who walk as trees. It is said that to enter their domain uninvited is to forfeit one's body and spirit to their control forever, for none who have dared such sacrilege have ever returned.

These legends are not far from the truth. The Forest is very, very old, inhabited by the spirits of a long-vanished race, the Eregin, who also built the Dancing Stones and other ruins that dot the Valley and the Plateau. Extremely adept with magic, this gentle and trusting folk at first shared the wonders of the crystals, but were appalled at the destructive use to which their precious gems were put by others. Now, even centuries after the last of their race has gone, their magic still guards the Crystal Valley, preventing the misuse of the crystals by never allowing them to leave.

The Ostrakonai have not yet been able to find a way past the barrier of the Eregin's will, but they have managed to create a path through the Forest where the power of the guardians is diminished enough to facilitate travel, marked on either side of the Forest by a pair of stone pillars. This path cannot be used for moving crystals, for the Eregin can draw upon the power of any crystals in the Forest, draining them of their energy and leaving only pretty rocks. Nor does the path completely protect the traveler from the Forest's illusionary influences; however, one who knows what to expect can walk through with only minor discomfort. The path is maintained by a crystal artifact, set into the pillars on the Valley side, which the mages will take the precaution of dismantling as soon as they realize they have strangers in their sanctuary.

On the verge of death, Giles will be able to offer only the following bits of advice regarding safe passage of the Eregin Forest:

- You must be out of the Forest by nightfall.
- Stay on the path, whatever happens.
- Eat or drink only your own provisions.

The major strength of the Eregin is illusion, weaving a spell about the perceptions of any who dare the Forest's depths. As long as the players remain on the path, the illusions are restricted to sight and sound, and cannot actually touch them. The path is packed dirt just wide enough for two people to walk abreast, or lead pack animals single file through the trees.

Horses and other pack animals, by the way, are also affected by the illusions of the Forest, and lack the intelligence to ignore what they perceive. Any frightening illusion (a fire, a monster, etc.) can cause one of the players' mounts to bolt into the woods, carrying its rider with it. Blindfolding the animals and leading them on foot, however, will protect them from most of the influence of the Forest, leaving them only a bit skittish.

Each character will experience the Forest differently, as the Eregin try to tempt him to leave the path. It is suggested that the GM tailor illusions appropriate to each of the players, and communicate



with them by note as to what they are actually perceiving. Actions that are seen by the entire group can be announced. The following are suggestions of possible illusions which the players can encounter, either individually or as a group:

Tree Dragon — A long, serpentine-bodied creature (#101) draped across the branches overhanging the path, which hisses and bares venomous fangs. If the players ignore it, it can only hiss, but it will try to goad them into attacking, in order to force them off the path.

Dryad — A beautiful nude woman (#102) with long, flowing green hair, is glimpsed bathing in a sheltered glen only a short distance off the path; there is even a little footpath leading down to the pool. She will beckon enticingly if the players call out to her.

Giant Spider Web — Strands of sticky web block the path; a hungry group of six giant spiders (#103) are seen waiting in the trees. The players can walk right through the web, but attempting to cut it or other actions that demonstrate a belief in its reality will bring the spiders closer, who will act very real indeed, if a player leaves the enchanted path.

Old Friend (or adversary, lover, adventuring companion, etc.) — A person out of a particular character's past (GM's option) can be seen just off the path; the object is, of course, to lure the player into the woods.

All Alone — The rest of the party disappears; each character perceives himself/herself as totally alone. The GM can throw in screams of agony as the rest of the party 'vanishes'.

Sleeper under the Trees — The entire party will see a young man dressed as a warrior (in an unfamiliar style of armor) sleeping peacefully under a tree some 20 feet off the path. This is not an illusion; he is a victim of the Eregin's magic, and would recover if taken outside the Forest's influence. His name is Tyronius (#104), and he is the last survivor of a Namori patrol that managed to get up the Giant's Stairs and past the nomads; if rescued and revived, he is arrogant, warlike, and is able to speak only pidgin Common. He will be hard to convince that over four hundred years have passed during the "night", and his glorious Empire is but a memory . . .

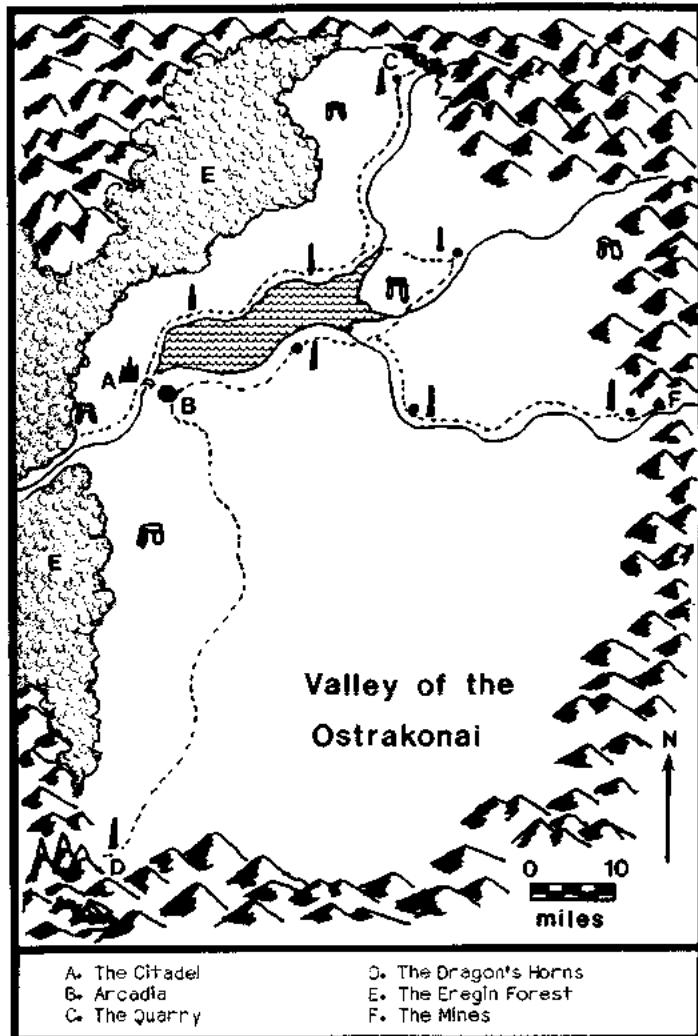
Ruins — Not far off the path are a jumbled pile of ruins overgrown with trees and ivy; a glint of gold can be seen on statuary, as well as flashes from gems inset into eyes, etc.

Branching Path — The path the players have been following appears to split into two or more branches. The actual path will appear the least appealing choice, with sounds intimating some monstrous creature in the distance, while the false paths will be clear, or even marked with runes, blazes, or other signs.

If the players can be enticed to leave the path (which is the purpose of the illusions), they are at the mercy of the Forest, where illusions take on the reality of dreams. For each foot they wander off the path, their chances of finding it again decrease; the chances are: <5 feet, 75%; 5-10 feet, 50%; 10-20 feet, 30%; 20

feet or more, 10%. If the players are still in the Forest after nightfall, a new and insidious danger will await them whether or not they have managed to stay on the path. They will begin to feel very sleepy and must make hourly saving rolls against MGR at a -6; if they succumb, they will sleep forever, untouched by time, unless brought out of the Forest (as has happened to Tyronius, in the encounters above). There is a similar danger with any water or food, such as game, nuts, or berries found in the Forest; players eating or drinking anything in the Forest that they did not bring in must make the same SR vs MGR at -6, or fall asleep under the Forest's spell.

There are several ways the players can facilitate their passage through the Forest. Any magic scrolls or devices that the players may have in their possession which dispel, or enable one to recognize, illusion will certainly be helpful, although Giles had no such magical aids. The crown worn by the Speaker-to-the-Spirits of the Erekonai functions in this manner, although it will only shield one person from the effects of illusion. Magic weapons of any kind will dissolve any illusion they hit. The GM will have to determine the effectiveness of other magical spells and devices the players may have, designed to 'find the way', protect against various evil influences, charm, etc.; it is suggested that many magic items carried in by the players operate at only partial effectiveness, due to the strength of the Erekin's illusions.



## Arrival in the Valley

When (and if) the players make it through the Forest, the path they have been following leaves the woods near a river, and passes between two stone pillars about ten feet in height. If examined closely, the pillars will be found to have two small crystals set into them to catch sunlight. The crystals could be pried out very carefully (SR vs. CDN to avoid damaging the crystals); this will render the magical path through the Forest inoperative, although the players will not realize this. Once the party's presence in the Valley has been discovered, the Ostrakonai will, however, definitely deactivate the path for the time being.

To the north and south, the Forest reaches as far as the eye can see. Along the edge of the forest are a series of five-foot stone pillars, about 100 feet apart. Any thief in the party has a 10% bonus to his SENSE TRAPS ability when approaching these pillars or attempting to pass between them. Crystals set into the sides of the pillars form a magical fence; anyone passing between them must make a SR vs MGR at a -10, or fall asleep for 1D6 hours. Breaching the fence or attempting to tamper with the crystals will also summon 1D4 Shieldmen, the local militia/police force, to the area in about an hour.

In the distance to the north-east are silhouettes of more of the giant stone monoliths that the party had found dotting the Plateau. The dancing light of what appears to be a small campfire can be seen among the pillars. A rough road stretches out before the party, following the river as it winds away to the east; across the river to the south-east are gently rolling grassy hills.

The players have several immediate options; they may travel along the road to see where it leads, investigate the firelight in the monolithic circle, or attempt to stay undercover until they know more of the situation in the valley. The Ostrakonai have no way of detecting the entry of strangers into their valley, and will not be aware of the party until they make some sort of contact. However, GMs should also note that strangers are extremely rare (and extremely obvious) in the small communities of the valley where every member of every family is known. Any contact with the inhabitants of the valley will eventually bring the news of the players' arrival to the ears of the High Council.

The road winds along the river for five miles to the town of Arcadia and the crystalline Citadel of the ruling High Council of Mages. More information on the reception the players will receive in town or Citadel may be found in a later section. The land south of the river is primarily open range for the Cherekonai, the descendants of the nomads who originally came through the Forest as 'gifts' to serve the spirit-people of the Ostrakonai. The Cherekonai live very much the way that the herdsmen of the Plateau do, except that a portion of their flocks and herds are used to feed the population in the northern part of the valley.

Should the party investigate the campfire, they will find a group of 8 young men and women, unarmed, in long robes, listening to an older man speaking about the

stars. The language spoken in the Valley is archaic and difficult for the party to follow (similar to the difference between modern and Shakespearean English). Two armed fighters lounge near the back of the circle, passing a bottle back and forth — they pay little attention to the discussion; horses are tethered outside the stone circle.

The elderly man is Fassur (#106), one of the High Council of the Ostrakonai; he is teaching a group of apprentices some basic astronomy/astrology as part of their magical studies. The group plans to spend the night here stargazing, and head back to the Citadel in early dawn. Fassur is a kindly old man, and would be eager to welcome the players should they make themselves known. The two Shieldmen are pledged to protect the group, but do not expect to have to exercise their duty on this short little jaunt. Like most inhabitants of the Valley, however, they are suspicious of strangers, and would watch the players very carefully. The appearance of the players would interrupt the astronomy lesson (to the disappointment of the apprentices, who relished the night out of the dorms), and the players would immediately be escorted to the Citadel as honored guests.

## The Ostrakonai

The Ostrakonai are the descendants of a large, ambitious band of adventurers who sought gold, glory, and powerful magical artifacts in the lost dwarven city of Myn-Orr, which legend placed in the northwest Khuz Mountains. The fortune-seekers did not find the city, but they did find a wide, fertile valley, populated by the remnants of a gentle race of elf-like beings who called themselves the Eregin. The Eregin were a peaceful, contemplative people, who tended gardens and forests and worshipped their Goddess in ancient stone temples. They were also talented mages, who used unusual crystals to enhance their arcane abilities and extend their lives for hundreds of years. The trusting Eregin welcomed the adventurers to their Valley, but found the uses that their guests envisioned for their crystals (to gain wealth, power, conquest, and personal glory) horrifying, and refused to allow the adventurers to take any of the gems from the valley. In the ensuing slaughter, the gentle Eregin perished as a race, but even in their last hour, they used the powers of their crystals to lay heavy enchantments on the thick woods that covered the only pass through the mountains into the Valley. To this day, the spirits of the Eregin are said to inhabit the Forest, keeping the crystals from ever leaving the valley and being used for evil or selfish purposes. The greedy fortune-hunters had the crystals, but they were trapped with them in the Valley forever.

With the abilities of the TAU crystals to supplement their own powers, the mages and wizards among the adventurers used magical artifacts and the fear of arcane retaliation to gradually promote themselves into positions of leadership and power. A settlement was built on the banks of the Silver River, and the beautiful crystal Citadel, once the home of the Eregin elders, became the stronghold of the new magocracy. Further work with the crystals eventually

resulted in the creation of an artifact that made a path through the barrier of the Eregin Forest, although attempts to move crystals in this manner proved futile. On the other side of the Forest, contact was made with one of the less aggressive nomad tribes, the Erekonai. The nomads, awed by the mages' power, named them the 'Ostrakonai', meaning Spirit-People, and hailed them as gods. Not ones to pass up an opportunity, the 'Ostrakonai' accepted the honor, and all the gifts of horses, sheep, cattle, slaves, and other goods accorded them. Since that time, the Ostrakonai have encouraged their position among the nomads by actively using their magic, particularly at the Great Dancing Stones, a circle of standing stones at the edge of the Forest, although they must leave all crystals in the Valley.

Over the past five centuries, the little settlement in the valley has grown to a small town, with several other villages scattered about the upper valley. Descendants of the nomad slaves live in clans very much like those on the Plateau, and roam with their flocks in the southern reaches of the Valley. Towers, homes for the mages who rule the valley, dot isolated hilltops or cast ominous shadows over farming villages.

The town of Arcadia and the magnificent crystal Citadel are the center of Valley government, where the High Council decides policy and determines the distribution of crystals, as well as other goods and services, to the mages, and the amount of tithes due from the general populace. The High Council has traditionally consisted of the seven most powerful mages in the Valley; beneath the High Council are mages of intermediate, veteran and elite status, who are engaged in various research jobs, or creating and servicing the numerous magical devices that make life easier for farmers and craftsmen. At the bottom of the heap are the apprentices, students and lackeys for any mage of higher rank, but superior by definition to any other non-mage in the valley — for to be a mage of any rank is to be minor nobility.

Mages tend to consider any commoner lacking magic skills as somewhat less than a true person, suitable only for ordinary labor to support the wizards — and the warriors, for the Shieldmen, traditional descendants of the noble fighters of the original band, share some of the respect accorded to the magic-using upper class. The commoners resent this attitude, but it is the secret ambition of many to become one of the Shieldmen, or, better yet, become a mage, thus proving oneself of true value. This not being possible for everyone, most craftsmen and farmers have resorted to the use of magic items as a status symbol, and gather many of the arcane devices as they can afford to give them a semblance of status among their non-magic-using peers.

While the existence of the enchanted path makes leaving the Valley possible (although still not easy), there is little interest among most of the inhabitants in so doing. Life for the general populace is as good as it would be under more traditional overlords, and few want to risk the Forest and the unknown. Mages have the additional lure of the crystal, use of which can easily become habitual and addicting; spells would have to be relearned in order to produce the same effects without

the crystal's power. And no one has yet figured out a way to take the crystals past the Eregin's vigilant guardianship.

Life is not uncomfortable in the Valley. One of the first of the great crystal artifacts created was a device to control the Valley's weather, which provides for ample sunlight, adequate rainfall for the crops (falling conveniently after dark), and a mild winter. Magic, the skill that separates the noble from the commoner, is used for rewarding loyal followers among the townsmen, village, and clan leaders, as well as representing the potent force behind all Council proclamations and decrees. For the most part, the commoners of the Valley live their lives untroubled by the political factions that divide the ruling class, and have only taxes or unrequited wanderlust to complain about.

## The High Council

The seven members of the High Council are the most skilled mages in the Valley. Each also bears one of the rare Lissar crystals, the artifact sought by Giles; these Lissar crystals can extend one's life without any sign of aging as long as the crystal is worn at least 80% of the time — but only a handful have been found among the Eregin ruins, and attempts to duplicate them have been thus far unsuccessful. There are many who sometimes wonder about the long lives of the High Council members. The most common explanation is a secret ritual held periodically in the Crystal Chamber, renewing life forces from the base elements of nature using the powers of crystals as a focus. Loss of a Lissar crystal by one who has carried it for any extended period results in the rapid aging experienced by Giles on the journey across the Plateau. A Lissar is not likely to be the only crystal a Council mage would be carrying on his person, but due to the nature of its powers, he would rarely be without it.

Due to the isolation of the Valley from outside influences and the generally slow pace of life, the High Council is rarely in session for other than ceremonial purposes. Most of the high mages spend their time in research or other pursuits in their own workshops and Towers in other locations in the Valley. Should their presence be required in the Citadel, each Council member has a teleportal access to his Citadel suite from his usual workshop/residence, and can arrive on fairly short notice. These teleportal work both ways, but require knowledge of the individual set of vocal commands both to operate the gates and to avoid the traps placed upon them by their various owners to avoid unwelcome guests.

At the time of the party's arrival in the Valley, the Council has gathered to face a different problem, which may become relevant to the players' efforts. Shieldmen patrolling near the newly-developed copper and tin mines in the eastern mountains surprised a band of small, green manlike creatures poking about the Valley several nights ago; in the struggle that followed, most of the little green men were killed, with only a few captured alive. One, however, was subdued only by use of magic, and managed to severely burn a journeyman mage and two Shieldmen with her own arcane powers before capture. The captives have been interred in the



Citadel's dungeons, and the Council has increased the guard on the mines; now they must decide what to do with their discovery, since they have never had contact with goblins (or any other non-human race) before in their entire history.

Despite the resolve to never again allow strangers to take advantage of them, the feelings of the individual members of the Council vary widely on the subject, as regards human beings, anyway. Should the players manage to learn (from Duban or Fassur, or a talkative guard) about the goblins, it is possible that they could win the support of several of the less paranoid members of the Council if they offer to share their experiences with this underground race (about which any adventurer would know more than the Ostrakonai). This would postpone, or possibly even prevent, their joining the goblins in the dungeons as spies and thieves.

### MEMBERS OF THE HIGH COUNCIL

#### Duban (#105)

One of the younger members of the Council, Duban is tall and thin, with unruly blond hair, wide blue eyes and a merry expression on his face. He is considered to be a bit of an eccentric by most of his peers, interested only in wandering around the Valley or in non-sensical pursuits such as the creation of odd creatures or plants. It is quite true that Duban believes that the



only way to tolerate such a long life as the Lissar crystals grant is not to take anything too seriously. Unlike his peers, most of whom are buried in their research or politics, Duban still has a sense of wonder about the world, and is well-loved by the Valley folk for his impetuous generosity, as well as his sense of humor. Despite his reputation as an eccentric fool, Duban is a sharp-witted man, a keen observer of life around him, and a potent mage. He would like very much to leave the Valley, but without his Lissar crystal, he knows he would have only weeks to enjoy it. Duban wishes no harm to anyone, and might be a potential ally for the players, even to the point of freeing them from the dungeon, if they can take him with them to the outside world. He will not, however, permit unnecessary violence, nor will he be eager to share the secrets of the crystals with the players until they have gained his trust. Duban knows of Fassiur's work with the GATE, and the command words for the teleportal in Verienne's chambers, as well as his own.

#### Fassiur (#106)

A slight, thin man with sparse grey hair and a short, scruffy beard, usually garbed in worn robes, he uses a staff to offset a pronounced limp. Fassiur is a historian and archivist, and has dedicated himself to studying the ruins and artifacts left by the Eregin, in hopes of reconstructing some of the lost knowledge. His latest discovery is the GATE in the stone circle near the Forest; he has not finished his research, but has confided to Duban that he believes that a person could use this GATE to bypass the Eregin Forest.

Fassiur is a kindly man, and not in favor of harming human visitors. Should the players through their actions or words be revealed as thieves or rogues (or to be connected with the infamous Giles), he will have no choice but to go along with the Council's wishes; until then, he is happy to give them the benefit of the doubt, and will be a good source of information for the players.

#### Thazass (#107)

Thazass is a man of seemingly middle years, stout with good living and immaculately groomed and dressed from his ornate wizard's robes to his neatly trimmed beard. Thazass is the Council member in charge of revenues, and sees to it that the craftsmen, villages, and Cherekonai clans pay their tithes to support the mages' regime. He is also very insistent on the "proper reverence" due his station as a High Master on the Council, particularly from mere commoners, which has done little for his popularity. He is quite satisfied with the status quo, and sees any stranger as a threat to his neatly ordered world; he will have no mercy towards the goblins or the players, or any who aid them. Over the many years he has held his position, Thazass has managed to amass a considerable hoard of crystals and magic items, which he uses to acquire loyal agents among the other mages and the commoners; these spies keep him informed of possible dissidents and (even worse!) tax dodgers. There is a 20% chance that any of the townspeople or mages of lower rank to whom the players talk will report the conversation to one of Thazass' direct agents.

Thazass is vain and pompous, and enjoys flattery, but he is not a fool, and did not arrive at his present position by being stupid. He is far more powerful a mage than one would expect, given his pompous airs, and totally convinced of his right to his station in life.

#### Kaharu'um (#108)

The oldest of the Council, Kaharu'um's face is lined, and his hair and beard are snowy-white; but his eyes are still bright and his mind sharp. Although Kaharu'um is an extremely talented artificer, the wizard has never been one for any sort of organized or methodical experimentation, and keeps no notes; therefore, he has never been able to duplicate any of his more successful accomplishments. In recent years, Kaharu'um has been assisted by the scribe Mellia (#109), the first such scribe able to tolerate working with the irascible old man in nearly four decades. Mellia does her best to keep the ancient wizard isolated from his peers and buried in his research; Thazass makes it worth her while to keep Kaharu'um from taking an interest in how the Valley and its people are governed.

Kaharu'um is not by nature a heartless or cruel man, but he takes little notice of what is going on in the Valley, and is not really aware of the fate planned for wandering strangers. He has the reputation of being a grouchy old man, irritated with almost anybody who interrupts his precious research. If encountered away from his assistant (10% chance, unless the party sets up some sort of distraction for Mellia), Kaharu'um is not really that unpleasant, and delighted to talk about his work; however, he tends to speak in circles, jumping from one subject to another, so that only another mage can follow what he is actually talking about.

#### Borand (#110)

Borand is a weasel-y sort of fellow with bulging eyes, who also favors ornate wizard's robes, although they usually seem to be two sizes too large for his spindly frame. Borand has been scoffed at for over two centuries for seeing thieves, raiders, and spies in every tree, and rebellion in every village green. A constant harbinger of doom, Borand will be in glory now, due to the capture of the goblins and the arrival of the players. Borand is certain that someone (either one of his peers or another mage who wants his Lissar crystal) is out to get him, and he surrounds himself with an 'honor guard', a group of eight select Shieldmen, wherever he goes; his quarters in the Citadel have numerous locks and traps on anything that the little wizard considers of slightest interest to thieves or potential assassins.

Borand controls the Shieldmen, and pushes to have the number and strength of the elite group increased to deal with the "increasing goblin menace"; he would prefer to have the players locked up immediately to prevent whatever evil they doubtless plan.

#### Verienne (#111)

Verienne is the youngest member of the Council, having been selected from among a group of potential mages some sixty years ago to fill a sudden vacancy, created when a Council Mage was killed by an invading dragon.

An attractive woman, with long dark hair and clear blue eyes, Verienne is apparently totally unaware of her own beauty, being far more occupied with her work. She is a brilliant theoretical mage and mathematician, and has done a great deal of work on calculating the various resonances and structures of the crystals, from which magical artifacts are designed making maximum use of each crystal's potential. It is said of her that she dreams in algebraic formulae, and has no personality other than patterns of mathematical logic. This is not

true; Verienne, like Kaharu'um, is simply more interested in her research than in political power. Should the players make an effort to befriend the young mage, they will find her to be gentle, without guile, and extremely intelligent. Verienne has not found many friends due to her intellectual superiority, and would be extremely susceptible to the charms of a male player who showed her special attentions; however, she is not likely to be attracted to anyone with an IQ of less than 15.

#### Siluril the Stonemaster (#112)

A broad-shouldered man with grizzled hair and a seamed face, Siluril speaks little, even to those closest to him. Despite his bulk, he is amazingly dextrous and can handle the smallest of crystals with ease. Over the centuries, he has developed an uncanny ability to estimate the power and resonance levels of a crystal by simply handling it; he is also almost totally immune to magic spells of all types.

Siluril is a craftsman, totally involved in the mining and processing of crystals. Except where the use of his precious crystals or his workers (a particularly close-knit group of extremely talented and magic-resistant group of men and women who live all their lives at the quarry) are involved, he cares little for the rest of the Valley. The fate of the players does not concern him, and he considers the summons to a Council gathering a waste of his time, keeping him from his work.

### **The Players' Reception**

Over the centuries, only a few hardy travelers have managed to win their way past the Erejin Forest to visit the isolated Valley. Unfortunately, the bulk of these visitors have been like Giles and his band of rogues (or, for that matter, like the original adventurers), taking advantage of the hospitality offered them to steal crystals or other valuable items. The Valley people, as a result, have become understandably suspicious of strangers, who have generally only meant them ill. The mages of the High Council with their extended lives (due to the enchanted Lissar crystals) remember very well the threat posed by curious strangers in their midst, and have vowed to take drastic steps to prevent such a threat occurring again. The players will be the first strangers against which the Council must test its newfound resolve to destroy any potential enemy before they themselves suffer further loss.

The players will be welcomed at first as honored guests, but the welcome will be shortlived. The mages view all strangers as spies and thieves, and will, even as they wine and dine their 'guests', be preparing the dungeon cells and the headsman's axe. Not all of the High Council are in favor of this plan, however, and some (as noted in their descriptions) may actually offer aid to the players.

When the party makes their presence known in the Valley, little time will pass before they will be invited to the mages' crystalline Citadel. The members of the High Council present (Fassiur, Duban, and Thazass) will welcome the players and have them shown to rooms on the fourth level of the Citadel, with whatever service they wish, including fresh clothing and hot baths. An elegant dinner will be given "in honor of our guests" that evening, in the Masters' Hall, at which the entire

Council will be present. The mages will be full of questions, particularly of the players' background and how they came to visit the Valley; the players' story will greatly affect their chances of remaining at liberty long enough to complete their task. If there is a mage among the players, that character has a better chance of making a good impression on the Council, who are not accustomed to dealing with non-magic-users as equals. Borand and Thazass in particular will be aggressive questioners. Any mention of Giles (who is remembered in the Valley as a deceiving thief and a murderer), or any hint that the players are less than honorable characters will only confirm Borand's worst suspicions, and likely result in an immediate transfer of guest quarters to the dungeons.

The Council will meet privately in the Crystal Chamber later that night to decide the fate of their guests. If the players have answered the questions in such a way as to disarm suspicion, they will have at least one day of grace before their welcome wears out. It is quite likely that, after a day of strangers asking questions of the mages and poking around the Citadel in their quest for information, Borand's growing paranoia will be sufficient for him to send Shieldmen (3 per player) to capture them in the middle of their second night at the Citadel.

#### The Town of Arcadia

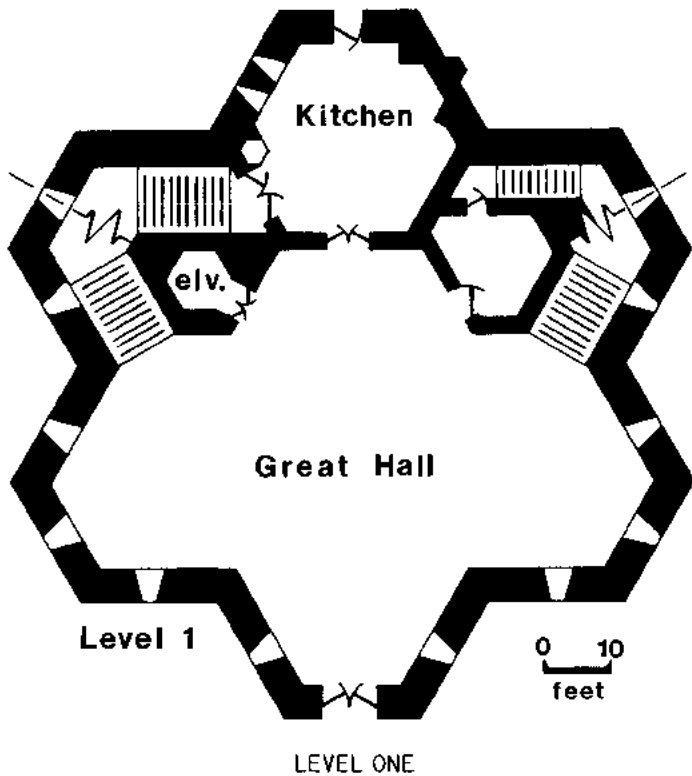
Arcadia is a small town nestled on the south bank of the River, with a population of approximately 1500. Except for the cathedral-like Town Hall, all buildings are of stone and wood, and are no more than two stories high (by decree: anything of three stories or higher is a tower, and for mages only). Streets are wide, but only the central Plaza is paved in stone; there are no walls, and outlying homes have gardens and trees. On the north end of the Plaza is an ornate stone bridge leading to the Citadel and towers on the other side of the River, where the mages live and work; the bridge is always guarded by four Shieldmen to keep unauthorized wanderers out.

The town is not particularly useful to the players in regards to this scenario, and is not described in detail here. Players seeking information in shops or taverns will be immediately recognized as foreigners (by their speech, if nothing else), and will be the center of attention wherever they go. The townspeople see very few visitors, even from other villages, and will view the players with a combination of suspicion and awe. Less than an hour after the players make themselves known in the town (if this be their first meeting with the people of the valley), a mounted party of 12 Shieldmen and several high-ranking Master Mages (including Duban) will come to invite the players to the Citadel. From the number of Shieldmen and the respectful attitudes of the townsfolk, it should be apparent that such invitations are never refused.

### **The Citadel**

The towering crystalline Citadel sits on the crown of a hill on the north bank of the River overlooking the subsidiary Towers and the town of Arcadia. Made of polished white quartz, the Citadel is a hexagonal cluster of towers reaching over 100 feet into the sky; its spires can be seen for miles, and they seem to glow

night and day with a mysterious magical aura. The Citadel was designed as a palace, not a fortress; it has no outer walls or gates, or other apparent defenses. A circle of six auxiliary towers surround the Citadel, also of quartz, these housing visiting mages, and the company of 150 Shieldmen that serve as Citadel Guard. The surface of the Citadel is exceptionally smooth, and cannot be climbed without rope or magical aid. Almost all of the numerous windows in the Citadel are very thin slabs of translucent quartz which allow light to enter, but cannot be seen through; windows in the Archives, private quarters of the High Council mages, and the crystal storage level are connected to arcane alarms that will alert the Shieldmen. Open windows are found only in the very top level of the Citadel, in Fassiu's observatory.

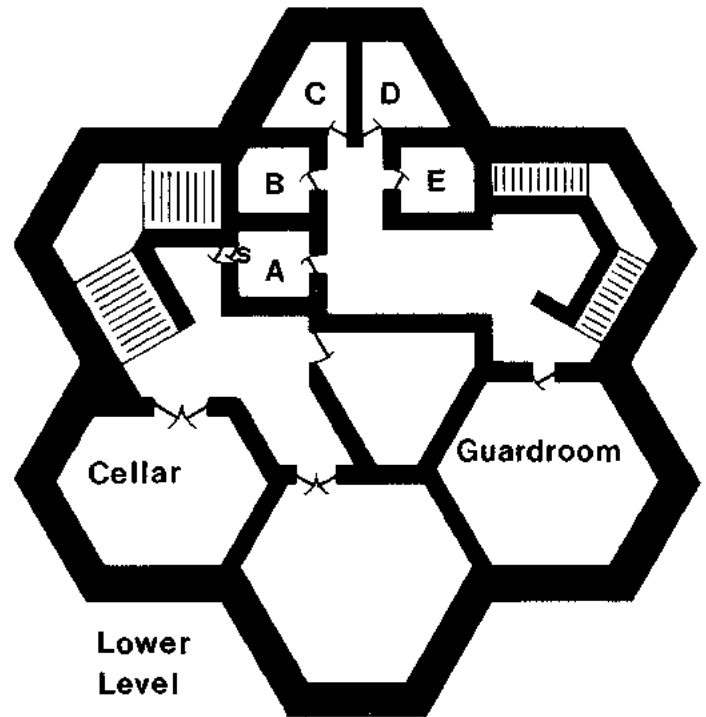


**The Great Hall**

A beautiful crystal hall, with a high, vaulted ceiling, lit by arcane globes hanging on gold chains, and sunlight from the numerous windows. Rich tapestries adorn the walls; wooden tables and benches capable of seating 50 are near the kitchen. Marble stairs lead up on the left and right, and three doors of highly polished wood are set into the walls. The one on the left leads to an arcane elevator (for the convenience of elderly mages), the center door leads to the kitchen, and the right one leads to stairs down to the lower level.

**The Kitchen**

Large and airy, the kitchen has little unusual in it. There is a dumbwaiter that takes food up to the Masters' Hall upstairs; a small person (a hobbit or kobold) could use it as an elevator. One door leads outside; it is locked after dark (Complexity 3 — no trap); another door opens up on stairs down to the food storage and wine cellars. The cook, Kedassa (#120), and her two daughters and 14-year-old son are in here from before dawn till dusk.



THE LOWER LEVEL

The lower level of the Citadel can be accessed in two ways; by the stairs in the Kitchen, which lead into the storage cellars, or by the stairs off the Great Hall, which lead to the dungeons and guardroom. There is a secret door through which one can get from one part of the lower level to the other, but only Duban and Borand know where it is. There are 10 Shieldmen and an officer on duty in this area, since two of the cells are occupied with goblins; see *Escape from the Valley* for details of their movements and the cells.

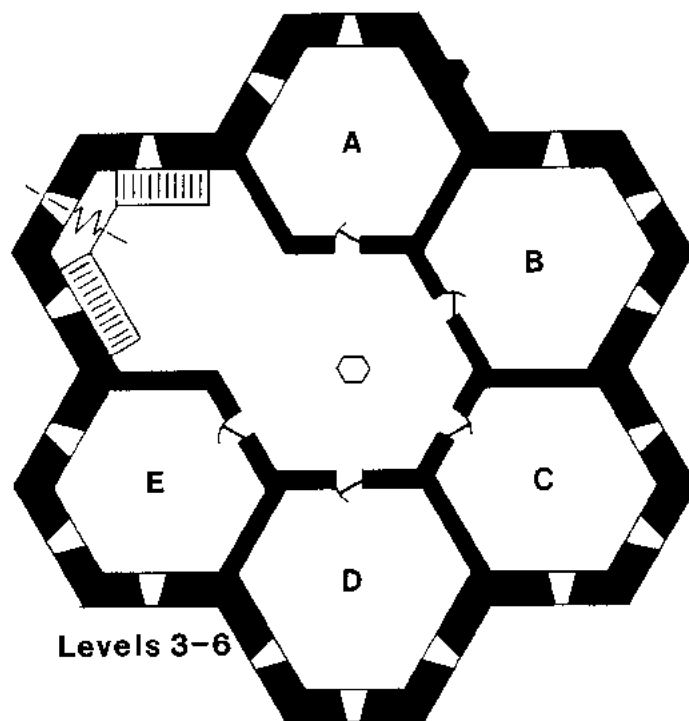
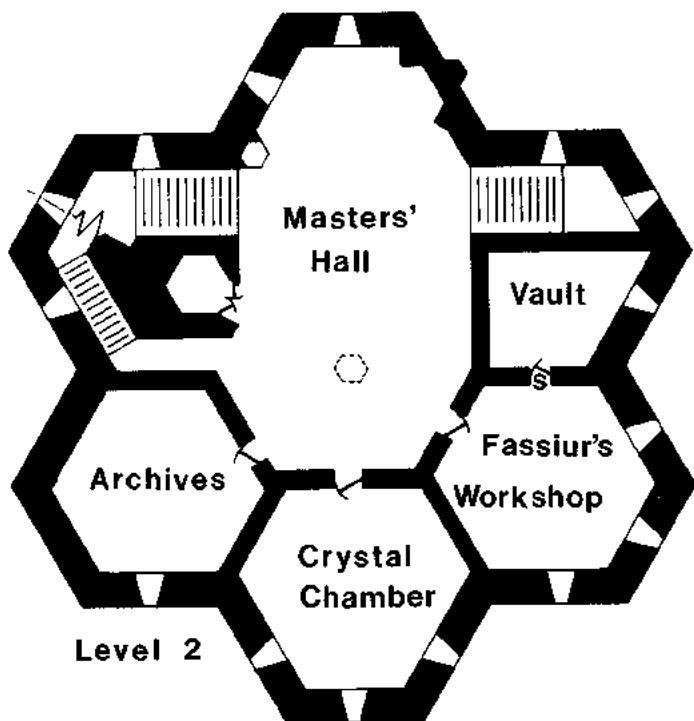
LEVEL TWO

**The Masters' Hall**

Another magnificent crystal hall, decorated with carved stone and gold leaf, with a long polished marble table running half the length of the hall. Around the table are the chairs of the Masters, many of them ornately carved or adorned with gold and gems. There is a 4' opening in the vaulted ceiling, through which one can see almost all the way to the top of the Citadel; beneath the opening is a hexagonal slab of black marble, set into the floor. This open shaft through the heart of the Citadel functions as a car-less elevator; anyone stepping into the opening on an upper level will float safely down to the floor of the Hall. Each of the High Council and other high-ranking mages wear crystal rings that allow them to go up the shaft as well. Guards are generally posted on the stairs landings, to prevent unauthorized entry; a patrol of 4-6 Shieldmen walks through about every half-hour at night. There are 3 doors at the far end of the chamber; the center one appears to be made of stone rather than wood.

**The Archives**

A large hexagonal room, its walls are lined with bookcases and scroll racks, all of them handwritten in an old-fashioned, ornate script. A map of the Valley hangs on one wall, and a large, leatherbound tome sits



on a stand in one corner; the title is *Historium Ostrakonai*, and it appears to be a carefully documented history of the Valley. Three copyists' desks sit in the middle of the room; three apprentices spend most of the day carefully copying various books and scrolls for others' use. There are no spellbooks kept here, but there are a number of journals of deceased mages detailing various research projects on the crystals, both successful and unsuccessful, plans for buildings, including the Citadel and major Towers (which do show secret doors and rooms), population and tax records, and scholarly treatises on the Eregin, the crystals, and magic in general. The Archives is generally locked when not in use; it is not likely that the players will be left to browse without Fassiur's supervision. The lock, however, is a simple Complexity 3, and has no trap; Fassiur and the officer on watch have the keys.

#### The Crystal Chamber

The chamber of the High Council is a lushly appointed room of marble and crystal. Seven ornate chairs set in a semi-circle like kingly thrones are the only furnishings. The room is lit by hundreds of sparkling LIGHT crystals set into the black crystal ceiling in the patterns of stars. The stone door is magically locked, and will only open to the bearer of a Lissar crystal.

#### Fassiur's Workshop and Secret Vault

Like the Archives, Fassiur's workshop is lined with bookshelves, with a number of desks and supplies of parchment, inks and other scribe's paraphernalia. Six mages of lower ranks (GR and INT) work here during the day. Here spellbooks and scrolls are created, as well as the careful deciphering of Eregin artifacts. All original scrolls or spellbooks are returned to the vault after working hours, while unfinished copies are locked in the desks. All of the copyists know where the secret door to the Vault is, but only Fassiur and the senior scribe know how to open it. Opening the Vault without looking for traps, however, will likely set off the alarm, which rings in Fassiur's quarters upstairs.

The Vault contains a wide variety of spellbooks, most of which involve crystal technology, and would be of little use without the crystals. The Vault also contains Fassiur's extensive records on the Eregin, including an uncensored version of the history, and several magical Eregin relics. The workshop is locked when empty (80% chance after 11:00 PM, otherwise Fassiur or another scribe is working late). Fassiur, the senior scribe, and the watch officer have the only keys to its Complexity 4 magic lock.

#### LEVEL THREE

Rooms in the next five levels follow the same general pattern, with five large rooms, stairs, and the levitation shaft opening in the middle of the floor. Level Three is primarily housing for the domestic staff, and, other than an occasional crystal-powered device such as a lamp or heater, etc., likely has little of interest to the players. Doors generally have Complexity 1 locks.

Room A is the residence of the commander of the Citadel Shieldmen, Nait Garth (#113). He conscientiously does his duty, even though his attitude towards Borand is that of a patient man humoring the mad. Nait is in only 15% of the time during the day, and 50% of the time at night. The cook, Kedassa, and her children are in Room B; Room C has four maids. Room D and E house 6 mage apprentices each, boys of age 12-15 who are beginning their study of magic as well as doing whatever drudgery the mages decree.

#### LEVEL FOUR

The rooms on this level are guestrooms for visiting mages; each contains 3-4 beds, desks, and storage chests, with comfortable carpets, wall hangings, linens, etc.; the rooms have Complexity 1 locks. At present, only Room B is occupied, by Jarum Pandius and his wife, Delene. Both are Master Healers, and have come to consult the Archives on healing methods used by the Eregin. They have a small chest of 15 crystals of varying sizes; eight are enchanted with minor healing



spells (deadening pain, stopping bleeding, diagnosing illness), and one major crystal that is not yet finished, for knitting broken bones. One or the other of the pair is in 60% of the time; both are present at night.

Rooms C and D (and E, if necessary) are the ones given to the players. They contain the furnishings previously mentioned, and candles for light. The windows are translucent quartz; a solid blow with an axe or hammer might break them (STR SR on 3D12); such a move has a 30% chance of attracting notice from outside observers, but there is no alarm on any window on this level. One of the desk drawers has a plain crystal in it, about the size of a grape, set in copper as if for a pendant. It is a tracking device planted by Borand in hopes of proving their malicious intentions — and being able to track them down later. As long as the players have it in their possession, Borand will be able to find them in the surveillance crystal in his suite. If the players do not take the bait, Borand will attempt to have the device planted on one of the party by one of his agents using a reverse pickpocket. All other rooms on this level are empty.

#### LEVEL FIVE

Level Five and Six contain the private suites of the High Council; the doors on these levels have Complexity 4 magic locks, requiring enchanted lockpicks, except when otherwise noted. Room A is a sitting room, with a fireplace, comfortable chairs and crystal-powered lamps. Occasional bookcases hold literature of a less serious nature, and there are carpets and wall hangings, and a large floor harp in one corner. It is never locked.

Room B is Fassiur's suite. Like his workshop downstairs, there are a number of bookcases, and a large desk, as well as a large canopied bed, oak wardrobe, and other furnishings. Since Fassiur lives and works in the Citadel, he has never bothered with a teleportal. There are a number of crystals here, in little out-of-the-way nooks where they can still get the required amount of sunlight. Most are toys, designed simply to test some theory; there is a 35% chance a given crystal has not had any spells imbedded at all, but is awaiting Fassiur's whim. There is a silver headband with a crystal set in it that improves night vision by 60%, which Fassiur wears when star-gazing.

Room C is Duban's suite. Like Fassiur's, it contains the usual furnishings, as well as a desk and reading chair. Duban's room is cluttered with numerous crystal knick-knacks, books, small items of statuary — mostly animals, and potted plants, all in orderly piles, since the shelves and tabletops were long since filled to capacity. There was a teleportal in this suite at one time that led to one of the Towers; Duban has never used it, and there are several bookcases and piles of things in front of it, making it practically useless through inability to reach it.

Room D is Verienne's suite. She is rarely here, spending most of her time in her Tower in the southwestern Valley. The room contains only the bed, wardrobe, and other furnishings; there few little personal items. The teleportal, a clearly defined stone outline in one inside wall, is activated by a spoken phrase, and leads to her Tower. Verienne has never bothered with any greater security than her password, which is known to Duban and Kaharu'um as well.

Room E is used as a bathing room; it contains a large heated stone pool some 15' in diameter and 2' deep, and a smaller tub, enchanted to provide hot water. The arcane plumbing represents one of the more lavish uses of crystal technology. There is a simple lock for privacy.

#### LEVEL SIX

Level Six is the top floor served by the stairs; it appears to be the top level of the entire Citadel, unless one is observant (training in Architecture will give a 25% bonus). The levitation shaft does continue, but the ceiling is enchanted to appear and feel like solid stone, unless one has one of the levitation rings. The levels above are the crystal storage chambers and Fassiur's observatory. The rooms contain the suites of the remaining Council members.

Thazass is in Room A, a luxuriously appointed suite with rich fabrics and gold leaf trim on the furnishings; there is even a silver tea service that magically heats its own water. The teleportal resembles an extra polished wooden door with a golden doorknob; it requires a magical key to operate and goes to Thazass' Tower on the north side of Humming Lake (all Towers follow the same general layout as the Tower described in the section on The Quarry). Thazass will be in his room after 10:00 PM, and 30% of the time during the day.

Room B is Borand's suite; the door has two Complexity 4 locks, one of which has a poison needle trap. Borand has also booby-trapped not only his Teleportal (which is operated by a key and a password), but his wardrobe, his desk drawers, and his favorite chair. There are no crystals here, since Borand never feels safe in the Citadel; there is also a 40% chance that the wizard is paranoid enough to have a Shieldman stationed outside his door at night.

Room C is reserved for Kaharu'um; it is comfortably cluttered with old journals and papers of forgotten or half-developed ideas, some of which are totally implausible. The teleportal is operated by a key, usually held by Kaharu'um's scribe and assistant, Mellia, since Kaharu'um has a tendency to leave such things behind him easily.

Room D is the suite reserved for Siluril. The furnishings look almost new, for the crystal master always returns to his Tower at night, resenting any time spent away from the business at the quarry. The teleportal requires a crystal key to open.

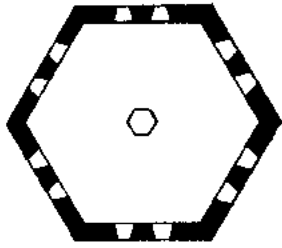
Room E is rarely used; it is furnished as are the guestrooms on Level Four. Occasionally, senior mages who assist members of the Council are permitted to stay here. The room is presently occupied by Kaharu'um's assistant Mellia, who still tries to keep a eye on her master's every move.

#### LEVEL SEVEN

##### The Crystal Storeroom

Only the central tower of the Citadel continues past the sixth level. This room can only be reached by someone wearing one of the levitation rings, and knowing how to disarm the trap in the invisible opening, which looks and feels like solid stone. Unless the trap is disarmed, an electrical charge will strike the offender doing 4D6 points of damage; the trap will continue to operate as long as it is not disarmed, no matter how many times it goes off.

## Levels 7-8



The room is lined with windows, so that plenty of sunlight can continue to keep its hoard of 1020 x 10 crystals charged and ready for use (to determine exact size and powers for individual crystals, see *The Crystals*, elsewhere in this scenario). The crystals are stored in compartmented trays on tables; the trays have removable lids stored beneath them, and are labeled carefully in a runic shorthand that only one trained in magic would be able to decipher. The tables are sensitive to the weight of the trays; there is a 10% cumulative chance for every tray moved or crystal taken from a tray, that an alarm will be set off in the guardroom in the dungeon. Since the Shieldmen cannot get up to the Crystal Storeroom, they will stop to waken Borand or another of the Council on their way upstairs, and will take about 1D6 minutes to reach Level Six.

### LEVEL EIGHT

#### The Observatory

The levitation shaft continues up into one last level, with no traps or illusions around the opening in the ceiling in the crystal storeroom. The observatory offers a spectacular panorama of the surrounding countryside; the windows have neither crystal nor glass to mar the view; however, the windows are 100 feet off the ground. A large crystal the size of a melon is mounted on a marble pedestal on one side; it can be used to provide closer views of anything visible from the windows.

#### **The Quarry**

The crystals mined in the Valley of the Ostrakonai are found nowhere else in the world. The quarry is in an isolated canyon in the northwestern corner of the Valley (see Valley Map), accessible only by a narrow road leading from the Citadel around the north side of Humming Lake. The mining operation is not large, and consists of a Tower for Siluril and his assistants, a small village for workers and their families, and a barracks for the company of 30 Shieldmen assigned to keep unwelcome visitors out. Once a month, crystals ready for export are packed into compartmentalized chests, loaded on a wagon, and sent to the Citadel with an escort of two VET level mages and 20 Shieldmen from the Citadel guard. Food and other supplies needed at the quarry are brought in every ten days by two wagons, escorted by six Shieldmen.

All crystals are stored in the Tower, where they are cleaned of as much rubble as possible without damaging the crystals themselves, and sorted by size and power ratings. Some crystals are indented with preliminary spells for future use as TAU "batteries" or other magical artifacts. There is a large pile of plain quartz crystals not far from the village; it is difficult to determine the true magic-bearing crystals within the quarry itself, and often ordinary rocks are brought in, only to

be rejected when examined in the more insulated environment of the workshop. It is possible that players picking up what appear to be magic crystals in quarry or workshop may be picking up simple quartz. DETECT MAGIC spells will normally identify a TAU crystal from quartz, but in the quarry, spells are overwhelmed by the area's intense concentration of magical energies.

The Tower is six levels high, of solid stone, with a number of translucent windows on every level, like those in the Citadel. Level One contains a kitchen, living quarters for the domestic staff, and stairs down to the food and wine storage cellars. Level Two, accessed by a curving stair, is a Common Hall for meals and discussions. Level Three contains workshops and sorting rooms, with numerous compartmented trays, and gem-cutting equipment, as well as a large bin for quartz rejects; no crystals are kept here after working hours, with the exception of magical artifacts and tools used in their work — all other crystals are returned to the sixth level storeroom, under careful supervision. Levels Four and Five contain living quarters for Siluril and his permanent staff, consisting of 2 GR mages, 2 INT mages, and 1 VET mage besides himself. Siluril's quarters are on Level Five, and the Teleportal from his suite in the Citadel enters into this room; the room contains mostly personal items and a number of journals he has kept on production levels at the quarry over the years — unless he is at the Citadel, he will be in this room after 10 PM. Level Six, the storage room for the crystals, is only accessible by an arcane elevator, secured with a Complexity 4 magic lock; Siluril and the commanding officer of the 4 Shieldmen who patrol the Tower at night have the only keys. The lock is trapped with a electric charge, capable of 4D6 points of damage. Doors to the workshops have Complexity 2 locks; an alarm will sound if locks are tampered with or if a window is broken.

In addition to the four Shieldmen who patrol hourly in the Tower, six mounted Shieldmen patrol the area of the quarry and the village. If Siluril has any reason to suspect an assault on his Tower, he will, of course, increase his security.

#### **The Crystals**

The Ostrakonai do not yet understand why the crystals are a natural source of TAU power, the basic energies used in magical spells and conjurations. Legends from the days of the Eregin describe them as gifts from the Goddess to defend her children from the Shadowed Ones; the Eregin always treated the gems more as sacred relics rather than as mere tools to enhance their magic.

The crystals vary in size and in their capacity for handling TAU energies. Even in their natural state, crystals radiate a strong magical aura in the same manner as a magic item, easily detectable by a mage (except in the overwhelming radiations at the quarry itself). Neither the size nor the color of a crystal seems to have any relation to its TAU power. A mage casting DETECT MAGIC on an individual crystal can usually estimate its approximate TAU power within 10%.

The crystals are natural formations, resembling rough quartz, and do not appear valuable at first sight. Although workers attempt to chip off as much extraneous rubble from the crystal as possible, the stones

themselves are never cut or faceted. Cutting damages the structure of the crystal, and destroys its ability to store magical energies. The color is usually a cloudy white, with a 15% chance of a tint of amber, rose, green or blue. Crystals can be set into rings, wands, or other magic items, but not even a kobold would mistake them for gemstones.

The crystals require a certain amount of care in order to retain their power. They must be exposed to at least one hour of direct sunlight every 24 hours in order to retain their full power; they will lose 5% of their TAU power for every day in which they are kept in the dark. After extended usage, a crystal needs one hour of sunlight for every 10 points of TAU power expended in order to recharge. If a crystal is ever totally drained, either by overuse or by being left in a dark place too long, it cannot be recharged and becomes totally useless — it effectively dies. The same care is needed whether the crystal is a TAU battery or part of a magic item. Crystals are always kept separated, generally in wooden compartmented boxes to insulate the resonances of one crystal from another, or on separate pieces of jewelry, etc. If not insulated (wood, leather, or silk is best), the resonances of each crystal distort the others, until all are useless; then, all must be re-enchanted. Use of a crystal will, over a period of time, increase its bearer's MGR by a maximum of 1D10 points (determine individually), at the rate of one point per year.

Crystals can be used in a variety of ways in the magical arts. The easiest use is as a TAU battery, supplying the mage with extra power to draw upon when casting spells; DRAIN spells must be cast on the crystal in order for the mage to utilize its power in this fashion. The crystal can also be used to extend the range or duration of a spell or conjuration, but it cannot be used to improve the intensity or finesse of a spell. Crystals may also be embedded with spells to create magical

artifacts; the amount of TAU power a crystal can supply determines the number and complexity of its embedded spells. The value of a crystal on the open market is variable, and the GM should modify prices according to the economics of his own campaign, but a suggested base price for a TAU crystal with no embedded spells would be TAU points x 200. Imbedded spells would raise the value by the cost of the spells involved.

The following charts are offered for the GM to randomly determine the nature and value of any crystals obtained by the players in this scenario. Actual spells contained in the crystals are left up to the GM's discretion, as long as the TAU power potential of any enchanted crystal is kept in mind. Rolls use 1D100.

#### CRYSTAL DETERMINATION

Size		TAU Power	
Roll	Description	Roll	Rating
01-30	very small (grape-sized)	01-40	10+1D10
31-50	small (walnut sized)	41-60	20+1D10
51-75	average (egg sized)	61-75	30+1D10
76-90	large (lemon sized)	76-90	40+1D10
91-99	very large (orange sized)	91-99	50+1D10
00	huge (grapefruit sized)	00	50+reroll

Spells	
Roll	Spell Capacity and Embedding
01-15	raw crystal, no spells embedded*
16-50	crystal can be used for TAU battery
51-70	crystal has minor spells embedded
71-90	crystal has 1 major spell embedded
91-99	crystal has 1D4 major spells embedded
00	crystal is a major artifact

\* If crystal was picked up at the quarry workshop, on 01-15 it is a piece of plain quartz, and all other classifications move one step down.

## Escape from the Valley

It has long been believed by the Ostrakonai that, because none of them have found a way to leave the Valley with any TAU crystals, that there is no way to do so. However, a hardy band of adventurers are quite likely to come up with ways of escaping the Eregin's quarantine out of sheer desperation that would never occur to the mages. Three such possible routes have been left for the players to discover and exploit: the legendary mountain pass where their late guide, Giles, was said to have made his escape; Fassiur's rediscovered GATE in the stone ruins; and the goblin tunnels in the eastern mountains. The feasibility of any other plans of escape the players may come up with is left up to the GM's discretion, with a word of reminder: if it were easy to escape the Valley, the Ostrakonai would have done so, long ere since.

### The Dragon's Horns

The players know that Giles made his escape from the Valley by crossing over the mountain wall at a place where three rocky peaks, known as the Dragon's Horns, rise above their fellows. References to the Dragon's

Horns can be found in the Archives, on various maps of the Valley, and in Fassiur's Historium Ostrakonai, the massive tome in which Fassiur has faithfully recorded the doings of the Valley civilization for the last four centuries. The maps show the peaks to be near the Tower retreat and workshop of Verienne, one of the High Council, in the southwestern corner of the Valley. The Historium, if one spends at least three hours reading the heavy tome to understand its cross-referencing system (and to master the difficult, archaic language in which it is written), has several references to the Dragon's Horns, including an account of battling a dragon in that vicinity some sixty-odd years ago. The dragon was defeated and driven off only with the aid of a powerful crystal artifact, the Wyrmsbane Crystal, still kept at the South Tower. Several mages, including one of the High Council, lost their lives in the struggle, as well as numerous brave Shieldmen and Cherekonai nomads. The dragon has never returned.

### GM's Notes on the Pass Route

The mountains are extremely rough terrain, with sheer rocky faces, deep canyons, and only the faintest of trails. There is little vegetation but grass and scrub, and water is scarce; the weather is also unpredictable, and violent storms (with snow in the

higher elevations) are not unknown. The pass is there, but it is not an easy trip. There is also the matter of the dragon, still living in the shadow of the crags, who has never forgiven the mages for the injuries she suffered in their epic battle.

There is a path of sorts leading into the mountains, but after about five miles, it becomes increasingly difficult to follow. Horses are useless; only goats and giant hawks seem to be able to navigate the steep cliff faces. The players will need to climb up several sheer drops in order to find the narrow trail over the pass, which will require ropes and other mountain-climbing equipment such as pitons, pickaxes, or arcane climbing devices like spiderpaws. Hopefully, at least one member of the party has Mountain Climbing as a skill, which will add 10% to the party's average climbing ability for each person so experienced.

The following are possible encounters the players may experience while in the mountains; the GM may use or modify them according to his discretion.

**Sheer Cliff**—The trail the party has been following ends abruptly in a sheer cliff up (60%) or down (40%). The cliff is 1010 x 10 feet in height, and must be navigated by climbing up or rappelling down the cliff using ropes and other gear, which will take approximately a half-hour for every 10 feet of cliff. It is not advisable to attempt the climb at night.

**Giant Hawks**—The party sees 1D4 giant hawks circling above. There is a 40% chance that the birds have spotted the party, and will come closer to investigate. As long as the hawks are not attacked, they will probably be content with a closer look, and soar off.

**Giant Hawk Nest**—While climbing up or down a cliff, the players approach the nest of a pair of the giant hawks; there is a 40% chance that there are 1D4 young chicks inside. The parents will be extremely upset, and attack the party fiercely. The party, hanging on to ropes, will be in an extremely vulnerable position, and not able to use weapons to full advantage. A quick retreat will halt the attack, but the birds will be on guard. If the players should manage to kill both parents, the chicks are the size of large turkeys, and rather wild, but when cared for properly by someone trained in falconry, could be very valuable.

**Mountain Goats**—The players surprise a pack of 2D12 mountain goats grazing on a grassy ledge; they leap gracefully away. If the players watch carefully, there is a 40% chance that they will find a trail they can follow from the goats' flight.

**Crevasse**—The trail the players have been following ends at a deep crevasse, at least 50 feet deep, and 1D10 x 5 feet across. The players can try to hike around the crevasse (1D10 miles out of their way), or attempt to cross it. A player can jump his STR rating in feet with a running start without a saving roll; any greater distance requires a CDN saving roll, with a -1 for every foot over his STR rating. Throwing a rope across the crevasse requires a simple CDN SR to aim the rope—there is a 10% chance of securing the rope on a successful throw, 25% chance if there is a grapple of some sort attached to the rope.

**Landslide**—The players hear an ominous rumble somewhere on the heights above them; they have 1D4 melee rounds (15 seconds each) to find cover, as several tons of boulders and loose earth and rocks tumble down the mountainside straight towards them. There is a 60% chance that the landslide will either block or break away the trail the players have been following.

**The Cave**—The players discover an opening in the cliff, just big enough for them to enter. Inside is a narrow passage leading to a large natural cavern 12 feet by 30, with a pool in the center of the floor. In the back of the cavern is a narrow passage leading deeper into the mountain (it leads eventually to the dragon's lair). If the players use the cave to escape the landslide, there is an excellent chance that the cave's entrance will be blocked by the boulders.

### The Dragon

The dragon mentioned in the *Historium* did survive the battle with the mages and their Wyrmsbane crystal, and still lives in the rocky heights. Her name is Yarryn (#121), a relatively young dragon only some sixty-five feet in length. She was badly wounded in her epic battle, and is now crippled and unable to fly. Unable to hunt on the wing, she has developed her spell-casting ability, particularly hypnotism, and can make a mountain goat walk into her jaws; any player foolish enough to meet her eyes must make a MGR SR at a -10, or be subject to her will.

Due to her past experiences, Yarryn hates humans, and will go considerably out of her way to hunt down and destroy any human she encounters in her territory. She knows the mountains well, and can maneuver surprisingly well, if not particularly fast, on the ground, even scaling cliffs if necessary. Once on the players' trail, she will not give it up until they are dead; wounding the dragon will only increase her rage. If the players happen to have the Wyrmsbane Crystal in their possession, and can figure out how to operate its powers, Yarryn will flee in terror from the artifact that defeated and crippled her sixty years before.

### The Teleportal GATE

Another possibility as an escape route is Fassiur's recent discovery of the GATE in the Eregin ruins. Fassiur's journals (kept in his secret vault) detail his research, and even list the conjurations Fassiur believes will activate the GATE.

Fassiur, if drawn into conversation by interested players, is quite willing to talk about his studies in history and archeology. For every hour spent listening to the learned wizard, there is a 15% chance Fassiur will speak of the GATE, and can be persuaded to tell more of his discovery (but not how to activate it). Duban is aware of Fassiur's discovery, but does not believe that the GATE offers a way out for crystals—for the GATE has been there for centuries, and the wizards have never used it. So far, Fassiur has determined that the GATE will not operate unless a crystal is sent through, but he has not been able to bring any of his test subjects back through the GATE to reach any further conclusions. It is possible Fassiur would be willing to allow the players to act as test subjects, even to the point of giving them some small crystals for purposes of the experiment.



### GM's Notes on the GATE

Despite Fassiur's optimism, Duban is right — the GATE cannot be used to transport live crystals out of the Valley. The GATE requires crystals with the same number of Tau points as the number of hit points of characters being sent through as a power source for the transfer, or the transfer will not occur. The GATE will totally drain the power crystals, rendering them into so much rock; it will also drain any other crystals taken through it. This draining effect is the reason why none of Fassiur's previous test subjects (at least one of whom was a bright apprentice) can return. The players would likewise be stranded on the other side of the GATE, which is in the Broken Lands of the Golden Plateau (see Thieves' Guild 8), or any other location of the GM's choosing. Neither Duban nor Fassiur will pass through the GATE of their own free will; Duban will actively discourage this plan if he is involved in the players' escape. The GATE will get the players out of the Valley with their lives, although not with any of the precious crystals they were seeking. It should not be presented as the best possible plan, but the players should have the opportunity to select it over the mountain pass or the goblin tunnels if they so wish.

### The Goblin Tunnels

If the players manage to learn (and they should) of the goblin prisoners, it should not take even the brightest of their party to figure out that if goblins, who are not native to the Valley and not likely to have come through the Forest, can come in, then they must also know a way out, and while goblins are not likely to be happy about the idea of adventurers in their tunnels



— especially if there are dwarves in the party — they might be persuaded to make alliance for common cause.

Rescuing the goblins from the dungeons should not be extraordinarily difficult, provided the players are not in a similar situation. There are 10 Shieldmen and an officer on duty, whose time is generally spent in the guardroom playing dice, with occasional trips to the beer cellar (which requires going upstairs, through the Kitchen, and down into the cellars; the guards know nothing of the secret door), or the necessary (located in the alcove beside the stairs). There is a 10% chance every 5 minutes for 1D2 guards to leave the game for one of these reasons). Once every hour, the officer and three of the guards will walk through the Citadel, including both halves of the lower level and up through Level Six, casually checking every unoccupied room. They have a 25% chance of noticing something unusual; the GM should modify this chance if the players have been careless or are poorly hidden. There is a thick rope hanging in the guardroom that will ring an alarm in the barracks tower; 2D12 Shieldmen will respond to the alarm in 1D10 minutes. It should be also noted that, despite their numbers and weapons, the Shieldmen are not used to actually fighting anyone, and may lose morale and bolt if a number of them are injured, or if the officer is put out of action.

The keys to the goblins' cells are on the officer's belt; the locks are magical and require enchanted lockpicks of Level 4 or better, but they are not trapped. Jazparilla (#122) is in cell B, with her three comrades (#123 to #125) in cell C. The other cells, unless occupied by player characters, are empty.

Jazparilla understands the Common tongue at pidgin level; the players will have to speak very slowly and use simple words in order to communicate ("Us free you, go to goblin-home!"). Her response will be equally halting, and may cause players to underestimate her intelligence. She will insist on rescuing her comrades, not because she bears them any particular affection, but because they are goblins and will obey her amidst this crowd of strange humans. The other goblins are males, and appear to have no individual names; they speak only their own language, and will obey Jazparilla without question. They are scouts and hunters by training, and can move almost silently; they are also skilled with light weapons. Not particularly bright, they will look to Jazparilla for guidance.

The goblins were captured in the woods outside the mining camps on the eastern side of the valley; they were brought to the Citadel in an enclosed wagon, and have no idea where they are now in relation to the caverns of their people. The players will have to organize an overland journey to the mine area (bearing in mind that goblins cannot travel easily in daylight without protective cover), or figure out how to use the teleportal in Borand's chambers that leads to his Tower, located not far from the mine entrances. The players will need to steal horses for the trip, and whatever weapons and supplies required. Maps in the Archives clearly show the mines, as well as Borand's Tower. A mounted pursuit of 1D4 mages of INT and VET rank, and 2D12 Shieldmen will be sent out within an hour of the discovery of their escape; if the players have the magic tracking device with them, the search party will be

distressingly accurate. If the tracking device has been discovered and hidden, or sent off on a false trail, then the players should have a lead on their pursuers; Duban does know of the device, and will warn them if he is with them. The players will also have to contend with patrols in the mines area, as well as the fact that goblins are no better horsemen than dwarves.

Using the teleportal requires disarming several traps in Borand's chambers, and breaking the key words to operate the device, as well as getting safely out of the paranoid wizard's Tower once through the portal. Once in the general vicinity of the mines, the goblins will recognize where they are and can guide the party to the right mineshafts to intersect with their own, narrow tunnels.

The goblin tunnels are small and cramped, smooth-floored, but so low that those of normal human height must travel either crouched over or on hands and knees. After several miles of this, the tunnels will begin to widen and the party will be able to walk upright. At one point, the party will be challenged by a large group of armed goblin warriors, but Jazparilla can argue her way past them if the players have been treating her fairly. The entire journey through the caverns is nearly thirty miles long, since Jazparilla will not lead them through any major population centers, but stick to back ways. An escort of several dozen armed warriors will be provided to guide them through the caverns. How hospitable the goblins are to these travelers in their heartland will depend on the players' behavior when they are deep in goblin territory; violence will be met with violence, and there are thousands of goblins in this area of the mountains. If separated from their guides, the players will have only the faintest chances of ever

finding their way out of the caverns, or even of finding food and water.

Jazparilla is trustworthy if treated with deference — flattery doesn't hurt, either — and she will do what she can to keep her side of the bargain. The quick response by her 3 companions to the goblin girl's wishes should give the players some indication of her rank, but trying to hold her for ransom would be foolish and turn every goblin in the mountains against them.

Jazparilla does not know about the existence or the powers of the TAU crystals. Should she learn of them, by overhearing the players talk, or by sensing their magic if they are removed from their shielded cases, she will (once in the safety of the mountain tunnels) demand a 'fair share' — about 50% — of the booty. Should this reasonable demand be refused, the players will be fortunate to be allowed to leave goblin territory with their lives and possessions other than any magic items.

#### GM's Note on the Goblin Tunnels

The goblins, an underground race that shuns daylight, are not the best custodians for the crystals, which require periodic exposure to sunlight. Unless this is explained carefully to them (which the players may choose not to do, even if they are aware of the requirement), any crystals or crystal artifacts left in the goblins' hands will gradually lose power and become totally useless in 306 days. Believing themselves cheated, the goblins will start a search for the players, who should, by this time (hopefully), be at least 50 miles away, and can thus avoid the goblins' revenge. Of course, any crystals the players retain will need several hours of recharging once they have left the underground tunnels.

#### Character Descriptions for VALLEY OF THE OSTRAKONAI

ID#	Name	Character Notes	Class	Purse	Requisites												Weapon	Combat HACO	Damage	Armor Class	HTK
					ST	CO	RF	SM	DN	IQ	TL	MR	MG	AP							
101	Tree Dragon	1	ILLUSION													BITE	5	2D8	10	56	
102	Dryad	*1	ILLUSION		08	14	16	09	06	11				14	21				0	23	
103	Giant Spider	1	ILLUSION													BITE	6	1D10	3	34	
104	Tyronius		INT HU FTR	1D6GP	16	14	12	15	08	09	07	12	10	09	BSWde	6	4D4	CHN 7	32		
105	Duban	2	EL HU MAG		10	14	13	12	18	15	17	20	13	11	SPELLS			NON 2	29		
106	Fassur	2,0	SUP HU MAG		05	14	10	10	16	17	18	18	14	11	SPELLS			NON 2	21		
107	Thazass	2,0	EL HU MAG		09	12	14	11	14	16	18	19	13	14	SPELLS			NON 2	28		
108	Kaharulum	2	SUP HU MAG		06	11	10	10	12	16	19	20	10	09	SPELLS			NON 2	26		
109	Mellia	*	INT HU MAG		08	14	14	09	12	15	15	12	09	12	SPELLS			NON 1	17		
110	Borand	2,0	SUP HU MAG		06	14	16	10	11	15	17	21	08	07	SPELLS			NON 3	22		
111	Verienne	*2	VET HU MAG		08	15	12	10	14	19	16	19	10	15	SPELLS			NON 1	23		
112	Siluril	2	SUP HU MAG		15	19	16	14	12	15	18	26	08	08	SPELLS			NON 3	34		
113	Shieldman Officer	3	VET HU FTR	2D10GP	15	12	14	12	13	10	08	16	12	10	BSWde	4	4D4	CHN 8	31		
114	Shieldman (01-40)	3,4	INT HU FTR	1D10GP	14	13	15	16	11	09	08	12	10	09	BSWde LANCE	5 8/NA	4D4 3D11	CHN 7	23		
115	Shieldman (41-00)	3	GR HU FTR	1D4GP	12	14	12	14	10	11	07	14	07	08	BSWD	7	2D4	CHN 6	18		
116	Mage A	0	VET HU MAG		09	12	13	09	11	15	18	19	12	11	SPELLS			NON 1	22		
117	Mage B	0	INT HU MAG		10	10	15	12	15	14	17	15	10	14	SPELLS			NON 1	18		
118	Mage C	*	GR HU MAG		11	12	08	08	10	16	16	17	11	10	SPELLS			NON 0	14		
109	Apprentice		GR HU MAG	1D4CP	08	07	13	13	05	13	17	14	08	12				NON 0	15		
120	Kedassa	*	INT HU NON		16	14	17	12	11	11	14	15	10	09	CLEAVR	9	2D4	NON 2	17		
121	Yarryn	*	DRAGON		50	17	12	48	08	16	17	17	BITE CLAWS TAIL FLAME SPELLS	5 4 7	2D10 2D10 3D8 6D20	PLT15	300				
122	Jazparilla	*	INT GO MAG		05	13	14	09	08	14	17	12	12	14	SPELLS			CLO 3	17		
123	Goblin Scout A		INT GO THF		09	15	16	12	08	05	06	08	05	06	SBOW	2/6/10	1D6	LTH 6	20		
124	Goblin Scout B		INT GO THF		08	16	15	09	12	06	05	09	08	07	SHSWde	5	3D3	CLO 4	19		
125	Goblin Scout C		GR GO THF		07	10	08	09	05	08	03	10	07	04	DGR	12	1D4	NON 0	11		
126	Goblin Fighter A		VET GO FTR		12	10	16	14	08	10	09	10	08	09	SPEARe SHSWde	4/7 6	3D5 4D3	LTH 6	27		
127	Goblin Fighter B		GR GO FTR		11	14	17	10	09	08	11	16	05	07	SPEAR	6/9	2D5	LTH 5	15		

**Notes:**

- \* Female
- 1 Illusion can be dissolved with magic weapon
- 2 Carries Lissar crystal
- 3 Has 60% chance of magic sword, +1 to +3 (1D3g)
- 4 With mounted lance, HACO is 4 if target stationary
- e Expert with weapon
- o NPC has potent offensive magic item on person

# Rescue Scenarios and Abduction Adventures

## B. Escape from the Ashwood Mines

### GM's Notes

This adventure is best if run for about eight characters of differing backgrounds and abilities; only three of them need be members of a Thieves Guild. In this scenario, diverse skills and abilities in information retrieval and planning are of much greater importance than lockpicking, pocketpicking, or other normal thieftly skills, although these will of course be handy.

### Introduction

The players have responded to an advertisement (or hired crier; not all can read) for a high-pay, medium-risk, long-term job. The group members, upon arriving in the Rose & Thorn Tavern in the city of Valon, are ushered into a private room. Three (the Guild members) are led into a separate room for a prior briefing.

The three have been called for special duty by the Valon Thieves' Guild. A high ranking lieutenant of the guild has been captured by the local government and convicted of serious crimes. He was sentenced to slavery in the silver mines of Ashwood, a small town located some 150 miles to the northwest. For reasons of which the Guild is yet unaware, the usual channels of bribe and graft have been slammed shut in this case, and all probes by bought officials stonewalled "at the highest levels of Valon government." Thus, a party had to be gathered in haste to attempt to spring him from the mines before the unceasing work kills him, as it has killed countless others. The three are informed by the somewhat nondescript gentleman that a cover story for the rest of the party is in effect, and the true identity of Drak, the lieutenant, is to be kept quiet unless there is no other alternative. The three are now sent into the other room with the remainder of the group.

After the stragglers enter, a well-dressed nobleman arrives, followed by another man (the speaker of the previous briefing). The nobleman greets the assembled group, and bids them to be at ease; a servant enters bearing flagons of wine and ale for the party to sample as they listen. The nobleman introduces himself as Eadwin mac Crow, a baron of the country of Merida (200 miles due east of Valon) and consul-general for his government in the kingdom of Valon.

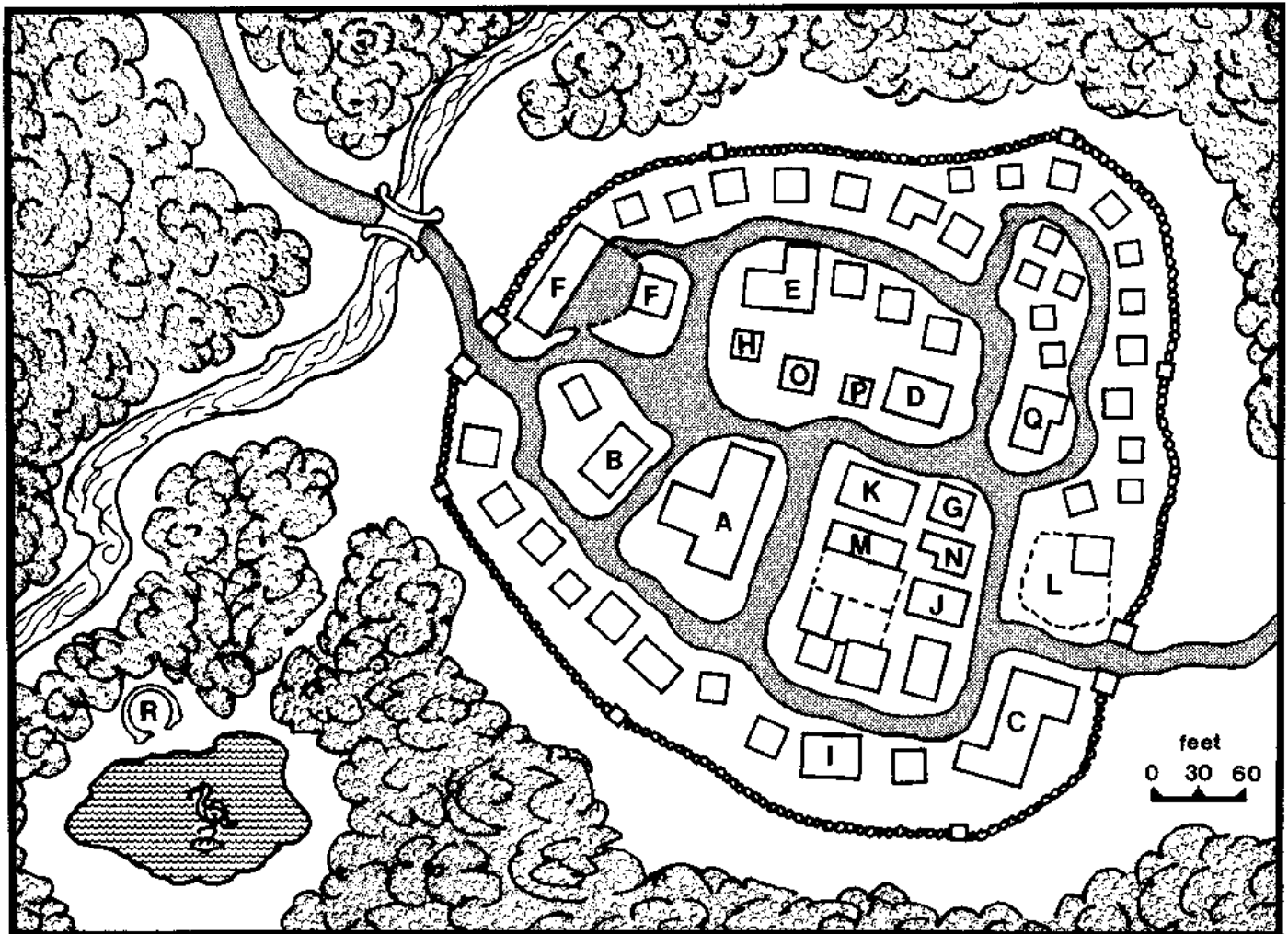
His tale is that of a lord of Merida, named Drak, who was a visitor in Valon a few weeks ago. Some local

lord had taken a dislike to Lord Drak, and through bribery and foul play had him convicted on a false charge and sentenced to dig silver in the mines of Ashwood for the rest of his life. The Valon government in its perfidy (this is laid on quite thickly) refuses any ransom or other inducement to free Lord Drak, and so Merida (a relatively small and weak kingdom, with no land forces to speak of) must resort to hiring mercenaries to free him. The Meridan ambassador is willing to offer 1,000 pieces of gold per person to those willing to attempt a jail break, 100 GP each in advance, the rest upon the successful completion of the task (a return to Valon with Lord Drak, alive). A description of Drak is provided — slender and well-built, of medium height; only in his late thirties, but with greying hair. While this can describe many men, Drak has the rather singular characteristic of eyes of different colors — one a cerulean blue, the other a verdant green.

### The Preparation

Most items the party members might wish for their enterprise are available in Valon, a city of about 8,000 population. Another small town exists on the road leading to Ashwood, about 40 miles southeast of the mining center. From Brisla (a wide spot in the road — about 500 inhabitants), a coach (a wagon with seats and a rain canopy) runs up to Ashwood about twice a week; there is little other communication with Ashwood other than the occasional merchant caravan of luxuries (gathered and husbanded by Myntar the Purse — see the further information on this person below) and the silver shipments coming from the mine. Information about the mine and its guards, or the town of Ashwood is sadly lacking, and can only be gleaned in situ.

The information for this scenario is presented in several sections. A description of Ashwood and its general locale surrounding are given first, followed by a discussion of the major NPCs likely to be encountered in the process of the adventure. A description of the mine and its environs is followed by a discussion of the various guard detachments in the area, and their responses to assorted levels of oddness or harmful activity. A schedule of events occurring in the area while the players are involved in the rescue is provided; these events may not affect the players in the completion of the mission, but can give the GM the running flow of activity in the area at the time they are present — a set of random encounters have also been provided, which can lead to some interesting side excursions from the mainstream of activity.



### The Town of Ashwood

- |                                  |                          |                              |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| A. IVth Cohort Barracks          | G. Greengrocer           | M. Herbalist and Apothecary  |
| B. Town Hall/Meeting House       | H. Jeweler               | N. Hunting Supplies          |
| C. Silver Ingot Inn              | I. Weaver and Tailor     | O. Corder and Rope Walk      |
| D. General Store                 | J. Blacksmithy           | P. Trapper                   |
| E. Mother Tooth's Boarding House | K. Flaming Flagon Tavern | Q. Miner's Rest Brothel      |
| F. Livery Stable                 | L. Mill and Mill Co-op   | R. Pool of Cranes and Shrine |

All other buildings are assumed to be residences of free mine workers or other "townles".

#### SHOP AND BUILDING DESCRIPTIONS IN ASHWOOD

##### Barracks of the 3rd Century of the IVth Cohort: (#A)

Many members of off-duty watches, those neither passed out in a tavern nor engaged in extra-curricular activities, will normally be here sleeping; roughly one-third of all off-duty watches (use #246 to #252) may be found here performing sundry tasks. During daylight hours, four or five commandos from the jungle patrol will be awake and present. The barracks has two stories. The upper is given over to accommodations, with individual cots and footlockers; the lower story is half accommodations, with a separate officers' wardroom and office. The basement (locked and barred, no window entrance) holds the armory and five cells for detention.

##### Town Hall: (#B)

This building is usually occupied by two clerks (#201), who will refer any mining questions to Mine Administration on site. The local town watch is also

based here: four watchmen on the day shift, three for each night shift (see #244 to #245) — all invariably goldbrick and quickly melt in crisis, relying on the cohort for any real peacekeeping. The townwatch is kept on for appearance's sake only; Ashwood has no formal town government — the nearest equivalent to a decision-making body is a town meeting twice per year to elect a 'land warden', who conducts town business. The current land warden (on his ninth term), Coro ti Valkanium (#202), is tall, thin, well liked and respected, and totally self-effacing. He may be found in the Town Hall, off and on most days when he's not out tending his gardens. Decisiveness is not Coro's strong suit; Tarienna and Belezin between them comprise the area's active leadership. Information obtainable here is primarily directions on how to get places, listing of area businesses, available housing and buildings for sale or rent, and the like. Sensitive material, gossip, and/or mine information cannot be gotten from the nervous and relatively uncooperative clerks.





**The Silver Ingot: (#C)**

Excellent quality/high priced. Soldiers, travellers from the capital, and other well-to-do people frequent this inn. Available rooms include two singles, three doubles, and dorm space for eight; the common room seats fifty maximum. Fare is usually jungle game with locally grown grains and produce; wines and liquors (other than beer and ale) are brought in from the capital and thus are more expensive than would normally be encountered. The innkeeper is Horga Oretar (#203), a deceptively beefy man who fancies himself a match in tests of strength with any soldier around (he frequently loses, disproving the theory). Tending bar is ex-cavalryman Thangal (#204), retired from the 11nd Cohort of the Third Legion to his hometown; Thangal holds the honorary position of Sergeant-Major of the townwatch. Since the watch is 'directed' by Coro, this post entails no real duties; however, the aging soldier is the most competent military-type in Ashwood outside of the cohort troops, and can be found pulling the watch into a semi-cohesive unit (rather desperately) in times of trouble. Most area politics and personalities are discussed in the common room, and rumors and other information can be gained by anyone with good ears. However, the inn's operating losses are covered by the army, so staff members hearing talk of plots or other subversion will generally report to Oretar, who passes this info on to Tarienna.

**Ashwood General Store: (#D)**

Mediocre quality/costly price. There is a 70% chance of finding a common item on the order of household goods and tools here, a 30% chance of finding an uncommon item, and a 10% chance of finding some sort of esoteric item (not including magical items or equipment). The high prices are alibied by storekeeper Murfo o'Dale (#205) as being the result of import and transportation costs. Murfo knows he has the townspeople over a barrel, and will stand for little haggling. No special information can be gotten here.

**Mother Tooth's — Boarding: (#E)**

Fair quality/high price. Many of the non-native mine workers and guards board here; no services other than living space are provided. Single rooms (more like cubbyholes) make up the accommodations; they are clean if spartan, and five are available. Mother Tooth (#206 — a full orc with unusually protruding jaws even for one of her kind) requires at least a week's rent in advance and will put up a fuss if offered that little; a month in advance is more to her liking. The reputation of the joint is somewhat wilder and raunchier than is actually the case. The help is comprised of the remaining area orc population (three — #207, #208, #209): a janitor, a bouncer, and a doorkeeper. All sorts of info (thin walls and loose lips) can be heard here.

Many of the rank and file mine workers occupy this place, so those wanting to stir up discontent concerning the mine's labor problems should have fertile ground to sow. People willing to moonlight as cheap muscle (numbering 108) for enterprising party members are available as well.

**Stable: (#F)**

Good quality/low price. This large stable has nine grooms and a veterinarian working full time to care for horses. The 1Vth stables all horses ridden by off-duty troops here; there is room for only seventy horses total, but since the soldiers have their horses with them while on duty, there is open stall room for fifteen equines. There will always be 1010 guards coming in and out within half-an-hour either side of shift change, and a 30% chance of 103 troops in the stable area at all other times. Care provided for mounts is good and includes grooming, vet service, tack and harness repair, and the like. The owner is Logan Polosi (#210), a reasonably talented hobbit vet who has apprenticed five of his nephews and nieces in addition to other youngsters in the town to make up his groom complement. Since the stable puts up the cohort's horses, gossip can be obtained from incoming or outgoing soldiers. More critical information (such as deployment schedules) can be bribed out of Logan Polosi for a decent sum; anything that could be considered outright treason, however, Logan will balk at.

**Velyan's Greengrocers: (#G)**

Average quality/fair price. Velyan's is primarily frequented by non-locals, as natives tend their own gardens. There is not a wide range of fare, but such as is found here will usually be of decent quality and freshness; fruits (except for pears) are imported from the capital and are quite expensive. Bormark Velyan (#211) is well known in the immediate area for his prowess as a drinker; considering that the Ashwood region includes several hundred soldiers and miners,

that's saying a lot. Velyan knows **everybody** and is willing to spill his guts on anything for the right price.

Jeweller/Silversmith: (#H)

**Mediocre quality/fair to high price.** Jewelry and silverwork are done by Carlo White Boots (#212). He is a poor lapidary but a decent silversmith, and much of his work is taken to the capital and marketed as 'Ashwood Jewelry', bringing some prosperity to Carlo. The high prices indicate exports, the lower what locals will pay for Carlo's work. He avoids local business if he can, but is under injunction from Belezin to earn his monopoly and take some local business. Gems have to be brought into the area; thus, jewelry is priced more reasonably if gems are not included.

Weaver — Tailor: (#I)

**Good quality/fair price.** Leona ti Larakka (#213) handles most of the wool and cotton (locally grown) weaving for the town. If requested, she does some simple dyeing; this will cost one and a half times the cost of the dye. She also does tailoring on commission, but requires at least a week's notice before starting work, more time than people may be willing to take.

Smithy: (#J)

**Mediocre quality/fair price.** Kadar the Hammer (#214) does a wide range of metal work (including some silver), but any item asked for beyond basic farm and household implements is seldom well-made — Kadar fashions (in an apologetic and bumbling way) quite shoddy iron weapons on any request. The smith makes most of the tools used by the slaves at the mine, and has identical copies for sale; he also has some chain in stock of the kind worn as manacles at the mine (locks are imported).

The Flaming Flagon: (#K)

**Good quality/fair price.** The favorite watering hole for the locals and many of the mine staff serves a fairly decent meal, but the big drawing card is the plentiful, potent (relatively inexpensive) whiskey the Flagon sells (hence the name). The owner is on good terms with Tarienna, and disturbances at the Flagon are quickly and efficiently quashed (a cumulative 10% chance per minute for arrival of 205 guards); further, there may well be several husky mine workers or soldiers willing either to participate in, or to finish off, a brawl (70% and 35% respectively). The Flagon offers no rooms, but flop space on the floor will be extended to the terminally drunk (or those who pretend to be) at a bargain rate of 3 CP/night, plus cost (if any) of cleaning up after said drunkards. The owner of the Flagon is the mellifluous Mellior Jablumon, of whom more is told; Boro the Onker (a mild and oft affectionate term of abuse — #215) runs the bar in his eager if plodding style — he is a bit of a blabbermouth, but knows little. A platoon of cooks and serving women (and men for the equal opportunity pinchers) help to operate the inn. Most cohort NCOs take their meals here, and Dinsul and his clique can be found on many an off-duty evening, quaffing and commiserating.

Ashwood Milling Coop: (#L)

**Good quality/low price.** The Ashwood milling operation is a cooperative jointly run and staffed by all the local farmers on a rotating basis. Grain prices can be negotiated with any farmer staffing the mill on any given day. The local grain is of very good quality, and

sold ground at a low cost. The mill itself is in a separate outbuilding behind the small shopfront.

Herbalist: (#M)

**Average quality/high price.** Magrin al'Ahir (#216) hails from the deserts to the north, and originally came to this region on an exchange to study the growths of the Biracean coast; he liked the area further inland and stayed, and now three youngsters study the trade under his tutelage. There is a 90% chance of having fresh local herbs in stock, 30% of rare herbs, 10% imported, and a D4x10% chance of any single compound mixed and in stock. Magrin has a D3x15% chance of knowing how to compound any herb-based magical salve, and a further 25% chance of being able to mix said compound with the materials at hand; he has no such compounds in stock at this time. Magrin has a cheerfully fiendish mind, and might possibly give covert aid to the party. He is familiar with the mine compound, as he is the closest thing to a doctor in the area and is frequently called there to minister to injured slaves. He also can whip up neat things like smoke bombs, irritants, soporifics, and mild poisons; however, he must be approached carefully — he really isn't insane, just mischevous.

Hunting Supplies: (#O)

**Mediocre quality/high price.** Rog Rogashnar (#217) operates this rather small shop between his forays into the jungle to hunt. A good hunter but a lousy merchant, his shop stock is limited and locally made; such are not of good workmanship. 150% of normal price must be paid for the rare sound tools imported from the capital. Rog has a great deal of knowledge about the surrounding area, and is generous with this knowledge; there is a catch — he has a great memory, and can give a lot of information to the authorities that less observant folk might miss. The hunter can be hired as a guide to the jungle, but has no great reason to be involved in the mission unless he gets a huge bribe.

Corders, Netmakers: (#P)

**Average quality/low price.** This complex produces or procures all the rope and cord needed for the operation of the silver mine and for the use of the jungle patrol and soldiers. Accordingly, there is a backlog and waiting list for non-business non-military natives and other walk-in customers; to get ropes more quickly (if lesser in quality), try the general store. Rena of Llyr (#218) is the owner, but is usually too busy for more than a passing word with any customer; this is unfortunate because Rena has been to the mine numerous times, and knows the layout quite well, particularly the interior of the shafts. He is a truly ingenuous man, and will seldom be suspicious of questions, even though they get very pointed and specific.

Trapper: (#Q)

**Average quality/fair price for locals, high price for outsiders.** Roderil the Snare (#219) traps fur-bearing animals for sale to the capital, and occasionally for local purchase; he is almost as knowledgeable about the surrounding jungles as Rog Rogashnar. Roderil can be hired as a guide for a truly obscene sum; if he gets the idea that the "gawdam furriners" are up to any nefarious doings, however, he will contrive to abandon them in the jungle rather than turn them into the authorities (he doesn't like them either).

### Miners' Rest (#R)

**Fair quality/high price.** Miners' Rest is the town brothel; Melior Jablumon operates the place with the advice and consent of the mine administration. Eight human and one half-orc women comprise the staff, with two bouncers hired by Jablumon to keep the patrons honest and relatively sedate. There is no madam; the establishment works on an honor system (the profits in a mine town are so huge as to make ten or fifteen percent slippage not worth bothering about); however, the bouncers report to Jablumon and keep graft down to a dull roar. As for the soldiery, Tarienna dislikes the place intensely, but has enough sense to let well enough alone. Information? Lots! The girls will cheerfully take gold and tell anything about anybody, subvert anyone... name it, one can buy it. Of course, time is money (hope the players have lots of it...).

### The Pool of Cranes: (#S)

This is a small, lovely pond set at the edge of the jungle, in which live nine cranes. A non-denominational shrine is maintained at the pool for any who might wish to pray or hold formal services. A regional legend relates the tale of a sacred staff and orb lost long ago; after the foundering of a great enchantment, the souls of the nine participating mages were bound into cranes (purported to be the same nine cranes frequenting the pool) — these may be freed if the orb is found, cast into the air, and shattered with the staff. A tenth crane then will appear (rumored to be the mighty mage Valelis), grant the staff-wielder a great boon, and lead the freed cranes away over the jungle, not to return in this age of the earth. The natives find this legend quite amusing; Sergeant Dinsul takes the tale to heart, thinking that the purported boon will be the best means to unseat Tarienna. He will attempt to enlist outsiders to help him look for the orb, claiming to have already located the staff, and offer them money (or what they ask). He might betray his trust as a soldier for clear input leading to the discovery of the orb, or denounce his aides and have them arrested and enslaved if they ask too great a price for services rendered.

As it happens, the legend is true. The staff is made of ash, some 34" long, tapered, with a knob on the end; Mother Tooth uses it in her boarding house to prop up the front counter. The orb is a 3" bubble of milky glass; it currently resides on the counter of Rog Rogashnar's hunting supplies shop — he found it on one of his trips into the jungle and has kept it as a curiosity since. The boon is very powerful indeed; unfortunately for Dinsul though, said boon is only applicable to sports or athletics. Within that field, it can do nigh unto anything, but the gift is useless otherwise; this catch will be no secret, for Valelis will tell the wielder this upon his appearance.

## **Major Personalities**

### Tarienna ti Cornust: (#220)

Commander of the 3rd Century of the IVth Cohort, Tarienna is responsible for all military defense of the mines and the Ashwood region. Tall and spare, she is a hard, brilliant woman who makes maximum use of her stark competency. The lieutenant is more conscientious than most officers of the Valonian army and will try to act rightly and justly in civil matters — for which affairs, in the end, she is responsible. Tarienna is aware that the several militantly misogynistic soldiers under her command foment plots against her, but she believes her position secure and regards the bulk of the troops as loyal. Originally from the hill stock of Darigos, around the town of Cornust, she is an expert knife fighter and proficient with the notorious lacquered compound bow of the Darigan hill tribes. Tarienna is 5' 8", very lean, and has quite sharp facial fea-



ures, with relatively short dark auburn hair and piercing green eyes. Typically found in the green and yellow leather jerkin of the IVth Cohort, she carries paired bowie knives (which she can use in tandem) and a compound bow slung over her shoulder. Her hair is bound back by her headband of rank, yellow with one silver bar. She possesses no magical items, but all her weapons are +1 due to workmanship. Normally she carries no valuables, as the shopkeepers all know her if she should need to purchase anything.

#### Belezin: (#221)

The dwarven mine administrator has run the Ashwood mine for a business consortium in the capital chartered by the government. He has been chief for seven and a half years, during which an increasing amount of company funds have found their way into the dwarf's pockets. At this point, Belezin is just trying to nail the door shut on any troubles for a few more months until he can make a getaway before the government gets suspicious. Any problems make him look bad, and increase the chance of scrutiny. He has the assistance of Oretar and Carlo in this scheme (both of whom have alibis in case the bovine by-product hits the fan), but is scared silly of Tarienna catching wind of the plan and is none too easy about Melior's knowledge. If Belezin dared, he would have Tarienna assassinated, but he blanches at the potential for inquiry in such an action, never mind finding competent assassins. He is harsh on troublemakers or potential troublemakers, and will try all he can to silence them.

#### Joron the Muscle: (#222)

Drawing his cognomen from his great strength, Joron is one of the three sergeants under Tarienna's command. Noted for neither great intelligence nor steadiness, Joron is however competent at his job, loyal, and popular with the men and women of his command. While no flaming proponent of sexual equality, Joron looks upon Tarienna as his duly appointed commanding officer, and is weary of Sergeant Dinsul's rabble rousing, wishing him a hearty exit from Ashwood and a return to more self-called 'masculine duties'. He is generally easy going in other matters and is wont to overlook minor infractions of military discipline. Other than a fondness for tavern hopping and sporting contests with his men and other locals, he has no outstanding habits or personality traits. Physically, Joron is six feet even, heavily built, with black hair drawn back into a queue; his somewhat-scarred skin is dusky, and his eyes are brown. He too wears military gear and jerkin at all times (except for changes of tunic). The only weapon he uses is the hand-and-a-half sword, in which he is an expert.

#### Dinsul ti Dayelsmot: (#223)

The sergeant assigned directly to keeping order in the town, Dinsul is a noted troublemaker sent to Ashwood largely as a punishment for indiscretions committed while on duty at the capital. He is somewhat bitter about his (well-deserved) ill-treatment, and even more so over his breaking from lieutenant to sergeant, and the subsequent subordination to a female commander. A notorious woman-hater, he blames his misfortunes on women and chafes badly at his present situation. Therefore, he and other similarly minded soldiers (largely under his command in an ill-considered move to get most of the bad apples into one barrel) continually

babble elaborate plots to undermine Tarienna's position and standing with the authorities in the interior. Dinsul has lately (and unusually) spent great amounts of time alone, often with a bottle; this is new for him, and could be considered a result of frustration at his troubles. He is reasonably good looking, and a bit vain; in combat skills, he is a competent sergeant, and a skilled archer and horseman. Dinsul is of average height, with brown eyes, dusky complexion, and light thick hair. He wears military gear only on duty, wearing as decent clothing as his pay can afford at other times. A good judge of horseflesh, he has a fine heavy warhorse (rather rare for the region), without which he is seldom seen outdoors; his favored weapon is the compound bow.

#### Serihwen: (#224)

Serihwen is the sergeant in charge of the jungle patrol, having succeeded the previous leader who vanished on single patrol several months ago. While young for the position, both her patrol and Tarienna have confidence in her abilities. She is fanatically loyal to the lieutenant and grateful for the chance afforded to lead the jungle patrol; as such, though still a bit shy about diving into service politics, she holds no fondness for Dinsul's viewpoints. Serihwen is quiet and unassuming, interested in performing her duties as well as she can as opposed to fooling around and pursuing leisure. The girl is 5'6", thin, with dirty blond hair and blue eyes; she carries the standard javelin and hatchet of the jungle patrol, and she and the jungle patrol wear plain brown and green tunics in an attempt at camouflage pattern, with a plain leather jerkin underneath. Serihwen continually wears a filigreed silver pendant given her by a beau long ago — she will not talk of him now and never lets anyone touch it.

#### Melior Jablumon: (#225)

Melior is for all intents and purposes the power in the town of Ashwood; he is cunning and crafty, knows the value of a coin, and keeps himself informed. Coro (the land warden) is in his backpocket; further, because Melior really is neither corrupt nor very greedy, he keeps on good terms with Tarienna — he knows a little too much about Belezin for the dwarf to cross him. The Flagon's owner uses his influence mildly and benignly, and is satisfied with his lot and with the stability of Ashwood. He is not happy with the labor problems at the mine (ultimately bad for business), considers Belezin incompetent, and is quietly pushing the Lieutenant towards taking military control of matters and setting up direct government controls. Melior stands 5'10" and has a good, if slowly aging, physique. He exercises regularly and causes quite a stir in the early mornings with his unheard-of practice of 'jogging'. In his youth he was a card-sharp, and still possesses an unusually keen sense of touch, along with the gambler's skill of easily judging character.

#### Calan of Theodur: (#226)

Calan is a fairly notorious wandering trader who specializes in the outback, the hill country, and many other places prey to bandits. Although he travels without escort, he has had no unfavorable encounters with nomad bandit groups, leading to widespread speculation amongst merchant and military circles concerning possible connections to the robbers. For such reasons, he is unpopular in trader groups, and his maverick attitudes and ways only serve to increase this



animosity. For his own part, he despises the merchant establishment for being "hidebound and frozen in their hell-forsaken wagon ruts." Well aware of attitudes toward him, he strives to make it rich as fast as possible in order to one-up the opposition. The bandit rumors are untrue. It happens that the only raid on Calan took place during a thunderstorm in which the thieves' leader perished from a lightning strike. The rumor has circulated around the various robber bands that Calan is under the protection of the gods and thus not to be assaulted.

Calan is blond, blue-eyed, extremely handsome, a true charmer, and has at least one illegitimate child in every town he has ever visited for more than a half day. Left in his travels have been many a broken heart; the man has "carpe diem, sine whatever" engraved on his aorta. His natural glibness makes Calan a skilled haggler and merchant as well as keeping him in bedpartners; otherwise, a persistent abrasiveness makes the man hard to deal with when he's not on good behavior. A note — his hearing is exceptional (+40%), and he is good at sniffing out potential ambushes. However, drink turns his forebrain into oatmeal, and he does so like to drink . . . No one in Ashwood will know him by sight, but all the Cohort officers, Myntar, Menneth, and Murfo know him by reputation.

#### Myntar the Purse: (#227)

Myntar is a very influential and wealthy caravan merchant, who runs cargoes between the capital and the outback. As such, he holds credentials from the central government to transport important goods (such as silver) from Ashwood. The man is wary as a serpent, though not terribly overgrasping, and liars in his presence have their work cut out for them. He is on reasonable terms with the area merchants, especially Murfo and Mellor, while his patriotism and honesty are high enough for Tarienna to be on speaking terms with him. One man with whom he is not on good terms is Calan, for aforesaid reasons; relative honesty aside, he deals with Calan as he feels the "renegade tinker" deserves. One could say that Myntar and a giant frog bear more than a superficial resemblance to one another; while the simile is not perfectly accurate (Myntar is not green-skinned), the merchant is a huge toad of a man who finds travel by any means other than a horse litter excruciatingly uncomfortable. His outward air is that of a genial and kind uncle, only partially a mask for the keen-witted master merchant — he has come to the 'noblesse oblige' state in his career and can afford some kindness. Almost continually accompanying him is the green-clad healer Lanora (#228), a severe young woman who plies him with rather foul herbal mixtures (for unknown purposes) several times daily; she offers little counsel or comment publicly.

#### Menneth the Tyger: (#229)

Menneth is Myntar's warleader, overseeing all security arrangements for the caravan and leading the guards against any attack. In his six years of service with Myntar, no raid against the caravan has ever been successful. A small man of wiry strength, he appears lean and hard; he is always armed, wearing chain armor and toting a shield. His helm is visored, and he has never been seen to remove it; rumor has it he was hideously disfigured in battle. Cold, business-like, and bitter are his actions and attitudes, and he doesn't like to be crossed.

#### Myntar's Caravan Guards:

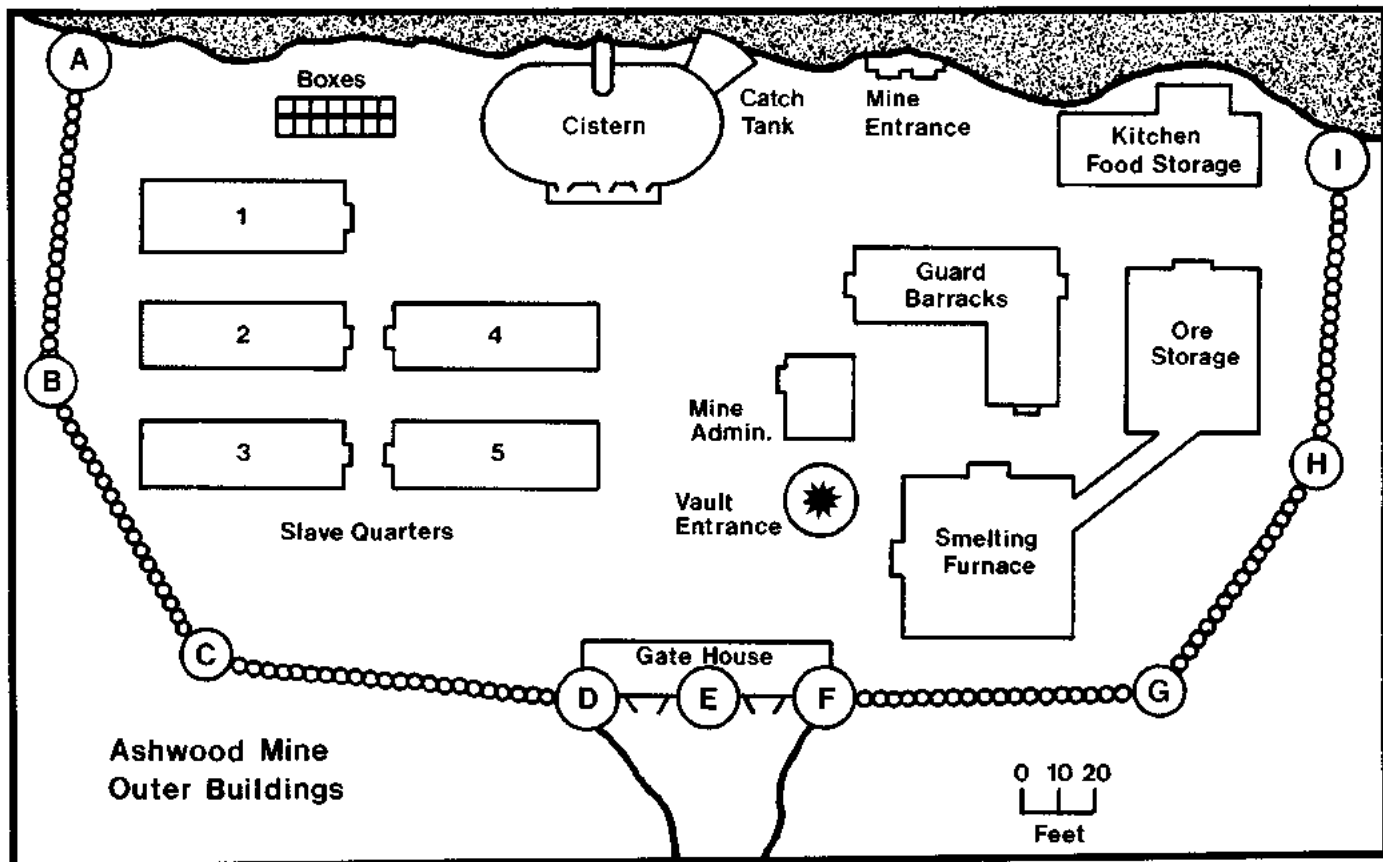
Myntar has a large retinue of 30 mounted and quite competent guards. Menneth's three lieutenants are Khanor Orcface (#230), Danric the Bow (#231), and Ezrik (#232). All three are very loyal to both Myntar and Menneth, and capable of handling almost any trouble. Khanor's background is hill nomad, and he generally rides point with a few men. Danric rides rear guard; Ezrik and his men ride with the wagons. Ezrik is from a strange stock (rumored to have ogre blood) from far to the north — he stands a full seven feet high, 340 pounds. Needless to say, he doesn't ride a warhorse per se, but a decently trained draft horse of larger size. The other guards can be drawn from #233 to #235.

#### Drak: (#236 — you remember him . . .)

Drak was a Guild lieutenant in the capital before he was found to be putting the horns on a ducal counselor. He was caught, and sentenced to dig silver for the rest of his short existence. The usual bribery attempts by the Thieves' Guild were quashed under official scrutiny; thus, Drak has been a mine slave for two months. Full of hatred and anger at this point, the thief will take dire revenge if sprung, but can keep enough brain power to be clever about the business. The thief is used to command and may try to take over the escape if freed; Drak is a very competent, cool, and ingenious leader, but is used to an urban setting. His fighting skill (rapier/main-gauche) is first class and his skills sharp. Tall, handsome (no scarring as of yet), but all too lean at this point, Drak's health remains good; he is not, however, up to any major or prolonged exertion. Right now all his possessions come down to a loincloth, other than personal moneys he has cached in the capital (still a large sum); he will likely reward the party members for an escape. Lastly, he is a good actor and conman, and if told the cover story will go along.

## **The Silver Mine**

The Ashwood silver mine consists of a steep hillock some eight miles into the jungle, reached by an access road from the town. The mine entrance is situated in the hillock, with one-third of the hill shaved away to form a cliff face. Running from this face is a curtain wall, 10' high and covered with hides, set in a semi-circle from edge to edge; the area enclosed within the wall is roughly 200 yards wide. The curtain wall is made of pine, covered with hides which can be soaked in case of assault to prevent the wood from being fired. A gatehouse, five barbettes and two semi-towers (set into the cliff face) bolster the wall defenses. Ten cohort soldiers assigned to each shift man the walls; seven keep to the barbettes and the two towers, while the other three remain in the courtyard, near their mounts. The above ground guards, fifteen hired by the mine, patrol in and around the slave quarters, the ore storage areas, and the smelting building. Each barbette protrudes five feet from the wall, and can hold one soldier; barbettes include a shuttered window which when closed provides an arrow slit. It is to be noted that the military defenses of the mine are not considerable; the intent mainly is to keep slaves in, wild animals out, and petty raiders away. A full-scale mass military assault would breach the defenses quickly; the isolation of the mine and the terrible terrain surrounding the site seems to preclude such operations.



The mine itself consists of seven shafts in descending order. Four of these shafts are under the water table, and a rather ingenious pumping system has been constructed to pump water out of the mine. This water is shunted to a huge cistern not far from the main shaft entrance, which provides the water for the slaves' drinking purposes and for the smelting process. Another feature of the system is the ability to flood the lower levels of the mine at will; since the more recalcitrant and spirited slaves are relegated to the lower levels of the mine, this process tends to cut down on the number of slave revolts.

All buildings in the courtyard are made from local hardwoods with crushed stone foundations, one to two stories tall. The mine administration building and the on-site barracks are covered with hides; other buildings are unprotected. Few windows are set into the structures (none at ground level), and those windows which exist are heavily shuttered.

## The Mine Layout

### Mine Administration Building

This building is in the courtyard, and is the headquarters for all mine bookkeeping. The chief administrator Belezin and his watch supervisors oversee all mine operations from this building, soundly constructed of oak and reinforced with bars (just in case). There are two floors to the building. On the first floor is a workroom for the three clerks and a break lounge for mine guards; the second floor contains

Belezin's office (including his safe, protected by a Tanglefield spell), and an office for the watch supervisor on duty. Belezin can usually be found in his office (a cot is installed for his use), wherein is found the master assignment schedule for all guards (including the cohort), the shipment schedule for silver convoys, and other extremely pertinent information. Belezin is taking payola in a large embezzlement scheme from the Minister of Mines; the real books, detailing all illicit transactions, are in the safe.

**Occupation:** The second floor is likely to be occupied at almost all times, except when Belezin is making his rounds. It would be unusual for both Belezin and the watch supervisor to be out of the building at the same time; there is only a 10% chance during day shifts of this happening in any given hour, and less at night (Belezin uses his cot). The first floor will often be empty, 40% chance during the day and 75% during night shifts. However, men drift in and out of the lounge at all times, and the clerks' workroom will be invariably occupied during the day.

### On-site Guard Barracks

This is a two story building, in the same style as the Administration Building. As the on-site quarters for the 3rd Century of the IVth Cohort, the mine duty officer will be found here, as will be Tarienna occasionally during day shifts. The first floor has been remodeled into a makeshift stable, while the second floor includes sack space for troops and the Lieutenant's office; posted in her office are similar deployment schedules to Belezin's — it is off-limits to

all except for Belezin, the sergeants, and Tarienna's orderly. A basement level has four temporary holding cells (empty at this time) and an armory storing weapons and leather jerkins for twenty soldiers.

**Occupation:** There is a 90% chance 2D6 guards will be using the sack space. Tarienna's office is occupied 85% during the day (by her, the orderly, or a sergeant examining deployment schedules). Soldiers go through the stables almost all (90%) the time. In any case, an unoccupied area on the upper two floors will not remain so more than 2D8 minutes. However, few find reason to visit the lower level armory/brig; there is an 85% chance that the lower floor will be empty during the day, and a 95% chance during the night (except for the weekly craps game amongst certain privileged members of the guard corps).

#### Smelting Building

The smelting building is a massive enclosure for the furnaces and ore piles used in smelting the silver ore. An enclosed walkway joins the outer ore building to the smelting building, and a drop shaft conducts the cast ingots through a foot high opening into the underground storage lock-up; twenty slaves and eight foundrymen work in this facility. One feature of the building is several large piles of charcoal and waste rock stacked against the east wall, affording reasonable concealment. The smelting operation runs from 8:00AM until 5:30PM; at other times the building is completely unsupervised.

**Occupation:** The building is continually occupied during the day. At night, it is empty nearly all of the time.

#### Outer Ore Storage Building

All the ore produced on-site is brought into this holding building in wains from the shafts, where the rock lies in great piles until it can be smelted; canvas tarps cover the piles. An enclosed runway leads to the smelting building.

**Occupation:** Traffic is irregular into this area; slaves and worker pass in and out throughout all shifts. There is a 40% chance that this building is unoccupied at a given time, but remains so for only 1D4x1D4 minutes.

#### Gatehouse

Unmanned except for shift changes, the gatehouse is a stone building centered in the curtain wall; the gate itself is made of oak banded by iron, with a great oaken bar. Two cauldrons filled with oil rest on the upper floor of the gatehouse to be used in conjunction with the murder holes (handy, aren't they?) set in the floor of the upper level to provide a nice surprise to hostile forces.

**Occupation:** The gatehouse is seldom occupied during normal times. In case of attack or slave revolt, it will be occupied on a regular basis.

#### Slave Quarters

Four one-story buildings set in a rough cross house fifty slaves apiece. The buildings are thirty feet apart and measure twenty feet by sixty, with the slaves ankle-chained in rows against the wall. A feeding trench is placed by the double door at the end of the building. This door is barred from the outside; the buildings have no windows. Burlap sacks filled with straw rest on the floors as sleeping pallets for the slaves. On the roofs are stacked piles of brush; this allows the barracks to be fired if necessary, and for

this purpose each soldier stationed on the curtain wall is equipped with a quiver of fire arrows and braziers. Each building houses two shifts of slaves sleeping on a twelve hour schedule. The whip slaves are housed with the others, but stay alive as a result of the truly inventive tortures inflicted on any whip-slave slayer. Also rumored included in the queues are 'white mice', informants for the wardens on slave revolts and other such unproductive topics. There are frequent changes of shifts and housing in order to break up potential cabals amongst the slave force.

**Occupation:** The slave barracks are occupied at all times except shift changes (the slaves coming on shift are brought out to flank the mine entrance about 5 minutes before outgoing slaves emerge) and feedings.

#### The Boxes

Since the cost and effort involved in transporting slaves to Ashwood is almost prohibitive, an attempt is made to handle discipline problems among the work force short of maiming and executions. A row of sixteen 4'x4'x4' wooden boxes lie next to the cliff face to serve as detention cells — the 'cooler' if you will. There are grills on top open to the elements, and not enough room for limb stretching; lice and vermin are encouraged by the friendly staff to keep the malfesants company. Brawling, insubordination, loss of or negligent damage to tools, and goldbricking are all sufficient cause for a slave to merit a stay in the dreaded box. Murder of a fellow slave results in death by hanging, murder of a whip slave death by torture, and murder of a free worker or guard death by slow immersion into molten silver (unfriendly, to say the least).

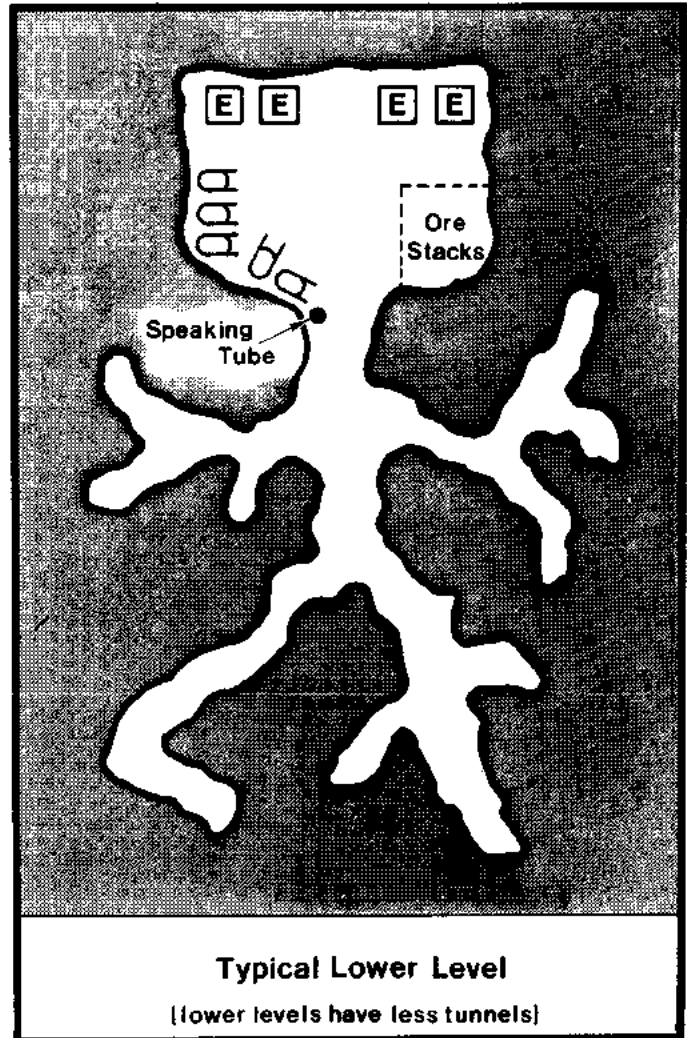
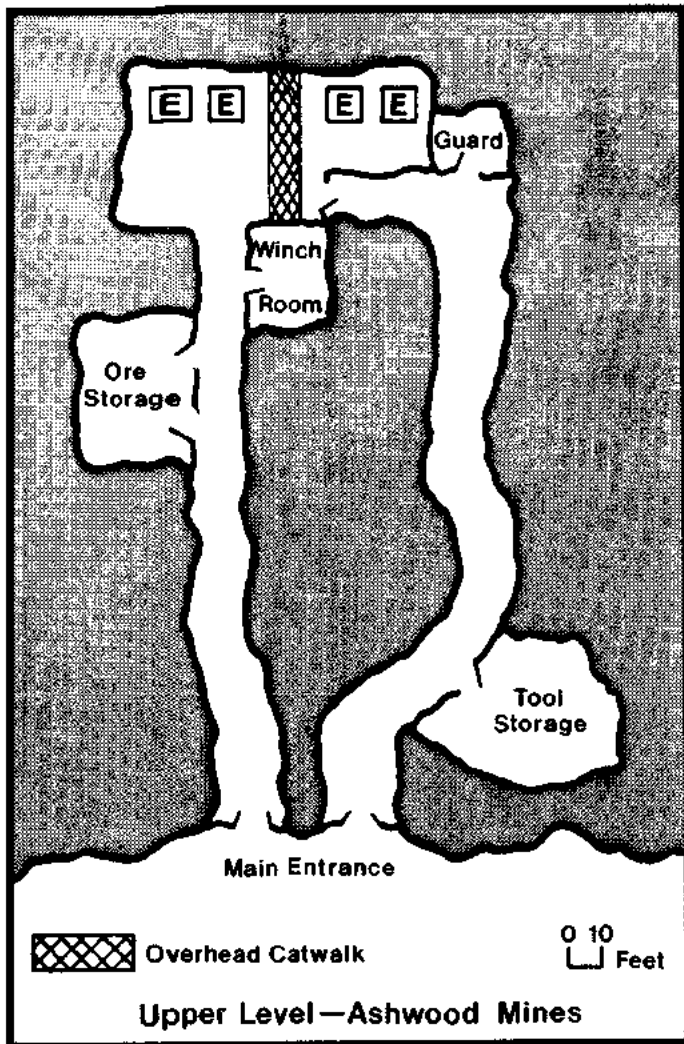
**Occupation:** 15% chance that a given box is occupied.

#### The Cistern

A cistern handles the runoff from the mine pumps. Two eight-inch stone pipes lead to the 9500 gallon stone tank; spigots run to troughs below used for the slaves' drinking water and for water required in smelting operations (the second in a catch tank). While the cistern is made of one inch thick rock, a few sturdy sledgehammer blows might open a breach. The intake pipes are joined to the bottom of the tank; this placement is used to create a possible backflow if flooding of the mine is desirable. Still, flooding of the sixth through fourth levels would take time for the water tables to build. A third conduit conducts overflow runoff outside the wall some fifty yards; the pipe is three inches wide.

#### The Mine Entrance and Upper Level

The entrance into the mine is a double tunnel some fifteen feet wide by eight feet tall. Two iron gates can be closed and locked to seal the mine shafts in case of trouble. The topmost level of the mine is given over to support facilities, storage, and the like. At the beginning of each shift, the slaves pass through a bend in the upper mine tunnel; around this bend the tools for the day are passed out, numbered for each slave to prevent theft and to control losses. Two soldiers are stationed here during shift changes. Access to the lower levels is controlled by elevated platforms operated by counter weights; the wains of ore are conducted from the lower levels to the upper level in the same way. A guard holds a position in a secret room controlling the counter weights — the counterweight



system can be sabotaged to prevent movement between levels unless ropes are used to span the distance. A system of speaking tubes (two on each level) runs here. Occupation: This area is continually occupied by soldiers, slaves, and overseers.

#### Pump Room

This room is enclosed from the rest of the mine at a depth roughly equal to the seventh level; however, the only access to the room is through a shaft leading to the guard station on the first level. The machinery is operated by free workers receiving triple pay ('danger silver'), in the knowledge that they may die if a revolt requires flooding of the lower levels. If the room is disabled (possible from the upper guard station), the levels will be flooded at a rate of 2D6 minutes per level, with each higher level above the fifth requiring an additional cumulative 1D6 minutes. The machinery itself operates very well and has not broken down in memory. Occupation: The pump room is occupied round the clock.

#### Upper Level Elevator Platform

This platform is at the far end of the 190' long upper level. The platform itself is partitioned into two sections, 40'x50'. During shift changes, the slaves are piled into the four elevators (15'x10') and taken from the lower levels onto the north partition. Only then do the slaves coming onto a work shift (gathered at the other side) enter the elevators to be lowered. These same elevators are used to transport wains of ore from

the shafts to the surface. Eight slaves operate the winches, the lines of which can be cut from the guard station previously mentioned, causing the elevators and any unfortunates thereon to crash into splinters at bottom alley, cutting all access to the 2nd through 7th levels in case of a slave revolt. Several particularly dispirited slaves are kept on hand to roll the wains to the inner ore storage room (q.v.). Also, several crossbow armed guards are posted here to serve as a second line of defense in a slave revolt.

Occupation: Soldiers and slaves are here continually.

#### Inner Ore Storage Room

This large room is set off the outbound tunnel of the upper shaft. Ore taken from the mine is first deposited in this room; only then is the ore (still loaded in the wains) taken from the rooms by slaves working from the outer ore storage building. This procedure was initiated to prevent slaves from having too wide a run of the complex; slaves in the two transporting crews are prohibited on pain of flogging from meeting or speaking to one another during the performance of their tasks. The storage room is 40'x40', normally filled with the ore-laden wains. The room is not patrolled; in fact, since guards rarely think it needful to enter the room, a few caches of stolen tools and other semi-useful items have been secreted here by various groups of slaves planning uprisings. Some of these caches have been long-forgotten — left by previously escaped or

deceased slaves, and thus intact and unwatched.

**Occupation:** There are people here only during those times when the ore wains are being moved.

### Tool Storage

Locked by a triple-banded oak door, the tool storage room is constantly watched by three guards armed with crossbows. Inside are picks, shovels, trowels, and other such implements — enough to supply 250 slaves. No slave, under pain of two weeks in the box, may set foot in this chamber; instead, free workers handle tool distribution. The room is only open one half-hour before to one half-hour after shift changes.

There are only a few sets of keys; one is kept in the guard station (where it finds its way anon into the hands of an alcoholic soldier), so it can be dropped into the shaft to the pump room if needed; two other sets are kept in Belezin's desk. The tools are neatly bundled in bins against the wall.

**Occupation:** The tool room itself is unoccupied except for a period of one hour at each shift change. However, there are three guards on duty at the door at all times.

### The Mineshafts

Each shaft varies in size (the higher ones tending to be longer, with more branches), but average ninety feet long with several ten to twenty foot splinter shafts. The shafts are relatively short, allowing for future expansion, and are stacked seven deep in order to provide for the optimum amount of crowd control. If shoring or new construction is needed, the level is cleared and a mining crew is brought in from Ashwood; shoring timbers are stored in the tool room, with emergency timber coming from the jungle hardwoods if needed.

Generally, 40 slaves in each shift handle miscellaneous support duties such as smelting, ore transportation, etc., leaving some 160 slaves to actually mine the six operating shafts. All slaves are ankle chained in groups of three; one whip slave supervises four 'chains' of workers. Five guards work in each shaft, three by the elevator and the shaft speaking tube, and two in the middle of the shaft. To increase guard longevity, no slave may approach within fifteen feet of a guard and never from behind; violators are often summarily executed by itchy, paranoid guards. During shift changes, guards move to the rear of the shaft (near another speaking tube) and clear out the side shafts, while the slaves, topmost level first, are hauled to the surface. Lighting is provided by torches; the levels are uniformly grimy and smoky, and the air is foul. Drak is on the sixth level; his truculence has ensured the low position and many a beating besides. He hasn't tried to retaliate (yet), so has escaped mutilation or maiming; certainly though, his primary desire at this point (beyond escape) is the slow castration of the entire guard and whip slave contingent. His chains are secured with a Complexity 1 lock.

**Occupation:** Two shifts of slaves keep these shafts occupied twenty-four hours a day.

### Additional Buildings

An on-site storage building (rather small) is used to contain the slops used to feed the slaves. Cruel is

## **Additional Information**

### Guard Deployment

There are one-hundred and forty-five civilian guards hired by the mine administration and assigned to the mine. Forty-five of these guards make up three watches, which patrol the compound, ore storage, and smelting buildings. Sixty other guards make up three watches, and are posted in the mineshafts. The remaining guards form relief watches; these guards are rotated in on a six day basis. The watches consist of three eight-hour shifts, with changes at 4PM, midnight, and 8AM. Each of the three shifts has a watch officer; he is responsible for on-site supervision — guard commanders are used for the evening and night shifts; the chief mine administrator is on-site during the day shift. In addition to these guards, forty soldiers from the IVth Cohort are assigned to the mine in ten man shifts following the general schedule, with the fourth unit as a relief rotation (again on the same six day schedule) and emergency mounted response.

The mine itself runs 12 hours a day during the rainy season, and 24 hours, six out of seven days in other times of the year. The 400-odd slaves in the mine are divided into two shifts, changing at 6 so as not to conflict with guard rotation. Food distribution is held once per day for each shift, one hour after the slaves in the shafts change into the compound; there is a fifteen minute rest period for mining slaves mid-shift. Of these slaves, some thirty are whip slaves; these whip slaves are working overseers who also act as informers to the operators (naturally, whip slaves are universally hated and tend to keep a tight grip — rendered iron by fear — on their charges; they are usually the first casualties in any slave revolt).

In addition to those soldiers working directly at the mine, sixty IVth Cohort troops complete the full 3rd Century posted in and about Ashwood. The one road cutting through the jungle toward the mine has two checkpoints (both one mile in from the entry and exit), worked by two soldiers during the day and four during the night. Twenty soldiers supplement the titular Ashwood town watch, as the jungle surrounding the town can sometimes be hazardous. The remaining twenty troopers have been formed into an elite jungle detail, comprised of experienced foresters and hunters; the force would not be normally deployed during the night, but would be called up in extreme circumstances — typically, several members of the patrol are employed to track down escaped slaves. If unusual events occur in the jungle area at any time, some members of the detail might be on round-the-clock duty for a few days until the emergency has passed.

### Reactions and Responses

Reaction levels for the various peace-keeping forces are determined by recent actions or events in the immediate area. There are six levels:

1) **NORMAL:** No unusual actions or events have been noted. Guards and other law enforcement groups are somewhat lax in patrolling. **Start at this level.**





asked or odd actions taken by the group will be remembered if such recall is needed. Guards are still be not too precise in their duties.

- 3) **WARY:** Strange events or minor crimes have occurred without immediate resolution. Non-locals will be briefly questioned and put under observation. Guards and troops will be tightened up, and further incidents will provoke official investigation. Duration is one day.
- 4) **SEARCH:** Slaves have escaped, or further strange happenings have occurred after the **WARY** level was reached. All non-locals without adequate proof of identity/purpose, or avouchment by locals, will be questioned at length and tailed. The jungle patrol will be put into action for the duration, and the 4th mine troop unit on active standby. After situation resolution, level reverts to **CURIOUS** for one day.
- 5) **DISORDER:** Civil disorder or severe disorders at the mine have occurred, or major crimes such as murder, arson, etc., have not been **immediately** resolved. Second watches will be called to duty at their posts or on special details; curfews are in effect in Ashwood town; non-locals without iron-clad credentials are taken into 'protective' custody. After resolution, level shifts downward to **WARY** for one day, then **CURIOUS** for two days.
- 6) **MANHUNT:** Mass slave revolt has occurred at the mines, large-scale civil disorders have broken out, events have escalated during and after **DISORDER**, or an invasion force is known or suspected. Martial law is declared; armed peasantry is called up, as are all

watches. Any persons without written permission from the Lieutenant caught out-of-doors are arrested; obvious fugitives or people avoiding arrest are killed on sight. Other results to be expected will include reinforcement from the capital and employment of magical detection (if this reaction level is reached, the players have messed up so totally that further action is impossible; the mission is a total scrub).

### Timetable

It is assumed (fatal though assumptions be) that the adventurers will require no more than four days to complete their task; this is based on the fact that numbers of outsiders with no obvious legal pursuit or adequate credentials will arouse increasing notice and suspicion from area residents and law enforcement officials. Eventually, this scrutiny will effectively squash any chances for springing Lord Drak while remaining undetected (always remember that the party has no hope of totally hacking their way through all possible opposition combined); therefore, the timetable is based on this four day 'work week', and provides a number of events occurring in the general area around Ashwood which may (or may not) affect the players and their mission — GMs may use these if they wish to provide more flavor for the scenario. Further, the varied and unpredictable jungle weather may have some effect on operations — a day-by-day weather report is provided; the time of year is presumed to be coming on to the rainy season, with temperatures reaching into the eighties, high humidity, and occasional showers.

## FIRST DAY

**Weather:** light winds, no precipitation; partly cloudy, highs into the mid 80s.

**10:00AM** — There is an alleged sighting of a forest pygmy on the fringes of the jungle by a farmer. Jungle patrollers are on their toes, and most residents exhibit wariness. The rumor is deemed false by 3:00PM.

**12:15PM** — An overflow of silver at a vat onsite injures a free worker seriously. Mine workers view this as another in a series of 'preventable' accidents, and feelings run high (ofttimes vocal) towards management.

**1:35PM** — Belezin and the watch supervisor hear an ad hoc workers' delegation over mine safety conditions. The dwarven administrator fobs them off with talk about "promptly addressing the matter." This leaves the workers unsatisfied and grumbling.

**9:45PM** — A surprise inspection is staged by two off-duty supervisors at the smelting buildings. They find 'evidence' of worker negligence.

## SECOND DAY

**Weather:** strong winds, dying down by midafternoon; overcast, temperatures in the upper 70s. Showers midafternoon to early evening; fog sets in late, around midnight.

**9:00AM** — Belezin confronts the oncoming dayshift with the 'evidence' gained the previous evening about 'worker incompetence'. Four free workers immediately quit in disgust, with the remaining workforce muttering (loudly) about "goddamn bosses!"

**10:00AM** — Calan of Theodur arrives in Ashwood, leading three loaded packmules. Announcing his presence brassily as he meanders onto the common, he sets up a portable table to display his wares. Within 20 minutes, townfolk arrive to browse and buy. There is a 70% chance he will have any given **uncommon** household item; he also has a fair selection of spices, salt, cloth, and gold jewelry (this lessens by 20-25% daily during his stay). (GM's Note: Calan's goods undercut similar goods in local shops 10-15%; he doesn't stock common items.)

**11:30AM** — A mine representative, flanked by two soldiers, sets up a table on Ashwood Common and announces the opening of several positions at the mine for unskilled and skilled labor. A small crowd, already gathered to examine Calan's wares, begins to heckle, led by two ex-workers. No villager signs up; two itinerants do.

**1:45PM** — A select group of area merchants (consisting of Carlo the jeweller, Murfo the storekeeper, Roderil the trapper, and led by a reluctant Coro ti Valkanium) walk onto the common to greet Calan, at this point turning a brisk business. They draw him aside and inform him that an outsider is not allowed by "municipal ordinance" to sell goods without a permit costing 1000 GP; of course, selling goods at cost to area merchants for further resale is quite acceptable. Calan audibly denounces this "foul theft and usury" in a fine resemblance to a quarterdeck voice and bids the "unscrupulous blackguards, begone!" The merchants leave, a few muttering vague threats.

**2:00PM** — The workers remaining at the mine agree to an immediate work stoppage. They refuse to work until Lieutenant Tarienna is brought to talk to them.

**2:35PM** — Tarienna rides into the mine from one of the checkpoints. She listens to the grievances of the staff patiently, and gives her sworn word to address them. Mollified, the laborers agree to return to the job.

**3:30PM** — The regular caravan of foodstuffs and imported items arrives in Ashwood. Most shopkeepers come a-running to collect purchased items, and otherwise unoccupied townfolk gather to hear the latest news from the interior. Amongst the latest news is a sizeable border skirmish, the most recent in several, between the nation and an aggressive state to the immediate south; the tavern talk is of little else for the rest of the evening. Less amused are the caravan's leader, Myntar the Purse, and his warleader, Menneth the Tyger, as they hear of an "upstart harlequin" who is calmly preempting their hard won business; they are even less happy upon finding out Calan's identity. Meanwhile, wains not bearing trade goods are hustled over to the mine to load up for the outward journey.

**4:00PM** — The wains arrive at the mine, and the outer gates are opened wide to let them pass. During the exchange, all cohort soldiers at the mine man the walls with missile weapons at hand, and the caravan guards ring the wall's base near the open portals. The wain-sized entrance to the lower storage area is opened, and the wains are led in one at a time. The wagons are intermittently loaded during the next thirty-six hours by workers on overtime. Everybody without exception is strip-searched upon coming out of the ingot storage basement, and all openings into the area are each guarded by two cohort soldiers.

**6:15PM** — The same merchants who confronted Calan earlier (excluding Coro, but including Oretar) meet in the Ingot with Myntar and Menneth to discuss what to do about Calan. Menneth agrees to deal with the situation.

**7:00PM** — Tarienna and her sergeants gather for dinner in the Flaming Flagon, to discuss the war rumors and the labor difficulties at the mine. Dinsul is contemptuous at his superior's lack of belligerence, and is as openly insolent as he dares. The discussion dissolves into argument and shouting as Dinsul sinks deeper into his cups. By 7:45 he jumps up, flings his chair aside, and stalks out, leaving a hush behind.

**7:50PM** — After seeing to his mounts, Calan is approached in the street by Horga Oretar, who strikes up a conversation and cajoles the trader to have a drink or two (or four) with him at the Ingot. The two stride off sharing a wineskin.

**10:25PM** — A couple of hours into his cups, Calan stumbles out of the Ingot for a breath of air. He wanders near an alleyway, where several thugs grab him, rob him, and beat the hapless man unconscious; he is left, bruised and bleeding, in the alleyway.

## THIRD DAY

**Weather:** Morning fog burns off by 10:00AM; no wind, skies partly cloudy, temperatures in mid to upper 80s; brief sprinkles throughout the day, with steamy conditions in the undergrowth.

**5:00AM** — Another surprise inspection is staged at the mine, this time by Tarienna and several of the cohort soldiers. She takes careful notes of what she sees, and rides off after a grueling hour for the night supervisor.



**8:00AM** — A scuffle breaks out between three slaves at shift change; they are sent to the boxes. The lieutenant, returning for regular duty on the day shift, watches, saying nothing amid intense protestations of "nothing wrong, sir, nothing!" from the supervisor.

**9:30AM** — A training exercise for the cohort begins. Troops tearing around the terrain are to be expected all day long in any given location. Initial inspection is held in Ashwood at the barracks.

**10:30AM** — The inspecting officers stop off at the stables for a looksee at conditions.

**2:50PM** — The outer checkpoint is next on the list.

**4:00PM** — The officers are at the inner checkpoint.

**4:45PM** — At this time, the inspectors are circling the walls of Ashwood town, noting condition of the mortar (fair) and deployment skills of the townwatch (mediocre).

**5:00PM** — A sighting of a tiger is reliably reported in the jungle fringes (a tiger — #256 — is actually out there — wandering adventurers, beware!). If not encountered (and slain) by the party, the beast will be killed by a jungle patrol member and hauled in about noon the next day. Naturally, the inspectors forego the pleasure of visiting the mine this evening.

#### FOURTH DAY

**Weather:** Light fog burns off by 8:00AM; light wind, skies cloudy, temperatures in mid to upper 70s; intermittent showers through the afternoon, with a heavy thunderstorm breaking about 5:30PM, lasting til 9:45PM; intermittent rains throughout the remainder of the night.

**9:00AM** — A soldier caught off post during the night is flogged in the central common — five lashes, if anyone is counting. A large crowd gathers for the event.

**10:45AM** — The loaded silver caravan (a half day late) leaves for the capitol under heavy guard.

**4:15PM** — A brawl spills out of the Ingot into the street; it appears to be between rival groups in the labor dispute. If any player currently hired by the mine is nearby, he/she will be spotted and dragged into the combat, willy nilly.

## Random Encounters

A number of random encounters have been provided so the referee might throw some sliders at the players outside of the opposition proper. Frequency of these encounters should be low, just enough to be a potential thorn in the party's side, but not enough to sidetrack them completely; it would also be a good idea not to use any single encounter more than once.

While some of these programmed encounters are indeed random everyday occurrences (at least in a day of the life of the average adventurer), several can, if played well by the group, be quite helpful in the successful conclusion of the mission. This is to be encouraged (matters are tough enough in the mission as it stands); very little obvious or concrete aid will come from these encounters — whatever information is gleaned (if any) should be reward in plenty.

The jungles around Ashwood are likely to be the scene of a lot of the players' activity. The following encounters are suggested for use in these situations; they are quite general and do need some detailing by the GM, but should suffice for most groups. One encounter roll should be made every hour (or half-hour) of time spent in the jungle (we suggest both game time and real time — it should speed up the play.

### JUNGLE ENCOUNTERS

Roll	Encounter
01-02	<b>QUICKSAND</b> Strength of bog 3D10+10; SR vs STR (only half of additional pullers' STR counts) to pull trapped one from morass.
03-06	<b>FELINE HUNTER</b> Small cats (#253): 01-75 — 1 only, 76-00 — 1D3g+1.
07-12	<b>SERPENTS</b> 01-75 — 2D4 small snakes (#254); 76-00 — a giant serpent (#255).
13-19	<b>MONKEYS</b> A tribe of 3D8+15 noisy chatterers; 40% chance they'll try to steal something — 65% chance they'll succeed; anything loose is gone.
20-37	<b>CLEARING</b> Simply a less densely overgrown area in the vegetation; 35% chance of a small stream.
38-49	<b>JUNGLE PATROL</b> They may find the party, but it's very doubtful they'll be found unless they wish to be (GMs may not wish to let the party know they've been spotted).
50-53	<b>BIG CAT</b> The tiger mentioned in the timetable above (#256); she is hungry and a maneater.
54-58	<b>APES</b> 01-65 — Baboons (tribe of 4D10 — #257, robbers and raiders par excellence); 66-85 — Chimps (tribe of 3D6 — #258, won't bother the group unless disturbed); 86-00 — Gorillas (65% lone ape, otherwise tribe of 3D4 — #259, lone is rogue who attacks, tribe as chimps).
59-65	<b>SWAMP</b> A sticky morass that will slow travel and muddy everyone passing through; area is 1D3*100 yards across by 2D4*100 yards wide — 65% chance of serpents.
66-00	<b>NO ENCOUNTER</b>

## ASHWOOD TOWN ENCOUNTERS

**Troops:** Three members of local guard units come into view. The men are in uniform (30% cohort troops, 50% mine guards, 20% Ashwood town watch), but seem to be off duty. Acting slightly tipsy, one of them lurches into a party member; he demands an immediate apology from the "clumsy ashhh . . ."

The three are standard guards of their type; all are fairly belligerent, as well as fairly drunk, at this point and would quite willingly brawl with anyone, given half an excuse. However, they are -10% on every skill they attempt (or die roll required) due to drink. If strongly placated (an offer to buy the guards a round suffices quite nicely, thank you), there is a 60% chance that the soldiers will attach themselves to the group for the evening. If a little more drink is poured into the men, they may become rather garrulous and can be led to talk about general conditions and personalities of their posts. Specific scheduling should not come up in the conversation; if pressed on sensitive subjects, the men will become suspicious, mumble something like "don't wanna talk about bloody work. Yoush guys haint no fun," and amble off towards greater excitement.

**Urchins:** A flock of some dozen waifs tag along with the party members for a block, jeering at the 'funny-looking' strangers. At the end of the block, or if an adventurer comments on the childrens' actions audibly in any way, several of the children will throw dirt clods at the party members, and the whole pack of youngsters will run off down a convenient alleyway.

The children belong to area families, some of whom are represented in the Ashwood business district. If the kids are left alone, simply yelled at, or perhaps mildly paddled, nothing will come of the incident. However, if any of the children are physically harmed by a party member, or even seriously threatened (such as sword-brandishing), the children will en masse scream bloody blue murder; there will be bystanders to confirm the foulness of the 'child molesters' in as lurid a fashion as can be, and anyone in the group not beating a frantic and well-executed retreat may well find himself behind bars within minutes and likely run out of town in hours.

**Puppy:** A small speckled puppy waddles up to one of the adventurers; he wags his tiny tail and snuggles up to the comforting leg. The puppy will tag along with the adopted master whether the person likes it or not.

Looking for deep metaphysical implications? There aren't any. The puppy is abandoned, and unless the adventurer in question has violent objections, he has been adopted by the dog. If the puppy is unwanted, well, there's no law against tossing it down the street, but at least 1D4 busybodies will harangue the evildoer for 1D10 minutes over his cruelty, thus branding the malefic lout the lowest of the low to anyone within earshot. This is a good way to bring one's self to the notice of those whose attention may be unwanted.

**Pothole:** Not keeping a careful enough eye on the road, a character plants his foot squarely in a pothole.

A successful saving roll against REF allows the tripee to take no damage; if the SR is missed, a successful saving roll against STM puts the injury in the class of a mild strain (1D3 hits of damage) — otherwise, the result is a serious sprain requiring him to get off his

feet for a day or two. In the case of a severe sprain, any strenuous or forced activity will put 1 hit on the character per minute (or part thereof) of such activity, with a saving roll against STM required each 5 minutes to avoid a tendon tear, disabling the character (no running, no walking, no anything active) for 1D3 months, or until magically healed. If a mounted character's horse steps into the pothole, there is a 50% chance that the beast's cannonbone will be broken, requiring it to be put down (unless immediate magical-type veterinary medicine is applied). The rider will be flung from the falling horse, probably taking damage in the process (see rules on Falling).

**Archery Contest:** If at the outskirts of town, the players spy an improvised archery butt propped up against the town wall. Six men, both local and military, seem to be competing in an impromptu bout; about twenty sports fans are spectators. One of the watchers spots the group, and invites any archers among them to take part.

The archers may be considered between fourth and eighth levels for purposes of proficiency with the long bow; two are rated expert. They may be rated using the small table to the right; if the archer is one of the two experts, award an additional +2 bonus to HP at all ranges. The rolls include modifications for in-born skill as well, so no other adjustments need be made.

### ARCHERS

Roll	HACØ
01-06	3/7/10
07-22	2/6/9
23-56	1/5/8
57-89	0/4/7
90-98	-1/3/6
99-00	-2/2/5

Any adventurer participating will be given ten arrows to shoot; he may elect to use his own. A normal roll to hit is made, assuming the target to be ACØ; the range is medium. On a miss, a non-scoring ring is hit — on a fumble, the target is missed entirely (likely producing much raucous derision from the bystanders). If the roll is successful, an inner ring has been hit, depending on the quality of the shot: the outer blue ring (1 point) if the shot is just made or up to 7 over necessary, the inner yellow ring (3 points) from 8 to 13 over bare minimum, and the black center spot (10 points) for anything greater. Each round consists of each contestant taking two shots, the turn passing to the next contestant in line.

After the bout, several of the bystanders will haul in two kegs of ale, and all may maketh merry. The hat will be passed for the winner (producing 3D20 copper coins, 1D10 silver coins, and 1D2 gold — the players will be expected to contribute). If a player is the winner or acquits himself particularly well, he will receive the adulation of the crowd, and likely not need to buy his own drinks for the next few of days if recognized.

**A Chance Encounter:** An ill-clad lout lurches into one of the party members. He will clutch the adventurer by the shoulders, apologize very profusely (with a fearful, sweating countenance), and scamper down the street as soon as he can break free.

In reality, the lout is a pickpocket; use normal pickpocketing rules to determine if he succeeded — his ability is 68%. If the players subsequently connect the man with the missing purse, there will be a 10% chance per hour spent henceforth in any crowd in Ashwood that the pickpocket (#260) will be recognized.

Character Descriptions for ESCAPE FROM THE ASHWOOD MINES

ID#	Name	Character Notes	Class	Purse	ST	CO	RF	SM	DN	IQ	TL	MR	MG	AP	Weapon	Combat HACO	Damage	Armor Class	HTK
201	Clerk		INT HU NON		08	11	10	12	11	10	09	09	10	10				NON 0	17
202	Coro ti Valkanium	j	INT HU NON	2D10SP	11	10	08	12	13	09	09	14	10	11				NON 0	15
203	Horga Oretar		VET HU MER	3D12GP	14	10	08	14	14	12	10	15	07	08	CLUB	7	2D4	NON 1	25
204	Thangal		VET HU FTR	3D10GP	16	10	10	13	17	12	12	12	12	14	1BBAXe	5	4D5	LTH 6	33
205	Murfo o'Date		VET HU TDR	6D20SP	15	14	08	12	17	15	10	13	13	11				NON 1	26
206	Mother Tooth	*,j	VET OR NON	4D10SP	10	08	12	14	10	09	10	09	09	06	CLUB	9	2D4	CLO 3	16
207	Janitor		INT OR NON		11	13	11	10	10	09	14	12	05	08				NON 0	17
208	Bouncer		INT OR FTR		14	12	10	15	08	08	12	13	04	07	SHSWD	7	3D3	LTH 5	27
209	Doorkeeper		GR OR NON		12	11	11	10	11	10	10	10	08	09				NON 0	19
210	Logan Polosi		VET HO NON	3D12SP	09	12	13	14	14	12	06	13	11	13	WHIPe	6	1D6	LTH 4	16
211	Bornmark Velyan		INT HU MER	3D10GP	14	10	12	15	09	11	05	15	11	12	MACE	8	3D4	CLO 2	17
212	Cario White Boots	j	VET HU MER	8D20GP	13	14	15	13	12	10	03	10	12	07				NON 2	21
213	Leona ti Larakka	*,j	INT HU MER	2D4SP	07	15	11	11	10	13	09	08	11	15				NON 0	13
214	Kadar the Hammer		INT HU MER	2D5SP	17	13	10	14	07	09	10	05	10	14	MAULe	7	6D4	LTH 4	25
215	Boro the Onker	u	GR HU NON	3D12GP	15	11	07	09	09	07	06	18	08	07	CLUB	9	3D4	CLO 2	19
216	Magrin al'Ahir		VET HU SCH	2D10SP	11	12	10	14	14	18	13	09	10	11				NON 1	25
217	Rog Rogashnar	2	VET HU FOR		15	12	15	16	12	10	08	11	11	08	LBOWe	1/5/8	1D6	CLO 5	37
															SHSWD	7	4D3		
218	Rena of Llyr	j	INT HU MER	3D10GP	12	12	10	13	06	14	12	05	13	11				NON 0	17
219	Roderil the Snare	t	VET HU FOR		13	16	13	14	13	11	09	14	08	15	SBOWe	0/4/8	1D6	CLO 4	32
220	Tarienna ti Cornust	*,2,q1	VET HU ARC		13	15	17	13	15	14	08	12	17	13	BOWKNe	6	1D6	LTH 6	28
															CPBOWe	-4/1/5	1D6		
221	Belezin		VET DW MER	3D12SP	16	11	08	15	15	12	06	10	09	08				CLO 3	32
222	Joron the Muscle		VET HU FTR		18	11	09	14	13	10	10	10	13	08	HFSWDe	3	4D6	LTH 6	40
223	Dinsul ti Dayelsmot (off duty)	1	INT HU ARC	3D10SP	13	14	15	13	07	13	07	09	12	14	SHSWDe	5	4D3	LTH 5	22
		j													CPBOWe	-2/3/7	1D6	CLO 3	
224	Serihwen	*	INT /E FOR		12	15	15	16	14	13	11	10	13	10	JAVLN	8/10	1D6	CLO 4	26
															SMAXe	6	4D3		
225	Mellor Jablumon	j	EL HU TDR	4D6GP	11	15	12	10	17	13	14	10	14	11	DGRe	6	1D6	NON 2	27
226	Calan of Theodur		INT HU TDR	4D20GP	12	10	16	16	13	12	08	07	17	16	SHSWDe	6	4D3	LTH 5	27
															LBOW	2/6/9	1D6		
227	Myntar the Purse	j	EL HU MER	2D12GP	11	12	06	10	16	14	08	10	17	08	DGR	9	1D4	NON 1	24
228	Lanora	*,j	INT /O HLR		06	13	11	14	15	13	15	08	13	17				NON 0	15
209	Menneth the Tygre	12,1	EL HU FTR		16	15	14	15	11	11	06	10	14	??	HFSWDe	2	3D6	C&S11	52
															LBOWe	-1/3/6	1D6		
230	Khanor Orcface	1	INT /O FOR		14	14	11	14	14	09	06	12	12	06	SCIMe	7	3D5	LTH 5	24
															CPBOW	-1/4/8	1D6		
231	Danric the Bow	j,2	INT /E ARC		13	14	10	12	11	08	05	08	12	13	LBOWe	-1/3/6	1D6	LTH 5	23
232	Ezrik	m	INT /G FTR		19	10	10	17	13	09	08	06	14	09	LGAXe	5	4D6	LTH 5	34
233	Caravan Guard A	m	INT MX FTR		15	12	12	13	11	09	11	09	09	10	BSWD	6	3D4	LTH 5	25
234	Caravan Guard B	m	INT MX FTR		13	13	15	14	10	10	10	16	12	10	SHSWD	7	3D3	LTH 5	21
235	Caravan Guard C	1	VET MX ARC		13	14	13	12	11	09	12	11	11	11	LBOWe	-1/3/6	1D6	LTH 6	30
236	Drak		VET HU THF		09	14	13	12	11	16	09	14	15	12	RAPRe	3	1D12	NON 2	26
237	Slave A (Whip)	u	INT MX NON		13	13	10	12	11	13	11	13	08	11	WHIP	8	1D4	NON 0	17
238	Slave B		INT MX NON		10	11	14	10	08	12	10	10	07	09				NON 0	15
239	Slave C		GR MX NON		12	10	15	10	10	10	12	10	07	08				NON 0	18
240	Slave D	*	GR MX NON		09	13	12	14	12	13	11	12	11	12				NON 0	16
241	Mine Guard A	s,x	INT MX FTR		12	12	11	10	09	09	11	14	11	08	SPEAR	5/8	2D5	LTH 5	21
242	Mine Guard B	3,s,x	INT MX FTR		11	14	12	10	08	09	13	09	10	10	LXBOW	0/4/10	1D8	LTH 5	22
243	Mine Guard C	s,x	GR MX FTR		13	12	12	11	09	10	10	08	10	11	SBOW	4/8/11	1D6	LTH 4	19
244	Townwatch A	s,x	INT HU FTR	1D6SP	12	10	12	10	09	09	11	14	11	08	SPEAR	5/8	2D5	CLO 3	21
245	Townwatch B	s,x	GR HU FTR	1D6SP	09	11	13	11	10	08	07	12	13	10	SMAx	8	2D3	CLO 2	16
246	Soldier A	1	VET MX CAV	2D10SP	14	12	12	11	10	10	13	10	10	11	SHSWDe	6	4D3	LTH 6	28
															CPBOWe	-1/4/8	1D6		
247	Soldier B	*,1	INT MX CAV	2D8SP	13	15	14	13	08	10	09	11	10	10	SHSWD	6	3D3	LTH 5	20
															CPBOWe	-1/4/8	1D6		
248	Soldier C		INT MX CAV	3D5SP	13	14	11	14	09	11	12	09	09	12	SHSWDe	6	4D3	LTH 5	18
															CPBOW	-1/4/8	1D6		
249	Soldier D	*	INT MX CAV	4D5SP	14	14	12	12	11	09	11	13	11	11	LANCE	7	2D12	LTH 5	25
															CPBOW	-1/4/8	1D6		
250	Jungle Patrol A		INT MX FOR		13	14	14	16	11	10	09	11	09	11	SHSWDe	5	4D3	CLO 3	26
															JAVLN	8/10	4D3		
251	Jungle Patrol B		VET MX FOR		14	14	16	15	13	10	13	15	10	10	SMAx	5	4D3	CLO 5	24
															JAVLN	7/9	4D3		
252	Jungle Patrol C	*	INT MX FOR		16	15	13	13	12	11	10	06	08	11	SMAx	6	5D3	CLO 3	26
															JAVLN	8/10	4D3		
253	Predator cat		ANIMAL		06	15	14	16		01		08			CLAWS	7	1D10	ANH 5	20+2D10
254	Snake	p	ANIMAL		05	17	09	09				11			BITE	7	1D3	SKN 1	2+2D8
255	Serpent	c	ANIMAL		09	12	09	11				12			BITE	6	1D6	SKN 3	6+2D12
															COILS	2	1D3		
256	Tiger	*	ANIMAL		17	15	17	18		01		11			CLAW(2)	6	1D8	ANH 7	20+2D12
															BITE	8	1D10		
257	Baboon		ANIMAL		11	16	14	13		02		11			CLAW(2)	7	1D6	ANH 5	12+1D10
258	Chimpanzee		ANIMAL		14	15	10	13		02		13			FIST(2)	9	1D6	ANH 2	14+1D10
259	Gorilla		ANIMAL		17	11	12	14		01		09			FIST(2)	7	1D10	ANH 7	16+2D10
260	Pickpocket	s	INT HU THF	2D5SP	09	13	11	08	11	09	12	12	11	12	DGR	10	1D4	CLO 3	12

Notes:  
 \* Female  
 1 Expertise bonus of +2 to Critical Hit Prob  
 2 Expertise bonus of +4 to Critical Hit Prob  
 3 Attacks only once each 2 melee rounds  
 † Magically enchanted weapon or armor (value given)  
 c Colls continue squeezing once thrown; damage per coll  
 e Expert with weapon  
 j NPC wearing some jewelry  
 m Also armed with JAVLN, HACO 9/11, damage 5D3 or 4D3  
 p Poison level equivalent to HTK; poison is fatal  
 q Workmanship enhanced weapon or armor (value given)  
 s Armor consists of shirt only; no protection for head or limbs  
 u Untrained with weapon  
 x Also armed with SMAx, HACO 8 or 7, damage 2D3 or 3D3



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