



The Dark Eye

**THE VAMPIRE OF
HAVENA**
SOLO ADVENTURE



The Vampire of Havena



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For all those who have filled Aventuria with life for 30 years.
In memory of Ugurcan Yüce.

With thanks to all who helped create Aventuria.



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How to Play This Solo Adventure

You do not read a solo adventure like other books (that is, from cover to cover). Instead, the story is divided into many numbered sections. As play proceeds, the section you turn to next is determined either by the action you choose or by the result of a skill roll or other factor. For example, if you have the choice to search a room, the text might read, "To search this room before the guard returns, turn to section 25. To wait quietly for the guard, turn to section 57." Sometimes, however, the next section to visit is indicated in parentheses, as in this example: "The little dog chases you all the way down the street (42)."

Rules Boxes

Boxes like these explain the mechanisms for solo adventures and present the basic rules of *The Dark Eye*. If you forget a rule, look it up using the following list of boxes that contain specific rules.

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*These boxes contain important hints about the game!

Preface

The following adventure is special for me as a writer in many ways. It is my first adventure after having devoted myself to *The Black*

Oak campaign for years. This lengthy campaign trilogy had its own complex mechanisms to simulate keeping

track of time, navigating with maps, and managing countless interconnections between the heroes.

The Vampire of Havena is a completely different adventure. It's smaller, the story is not as convoluted, and the fate of a whole region does not hang in the balance. But it was really intriguing for me to accompany a young, reluctant hero through that hero's first adventure. *The Vampire of Havena* can be played by any rogue, but it is written from the point of view of an anonymous rogue from Havena. As the player, you get to direct his actions, but you also get to share his thoughts, hopes, and fears.

I decided early in my planning to include allusions to old adventures. I started to plant various scenes alluding to the cover illustrations that appeared when I first began playing *The Dark Eye*. These covers were what attracted me to the game in my youth, formed my image of Aventuria, and filled me with a curiosity that kept drawing me back to the game store. All of these images were painted by Ugurcan Yüce. While I was editing the adventure, I heard the sad news of the artist's death. I wish to dedicate this adventure to him and to everyone who has accompanied Aventuria for the past 30 years.

Sebastian Thureau
Hamburg, 2015

Your Hero

In this adventure, you control the actions of a true hero in the making. You make all the decisions and hold the hero's fate in your hand.

The character provided with *The Vampire of Havena* is a rogue who was born and raised in the city of Havena. For a character sheet and more information about the profession of *rogue*, see page 59.

You are welcome to use your own rogue, as long as your character is a Havena native or at least knows a great deal about the city, for you will come across situations in-play where your hero knows events, persons, or rumors that would be familiar only to locals or others who know the city well. For more information about Havena, the setting for this adventure, see page 58.

Have fun playing *The Vampire of Havena*, and good luck finding the hidden cover descriptions! When you are ready to begin the adventure, read *Out of Breath*, below.

Out of Breath

Your lungs are burning and the cold sea air makes the piercing pain even worse. You brace your hands on your knees and fight for air. Your hands! A bleeding wound crosses your right palm where you slipped from the rope, and warm blood sticks to your fingers. You are not one to take law and order as seriously as the priests of the sun god would prefer, but you have never had trouble like this.

Suddenly you hear muffled footfalls on the wet pavement, boots stepping into puddles. Somebody is approaching the corner where you have paused. You can barely see 10 yards through the dense fog, and the muffled sounds seem to come from far away. Weak lantern light shines down on you from the other side of the road. A dark shadow peels from the gray mist. If not for the omnipresent fog, you could find your way on this full moon night, but it is hard to see even the row of houses opposite you. This is not the first autumn full moon night you have spent in the harbor of Havena, but you cannot recall one this foggy.

You have trouble seeing your pursuers or even where to turn next. You cannot trust your eyes, and you trust your ears even less. Sounds echo in the streets: a cat's mewling, an old raven's call, footfalls that seem to approach from all directions at once (65).

1

You look at the thing that startled you. Hanging in front of you is a dark hood that hides a darker head with traces of glass that must have been its red, staring eyes. The figure is dressed in billowing robes. In its right hand it holds a rusting, wavy-bladed sword. In its left hand, a blood-red whip. A strong draft causes the demon puppet's robes to billow hauntingly. When you touch the figure, you discover that its arms are simple metal rods and its head is made of wood, as is the sword. Its body dangles from strings that run to a wooden cross frame suspended from the ceiling.

This unsettling marionette is surrounded by more figures—heroic knights, mysterious mages, hairy orcs, a hunched kobold that reminds you of the raftsmen, and a barmaid with an exaggerated bosom. You notice the figure of a long-distance trader that reminds you of old Tagkrammer, and beside it a charismatic youth that resembles you. Hanging above them all, you see the figure of a six-foot-long dragon. Thank the gods you have never seen a real dragon. Judging from your reaction to harmless marionettes, you are far from ready to meet such a beast.



Nevertheless, you gush like a child about the exquisite figures. Sadly, few still possess all of their strings, and most have collapsed to the floor. The stick and hand puppets stored on shelves along the walls of the dark room are also falling apart. You could spend an eternity here and easily forget that you are standing in the ruin of the Undercity. You could also forget your goal to get to the bottom of Rogobald's plans. This realization drags you back to reality. If you knew the right art collector, you could earn a fortune selling the treasures you found here. But you would have to carry the puppets home, a feat for which you have neither the time nor the strength. You decide to leave the room (37).

2

You feel both light and heavy at the same time, and you almost black out. You seem to be caught in a permanent state of silence and blackness. But you can hear *him*. A muffled rustling of feathery wings slowly builds to a roaring hurricane, then you see *him* and *he* carries you across the Neversea. **THE END**

3

Now:

You wake with a start. Where are you? Fog, cold stone beneath you, pain in all of your muscles, your lungs stinging and burning. You are sitting on the pavement next to a large puddle, a pile of crates, half a dozen baskets... and the massive figure you must have just run into. The man turns around, looks at you in surprise, and reaches out with his hand. It is Rogobald, the man who hired you.

"It's you?" you ask. The trader blinks at you, as surprised as you are.

"Yes, my friend," he laughs warmly.

"We must leave! I am being followed!" you say urgently, but Rogobald glances around quizzically.

"Nobody is here," he says. "We are probably as safe here as we would be in any other alley in this neighborhood. If pressed, I know how to use my epee, and you look like an able-bodied fighter yourself, my friend." The unexpected praise makes you smile, but then you remember your failed attempt at burglary.

"Thank you, master Rogobald, but I must inform you that I haven't found your freight documents."

The trader looks at you thoughtfully. "Well, I am sure that you did all you could do. If you could not find the papers, I feel certain that they were not hidden in the kontor."

You pause for a moment and open your mouth to speak, but Rogobald interrupts you, saying, "The Tagkrammers own another warehouse in the old sea port. The freight papers are probably there..."

Which reply do you choose?

"You are probably right. Let us go there at once!" (165)

"You flatter me, but I must disappoint you. I have been spotted and I am not sure whether I have searched thoroughly enough to agree." (87)

4

Turn to section 127.

5

You sneeze loudly! Sheep's wool can be truly demonic stuff... Angrily, you knot the bag and shove it to the side carelessly. Record a Noise Point and return to section 175.

6

You jump onto the crate with the grace of a cat, but your subsequent jump from the crate to the wall doesn't go so well, and you land like a wet sack of flour. You hit the cold stone with a smack and barely grab hold of the coping on the wall. You scramble awkwardly until you finally manage to pull yourself up onto the wall. You suffer 2 DP while climbing. Reduce your life points accordingly.

You look down from where you are sitting and think you see the sparkling surface of a body of water. A channel on the other side of the wall is probably too narrow to navigate but definitely too wide to jump. Running along the wall seems to be your only option for escape. To your right, the coping ends at a three-story warehouse. Its unwelcoming outer wall offers almost no handholds. To your left, the wall extends so far that its end is lost in the fog. You notice a second wall that meets yours at a right angle. Behind that wall, you would gain at least some temporary shelter from your pursuers, even though it is only a few bricks thick.

You hesitate at the intersection of the two walls, trying to avoid being seen. One more step...

Make a check using *Climbing (Walls)* (COU/AGI/STR) with a bonus of 3. If you succeed, turn to section 203. If you fail, turn to section 72.

Skill Checks with Bonuses

A skill check with a bonus is conducted almost the same way as an unmodified skill check. The only difference is that the bonus increases the effective value of all three attributes for the duration of the check. This *Climbing (Walls)* check is made as before, but this time, the relevant attributes each count as three greater.

7

“What kitsch!” you think as you pull the cloth from the painting. The scene is of a young woman with long, blond, wavy hair who is wrapped in a white gown. Her gown is at once figure-hugging and yet cut so wide that it covers half of the bed of straw where, incongruously, she sits enthroned like a queen. The simple jug of water, moldy crust of bread, and windowless, massive stone walls in the background remind you of a dungeon. The soulful expression on the fair maiden’s face almost looks grotesque. She looks as if she is sighing longingly, though only child-like minds would find such a scene romantic. The awful title shown on a finely engraved inscription fits: *Lovely Princess Yasmina* by Cüye Guucarn.

With some satisfaction, you return the cover to the painting (160).

8

The shark tries to snap at you with its massive jaws. Unfortunately, it is in its element and you are not. Halve your attack stats. Also, you cannot parry, and must surface each combat round to catch your breath. The shark attacks twice each round. If you deal at least 12 DP to the shark, turn to section 46. If your life points drop to 0 or less before that, turn to section 2.

9

The kontor’s owner seems to like paintings of every kind: small and large, narrow and almost square, simply and lavishly framed, and complex and wild, and showing landscapes and people from both real and mythical places. You see images of the icy wasteland of the north and the snow-covered forests of the Bornland, the wild reaches of the green plains, the edges of the Stone Oak Forest, the rough coast of Thorwal, the Imperial city of Gareth, the jungles of wild Maraskan, the stinking streets of Al’Anfa, and the rolling dunes of the Khôm Desert. You especially notice a giant painting showing a thin man of around sixty and a little girl of perhaps age ten at most. The merchant stands straight and dignified, even though his neck looks a little narrow for his high, sloping forehead and prominent chin. His white beard is carefully clipped, his thin hair cropped short. Authority and open-mindedness shine from his blue eyes—all four of them (he wears glasses).

The girl has the same eyes with the same expression. Her skin is pale and her tender face is framed by golden locks, but she looks too serious to be happy.

Striped Shark

Size Category: medium

Type: Animal,
non-humanoid

COU 15 **SGC** 11(a) **INT** 13 **CHA** 10

DEX 8 **AGI** 12 **CON** 14 **STR** 16

LP 35 **INI** 13+1D6 **DO** 7

PRO 1 **SPI** 2 **TOU** 2 **MOV** 13

Bite: AT 14 **DO** 7 **DP** 1D6+4 **RE** short

Actions: 1

Special Abilities: none

Skills: *Body Control* 7, *Feat of Strength* 7,
Self-Control 7



Disturbingly, the girl wears a broad iron ring around her neck that might explain the look on her face. You are sure that there must be more beautiful portraits. You notice that the painting hangs just a little bit askew. Do you straighten it (47) or do you leave it as it is (66)?

10

Your heart skips a beat as the footfalls approach the door.

“...you that I have heard something.”

“In there?”

“Yes, that’s what I said.”



"But only the old man's horrible paintings are in there."

Suddenly, somebody shakes the door vigorously.

"You see, the door is locked."

"And if somebody is in there?"

"Do you want to go get the key? Guntrudt will *certainly* be happy to see you."

You hear a mocking giggle.

"All right, all right. Let's go."

The voices fade away. You wait for a few moments, and then you carefully open the door and return to the empty hallway (168).

11

With strong, fast strokes, you try to cross the room and pass the shark as quickly as possible before it can take a bite out of you. Make a *Swimming (Chases)* check (AGI/CON/STR) with a penalty of 2. If you are successful, turn to section 73. If not, turn to section 202.

12

The game is not as simple as you had hoped, but you have mastered games that are more complicated. In essence, you roll 5 dice without showing the results and declare a number of pips and the number of dice that show that number. The person to your left must either raise the number of pips (with any number of dice) or the number of dice, or *challenge* the last player's result. If the challenger calls correctly, the target player loses one die, if not, the challenger loses a die.

If you are the last person with a die under your cup, you win the round and the pot. As it turns out, you lose the first five rounds against the other five players, but you win the sixth, having neither won nor lost any money while you are learning the rules and devising a strategy.

The other players are a ragtag bunch. The toothless sailor takes the role of referee, watching the other players to make sure they play according to the rules. To his left sits a female Tulamydian sailor who comments on everyone's moves with flowery language. She describes a mistake you made in the first round as "bitter as the fermented milk of an old Cal'Balka goat,"

but she labels your win in the sixth round "a wonder of divine providence, filled with terror and mystery." Her comments can be quite tiresome, but sometimes they are amusing. The two fishermen seated next to each other are brothers. They bicker all the time, accuse each other of cheating, and try constantly to outshine each other. Luckily for all of you, they concentrate on just one opponent at a time, which hinders their play.

The older woman sitting to your right has much more luck—though it appears she intends to trade her luck in play for luck in love. She uses any excuse to slide closer to you and touch your hand or pat your knee, and you have trouble fending off her advances. Her unique blend of sweat and halitosis alone serves as ample motivation, even though it is getting harder to be polite.

At one point you almost fall out of your chair, and she laughs coyly. "Darling, why so shy?" she coos. "I am not the Vampire of Havena!" With a chuckle, she reaches for her jug of mead.

"Don't be so loud, you careless cross of camel and donkey!" the Tulamydian hisses quietly but angrily. "It is unlucky to mention the evil by name." This dampens the table's mood quickly. Even the brothers stop arguing about the hidden dice they claim to have seen in each other's boots.

"I do not believe there is a vampire," the old man to your left says with conviction. "I saw the dead mermaid and the second red-haired victim of this vampire. Since when do vampires drink the blood of sea creatures?" The brothers nod in agreement, their heads bobbing with such synchronicity that it looks like they share the same neck. The smelly sailor woman disagrees, however.

"Who says that vampires do not like the blood of fish people?" she says. "I like beef, but I only get to eat it once or twice a year. Two witches, a mermaid, and an elf—this vampire must have exotic tastes. That is why I do not fear him. I am about as exotic as a salterel in Nostria." The brothers nod again, while the two women at the table try to hide a chuckle.

The old sailor remains skeptical. "Who says those women were witches?" he asks.

"Please," one of the brothers interrupts, "Two redheads? If they were not witches, I am the stupid one in my family!"

“That you are,” his brother agrees, and the two exchange menacing glances.

“Hmm...,” the sailor intones, “Let us hope that we are safe here. Whatever it is, we should be afraid of it. I have seen much on my travels, and fear seems an appropriate reaction. Fear and caution!” Your fellow players agree with a murmur. The Tulamydian grabs up her dice cup, turns it in her hand, and slams it on the table, shouting “Let’s play!”

Do you want to continue playing (51), or say goodnight (162)?

13

You curse quietly as your pick breaks. You won’t get any farther here. You would have loved to know what was behind that door (168).

14

For as long as you can remember, you never had any thoughts of leaving the dockland or visiting the old flooded part of Havena. And then you had the bright idea to become a hero. Daringly, you went to the Undercity and sneaked into the empty puppet theater. Sure, you managed to enter the building, but in the end, you could not even break into a ruin and get out without being caught. What were you thinking? You are no hero, and pretending to be one was just wishful thinking—or the most stupid idea of your life.

At least you are still alive.

Rogobald—or whatever his name might be—has overpowered you, but at least you were not knocked out again. You wonder whether repeated blows to the head can make you crazy permanently (a theory that might explain your current situation and the naiveté with which you stumbled into it). You also wonder if you would have preferred unconsciousness, the special gift of Boron, the god of sleep.

But if you had been unconscious, you would not have noticed Rogobald tying your wrists to your chair. You also would not notice him dragging the crying little girl from the next room into the puppet workshop. The poor thing is wearing a metal collar. Even slavers don’t use metal collars on children. Rogobald throws her roughly on the workbench and ties her down with



Rogobald

COU 14 SGC 14 INT 13

CHA 12

DEX 12 AGI 12 CON 13

STR 13

LP 33 INI 13+1D6 DO 6

SPI 2 TOU 2 MOV 8

PRO/ENC 0/0

Short Sword: AT 13 PA 7 DP 1D6+2 RE short

Actions: 1

Special Abilities: none

Advantages/Disadvantages: Socially Adaptable
/ Personality Flaw (Arrogance, Envy)

Skills: Body Control 5, Feat of Strength 5,
Self-Control 8, Willpower 6

ropes. He calls the little girl Murna, a name you have heard before... Yes, that’s it—old Tagkrammer’s child!

Rogobald pauses and examines his handiwork, stroking Murna’s collar thoughtfully. Then he turns away suddenly and opens a drawer in the workbench, looking for something.

Do you ask Rogobald to leave Murna alone (148), or ask him about the meaning of all of this (122), or stay silent (213)?

15

You jump to your feet, rush along the road, and dive into a side alley. You pause for a moment, but nothing happens. You stand up and look around (77).

16

The fight against Rogobald is a fight to the death, and you cannot escape without leaving Murna behind. After all free attacks are resolved, start regular combat rounds. You make the first attack.

If you kill Rogobald, turn to section 128. If you die, turn to section 2.

If you don’t remember how to conduct combats in *The Dark Eye*, read the box in section 27 or section 218.

17

After Klabauter calms down, you tell your story about the stolen freight papers that must be hidden somewhere in the warehouse. Klabauter scratches his chin while listening to you. When you finish your story, he grins at you and begins to laugh. Minutes later, when he can speak again without making squeaking noises, he wipes the tears from his eyes and asks, "Who has told you such nonsense, bonehead?" Even though that last word stings, you don't say anything. Instead, you look at him quizzically. Now that you think about it, the term *bonehead* might be appropriate, after all.

"This? A trader's warehouse?" Klabauter asks as he spreads his arms in a grandiose gesture. "A trader in fine cloth is hiding his freight papers here? No, I have lived here for twenty years, since my friend Leirix first showed me the place. The Tagkrammer family does not own this house. Leirix told me that it used to belong to a trader called *Rastwürger*, or something like that. The only humans that ever found their way here were some guards who were certain that I was hiding evidence of dark machinations. There was never any truth behind it, though." He huffs in contempt. The disturbance must have been very unwelcome. You expect him to rail against the city guards who rummaged through his belongings, but instead he just gazes around, seemingly lost in thought.

"And then there was the man who wrote something over the door," he adds, almost as an afterthought.

This grabs your attention (158).

18 ○

If you have visited this section before, turn to 62. If not, turn to 155.

Sections to Cross Off

One or more circles appear after some section numbers. Whenever you visit such a section, cross off the next available circle. This record reminds you that you have visited that section before. If you return to the section, follow the directions.

19

You nervously wipe your brow, dry your sweaty hands on your shirt, and carefully insert the pick into the lock. Make a check using *Pick Locks (Bit Locks)* (INT/DEX/DEX) with a penalty of 2. If successful, turn to section 95. If not, turn to section 144.

20

You open the door slightly and look outside. You recognize the street in front of the kontor. With some trouble you can even see the dark corner you had been using for cover. Suddenly, loud hoof beats echo down the street. A coach passes the house a moment later and disappears into the night. This door might serve as an acceptable escape route (provided you don't accidentally step in front of a wagon). At the moment, you prefer to remain inside the kontor, for it contains important loot that could make you rich (80).

21

"Have you seen enough?" a mocking voice asks from somewhere above you. You have been spotted! That explains the scratching sound. You can't think of anything witty to say in response to the rhetorical question. Suddenly you feel a sharp pain at the back of your head, and you black out (49).

22 ○

If you have been here before, turn to section 134. If not, turn to section 58.

23

The tree trunk is overgrown with dark green moss and is quite slippery. It feels like a layer of slime, which makes sense, given the high humidity. You put one foot in front of the other carefully, but crossing the tree takes all your skill.

Make a *Body Control (Balance)* check (AGI/AGI/CON). If successful, turn to (99). If not, you are unable to cross the tree (178).

24

"The vampire," Trode mutters thoughtfully as he scratches the back of his head. Alrik looks around nervously as Tronde whispers, "There really does seem to be a vampire. You might be right."

A chill runs down your spine. The two guards, usually talkative, no longer seem to be in the mood for conversation. Deep in thought, they gaze into their

tankards of mead as if you are not there. You decide to let them be (210).

25

The wooden door looks much finer than the other doors in the kontor. The wood is darker and reflects the lantern light of the corridor at its edges. The door is more important than the others, you are certain of that. If your assignment had been to steal the most expensive door in the house, you would take this one.

But you are not here to steal a precious door. You are supposed to steal precious freight papers. Are they behind this door? You can open the door and take a look (182), try to peek through the key hole (75), or ignore the door (100).

26

"You are polite, but I do not believe a single word you say," you answer. Rogobald's expression turns serious. He puts a hand on your shoulder and pulls you closer.

"Well, I was warned that you are smart," he says. "What was I thinking? Trying to fool you with such a story? But what I said is mostly true. I lied only about my motivation."

He glances around surreptitiously and whispers, "This is not only about drugs and poison. It is said that the Tagkrammers do business with slavers from Al'Anfa." He pauses to let his words sink in. "You have heard about the murdered women? Well, there are other victims. I act on behalf of a wealthy lady whose daughter has disappeared. While you were breaking into the kontor, I was searching for her daughter on the ground floor. Did you find her on the upper floors? She has long, dark hair and is about twenty years old."

You shake your head. You have not seen a woman like that in the kontor.

"The missing papers might hold an important clue about the kidnappers' hideout. If you help me find the papers and the girl, I will triple your payment. And I will split the reward money with you. Don't tell anyone. There are greedy vultures everywhere who will try to take that money from us."

You nod knowingly.

"Good. I will follow another clue, while you take a look around the warehouse. Do you agree?"

If you agree, turn to section 79. If you do not agree, turn to section 193.

27

You hurry down the street towards the crossing when suddenly you see a shadow in the fog. You try to step to the side, but you are not fast enough. Something hits you hard on the back of your head and you collapse. It is a miracle that you do not pass out. You roll onto your back and try to collect your wits.

Standing over you is a tall woman who points her dagger at you angrily. Looking past the blade, you recognize the broad-shouldered, red-haired woman in her 30s whom you saw just a while ago. She glares at you with an expression like a raging bull, and you know that you will not be able to avoid a melee. Unfortunately, she is most likely the better fighter. She tries to stab you again, but you dodge to the side and roll. You get back to your feet, but the woman presses the attack. You manage to draw your weapon just in time to ward off her next blow.

After you survive one combat round, turn to section 113.

Thorwaler Woman

COU 14 SGC 10 INT 12

CHA 10

DEX 12 AGI 14 CON 13

STR 15

LP 31 AE - KP - INI 12+1D6

SPI 0 TOU 3 DO 7 MOV 7

Dagger: AT 12 PA 7 DP 1D6+1 RE short

PRO/ENC 1/0 (-1 MOV and INI, already included)

Actions: 1

Special Abilities: Quick-Draw

Advantages/Disadvantages: Increased Toughness / Decreased Spirit

Skills: Body Control 6, Feat of Strength 8, Self-Control 6



Combat

The rules of *The Dark Eye* can handle complicated combats, but this solo adventure uses simplified rules. First of all, you are fighting against just one opponent. Who attacks first is clear (in this case, it's her) and there are no special maneuvers to worry about (your hero is an inexperienced fighter, and your opponent has not received any special training, either).

Solo adventures differ from group adventures in that you roll the dice for *all* combatants. This has the added advantage of helping you to learn the rules. Fights usually lasts several *combat rounds*, but in this case, you must turn to section **113** after just one round of combat. In other cases, one combat round leads to the next until either a certain condition ends the battle or because one participant surrenders (or dies).

Let's concentrate on just this combat round for now. Each round has two phases: your opponent's attack, and your attack. Note that both you and your opponent have an *Attack* stat (abbreviated AT), which is treated like an attribute, meaning you make an attribute check using the Attack stat. If this check fails, your opponent's attack misses you, and the attack ends. If this check succeeds, the attack might injure you.

When an attack succeeds, you can either *parry* it with your weapon or choose to *dodge*. To parry an attack, you need a successful check with your *Parry* stat (abbreviated PA). If you wish to dodge instead, you need a successful check with your *Dodge* stat (abbreviated DO). It is usually smarter to pick your best defense (the one with the highest stat). If you are using the sample character provided in this book, your best defense is Parry. Roll 1D20. If you get a result of 9 or less, your parry succeeds and your hero avoids the blow. On a result of 10 or greater, her attack hits you.

If the woman's attack hits you, you next roll to see how much damage her attack inflicts. From her stats, you can see that her weapon does 1D6+1 damage points (abbreviated DP). To determine the total DP inflicted by her attack, roll one six-sided die (abbreviated 1D6) and add 1 to the result.

Even though you are not wearing armor, your clothes do offer some protection. Look for your Protection rating (abbreviated PRO) on your character sheet. Subtract this PRO from the damage result to get the net damage caused by the attack. Finally, subtract *that* amount from your life points (abbreviated LP on your character sheet). If PRO ever reduces a damage result to zero or less, the target takes no damage from the attack.

Characters die when their LP are reduced to zero or less. After a fight, survivors must often wait for wounds to heal, usually by resting, drinking healing potions, or by seeking treatment. Rules for healing appear later in the adventure.

The second half of the combat round follows the same pattern, except that now it is your turn to attack. Does your AT succeed? If not, your half of the combat round ends. If yes, your opponent must defend herself. Roll 1D20 for her check with PA or DO—if it succeeds, the combat round ends. If it fails, roll your damage (1D6+4 DP, as indicated for the weapon listed on your character sheet). Subtract your opponent's PRO (1, in this case) from this roll to get the final damage. If the net DP is higher than 0, subtract that number from your opponent's LP.

Normally at this point the next combat round would begin, but this case is different. After finishing one combat round you must turn to section **113** at once.

28

You push Rogobald into the marionettes, causing some of them to break. Rogobald's head hits the ground hard, and he gets tangled in the puppets' strings. You may make two free attacks against which Rogobald cannot defend. The regular fight begins after you resolve these two free attacks (**16**).

29

You pull open the door to the corridor, dive out, and kick the door closed again. You lay quietly on the floor for some time, but nobody follows you. Maybe you only imagined the voice?

Record four Noise Points. Then, with your heart still hammering, proceed to section **168**.

30

Suddenly the door is pulled open and several people charge at you. Two young men grab you and drag you to the ground. For a moment, you cannot decide which to do—block a punch or stop your fall—so a fist hits your chin and your head smacks against the floor. It's a mercy that you black out before you feel any pain (49).

31

You dare to gaze through the key hole. Your field of view does not extend very far to the left or right, but in the light of an oil lantern, you see an artfully crafted bed frame that nevertheless seems barely capable of supporting the weight of a dozen blankets. Next to the bed is a shelf holding countless puppets. A girl sits in front of the bed with her back turned to you. She plays with a wooden horse.

It seems strange to find a very young girl in a kontor, but it is even stranger to see the iron collar around her neck. It is as thick as her forearm, and reminds you of a collar on a chained dog. Who would torture a child like this?

Do you want to charge in to save the child (132) or do you leave her behind with a heavy heart and walk away from the door (100)?

32

The noise in the hen house grows louder, but you can hear the creaking of the floor boards above you. Somebody is moving. You look around nervously, but you can't see anything in the darkness of the room. It would not be wise to stay here much longer. What is there to find in a hen house? Besides eggs, that is (but you have no use for those at the moment). Since staying here gets more stupid with every heartbeat, you decide to retreat quickly. Record two Noise Points and turn to section 156.

33

Earlier this evening:

The Disc of Praios set an hour ago, but given the dense fog that has been drifting through the alleys of Havena, the largest port city in western Aventuria, since this morning, you would not even have noticed. You can barely see the other side of the street in this fog, and you would probably have crashed into some bystander if you had been out wandering the alleys. In the past you would have tried to use this opportunity to steal purses from the unwary or pull a precious ring from a finger, but your years in the alleys of the city have

taught you to be more careful. When you cannot judge the mark, you cannot judge the risk, and you cannot afford to pay with your life because you tried to steal a few lousy silverthalers from a dangerous thug. Not in these times...

A shiver runs down your back, even though you are sitting in a warm tavern next to a crackling fireplace. The stifling air and the heat emanating from the three dozen guests of the *Heroes' Refuge* only add to the warmth.

"Heroes' Refuge," you muse. "When was the last time there were heroes in here?" You do not know the answer, but it must have been quite some time ago. Heroes protect other people, face dangers, and become rich and famous. But there never have been famous heroes in the *Heroes' Refuge*, and if anybody had made Havena's alleys safe for families, you would know. No, these are dangerous times, and although you would never admit it, fear of the danger lurking in the streets is what made you stay indoors tonight.

Four weeks ago, a dead mermaid was found in the harbor. You had never seen one of the green-skinned fish people before, partially because these shy sea creatures live in the swamps of the Undercity and tend to avoid humans. The whole neighborhood was upset when one of them was found floating in the harbor. The fish people bury their dead by setting them to drift towards the city during high tide. Old Grona said that she had never encountered a mermaid so far up the river that it could be seen from the city. By the time the Guard pulled the dead mermaid from the water, half of the neighborhood had gathered around. The healer that was called to the scene and the local priest of Efferd both confirmed that she had two circular stab wounds in her neck, although she had appeared uninjured at first. People said that she must have been bitten by some strange animal...

Less than a week later, another corpse was found in the water, this time a red-haired human woman who was not yet twenty years old. Her skin was pale as chalk, and those who saw the body swore that there wasn't a drop of blood left in her. The two circular stab wounds in her neck seemed to fit with the story about an animal attack.

A third corpse turned up in a side alley close to the *Heroes' Refuge*, having been stuffed into a large barrel. This time the victim was a male elf. Elves are not well-liked in the harbor district, as everybody knows that it

is bad luck to have an elf aboard ship. The guards sent for a Blessed One of Hesinde, who confirmed that the elf's body had been drained completely of blood. He, too, had two puncture wounds in his neck.

Rumors began to spread after the Blessed One explained that he could imagine no natural animal or monster that caused such wounds and drank blood. Some talked about a madman who massacred his victims brutally. Others speculated that a circle of cultists was performing human sacrifices in the Undercity and throwing their victims into the harbor. A short time later, people began to think that a ring of slavers—probably from far away Al'Anfa, where slavery is common—was killing escapees as a warning to others. Now most people are sure that there can be only one explanation for the strange findings: a vampire is preying upon the innocent in the streets of Havena.

You shiver and look around cautiously.

The smell in the tavern indicates clearly how many people believe in the vampire's existence. Besides the nasty smell of sailors—the typical mixture of sea water and sweat, a hint of urine, the fragrance of cheap booze, and the sour smell of vomit under the next table—this place smells mostly of garlic. Not just here, but in the whole neighborhood. People are afraid, and superstitious sailors are buying up talismans and other good luck charms.

A red-headed Thorwaler woman stands out from the crowd. Her clothes match those worn by employees of local kontors, except that she wears her shirt open a bit to reveal her cleavage. Two long wooden stakes, connected by a piece of rope, dangle from her belt, and the silver chain around her neck must have cost her a large part of her income. You can understand her caution. Not a week ago, a second red-haired woman was found in the harbor. Like the others, she had two puncture wounds in her neck and her body had been drained of blood.

This event caused a greater commotion than before because two inquisitors from the Church of Praois demanded to examine the body. It is well-known that elves can use magic, but a new rumor suggested that these two women had been witches, and for a while people talked about a mystical or demonic avenger that wanted to rid the city of magically-gifted creatures. Others think that the inquisitors themselves are to blame. Some talked about a divine curse, a miracle, or even a disease that causes magic users to kill themselves. One variant attributes the deaths to an experimental treatment by a healer who is brilliant, ruthless, daring, or simply mad—the kind of healer Havena has not seen since the days of Archon Megalon. Maybe the dark druid has returned and is casting new and terrible spells on his victims...

Your head begins to spin with dark thoughts. And this after you came to the *Refuge* to chase dark thoughts



away... You decide that perhaps a little socializing will help.

There are many sailors in the common room. Most of them are local men and women who earn their living as fishers or deckhands. Half a dozen pilots sit in the corner, passing a jug of spirits around and using the bad weather as an excuse to get drunk, since no ship would dare navigate the delta of the Great River in this fog.

At another table, some sailors are gambling with dice. An old sailor woman gets up to leave, and you could take her place (192). When you look around to find other ways to amuse yourself, you notice the red-haired Thorwaler woman sitting at the counter with a tankard, staring thoughtfully into her beer. The seat to her left is free, and she seems to be unaccompanied (86). Two old city guards, Trode Peatcutter and Alrik Blighter, sit across from the empty seat. You are sure that you haven't given them a reason to look for you recently—and even if there was a reason, they wouldn't care during their free time. These two are not known for their eagerness to work overtime, but they are known for telling interesting stories if someone gives them some silverthalers or picks up their tab (154).

34

Do you dive down again to muscle open the door (167), or do you try your luck with the other entrance (146)?

35

"Isn't it obvious, my friend?" Rogobald asks in an amused voice. You shake your head.

"Murna carries magic, he continues, "Just like the other four. But with Murna, the magic is still new and unused. Why do you think she wears the collar? Her own father placed it there. He prevents her from ever showing herself outside. People in Havena don't like magic, you see. The public ban on magic, the superstitious sailors, the Blessed Ones of Praios—all of them hate magic. But I understand that magic leads to true power—power that will soon be mine!"

Rogobald's mad laughter makes you shiver (104).

36

You realize that you cannot win the round and must watch as your wager vanishes into somebody else's pocket. Deduct a silverthaler from your character sheet. If you have at least one silverthaler left, you can

play one more game (51). If you have no more money or don't wish to play Svellt Valley dice boltan anymore, you can say goodnight (162).

37

The puppet storage room has three exits. You can leave the room through the wall in the south door (115), the 3' hatch in the north-west corner (186), or the hidden door in the south-east corner of the room (217).

38

"Watch it, or you might get hurt accidentally. And are you saying that this pile of garbage actually belongs to someone?" you shout.

The small creature stares at you angrily and then shouts back, "Garbage? This is my treasure! Not... *garbage*." He snorts angrily, inflating his large nose even more. "And I am not a half-pint! I am a klabautermann." These last words seem to calm the kobold down a bit, and he continues quietly, "You can call me Klabauter. First name *Klabauter*, last name *Mann*." He smiles as you give an understanding nod. You feel it might be best to appease him, especially since you think the small creature is a bit mad.

"Oh, then I beg your pardon Mister... Man?" The way you pause on the word *Mister* and make it sound like too much of a question causes the little man to interrupt you.

"Klabauter! I am no *Mister*." The creature seems to spit out the word. "I am a klabautermann!" He snorts again and looks at you pleadingly. "Just say Klabauter. Klabauter is fine. That's my name. Yes, that's my name. Just Klabauter."

Has the kobold calmed down? It seems so, for the moment (107).

39

You peak through the door and see across a narrow gangway to a channel covered by dense fog. When you have your loot, this could serve as your daring route of escape—or it could be a trap. For the moment, you go back inside. You are breaking in, not breaking out (175).

40

"If you live by the sword, you will die beneath a pile of fish," you exclaim as you wade carelessly into the mountain of fish.

Unfortunately, the woman beneath the fish is not unconscious, only stunned momentarily. The first fish barely misses you. The second hits your thigh, close to a much more sensitive area. It is time to leave (166).

41

Before Rogobald can react, you kick his knee as swiftly and strongly as possible. Make a check using *Feat of Strength (Smashing & Breaking)* (CON/STR/STR) with a penalty of 2.

Do you succeed (142), or fail (81)?

42

It seems to take half an eternity for your eyes to adjust to the dark on the first level. Very little light comes in through the open hatch in the southern wall, and the opening in the north wall is closed. You had expected to find more goods here, but this part of the warehouse appears to be unused. An old metal bucket and a broken stool—that is all you find beneath this pitched roof supported by four wooden beams. Disappointedly, you climb down again, taking care to avoid stepping on the creaking steps (100).



43

The wooden floor of the warehouse must consist of about a hundred boards, but you are lucky enough to step on the one spot which creaks so loudly that you are sure you have alerted the whole house.

Record a Noise Point and turn to section 175.

44

Somewhat clumsily you feel for the honey pot, then for the window shutters. As you take up the jar, the honeybold explains that he hasn't been shaken so vigorously since a man named Scatteroff sold him to a trader named Rastbürger.

As you prepare to throw him out the window, you begin to wonder how he might feel about being discarded like that the moment he was rescued from the jar. Instead of throwing the pot away, you place it outside on the ledge, close the shutters, and leave the room as quietly as you can (168).

45

Hiding around the dark corner of a nearby house, you peer back at the warehouse. A dozen guards armed with halberds are searching the warehouse that Klabauter calls home. The little man is standing on your shoulder and casting venomous glances at the guards. He murmurs curses quietly in your ears, but you ignore him.

Rogobald tried to trick you—you are sure of that—by luring you to a place that is considered a villains' hideout. If caught there, the city guards would have arrested you, and then old Tagkrammer would have you charged with breaking into his warehouse. Then you would have been dragged before the court, and you would have never seen Rogobald again.

But you were no threat to Rogobald. He must have had a reason for targeting you, but as much as you would love to know why, the thought of teaching him a lesson and avenging this injustice is even more appealing. You are angry, all right... and so is Klabauter. If not for Rogobald, the guards would never have searched the warehouse and destroyed Klabauter's beloved home when they rifled through the crates. Klabauter curses the guards something fierce. When he finally pauses to catch his breath, you take the opportunity to explain your thoughts to him. The klabautermann's face lights up at the prospect of seeking revenge against Rogobald, or whatever his name might be.

"Then we have to find the villain," Klabauter sums up, implying that he wants to help you seek your vengeance.

"And I know just the person to help us!" (123)

46

Bleeding from several wounds, the shark retreats. For the moment, it seems to have lost interest in you. You should take this opportunity to retreat as well.

Do you climb the ladder to the scaffolding from which the puppeteers once entertained their audience (186), or do you climb the stairs to the audience seating area (150)?

47

You try rotating the painting slowly, but you cannot move it as easily as you would have thought. You lift the frame slightly and look behind it to see a metal wheel on a metal plate hidden behind the portrait. You remove the painting from the wall carefully and turn to study the mechanism that seems to affix the plate to the wall.

You would never leave precious documents just lying around. You would hide them or at least lock them up, to keep them safe from thieves. This looks like it might be a place to do just that, but unfortunately the mechanism looks too complicated for you. Maybe if you try spinning the wheel a bit... (30)?

48

You are barely seated when a large figure appears in front of you, a tankard in each hand.

"Is this seat taken, my friend?" he asks in a pleasantly warm voice. "May I sit down?"

Without waiting for your answer, the man sets the tankards on the table, pulls the chair back, and sits down. He removes his hood to reveal the bare head of a man of fifty years. His crooked nose has been broken more than once and is too large for his narrow face, but the dark eyes under his bushy brows look both warm and intelligent. His clean teeth and trim Emperor Reto beard indicate that he is wealthy, and his prominent chin suits a man of high social standing. You note his expensive leather gloves as he removes them and sets them on the table. Traces of wax adhere to his signet ring.

"Excuse my manners," the man says with a propriety that displays his education. "Rogobald of Garlishgrotz, independent trader, specializing in wares from the south." A slight bow completes his unusually formal introduction. Somewhat sheepishly, you stammer your name, knowing that you are inferior to the man in education, wealth, and connections.

"What leads an influential person like you to approach a simple man like me?" you ask.

"Oh, do not be modest, friend," Rogobald says cheerfully. "My father always said that the gods give something to everybody. It is not an art to *have* worth, but it is an art to recognize worth." He pauses for a moment to emphasize the importance of his words. "I am sure you have qualities that would be of great use to me." He lets the flattering sentence do its work before continuing. "I am in something of a predicament, and you can certainly free me from it. In return, you will be rewarded."

You furrow your brow. What qualities does he mean? Rogobald leans forward conspiratorially, sensing your uncertainty.



"Listen, young friend," he says in a low voice, "A precious cargo that is mine by rights is lying around somewhere in a warehouse, but it can be retrieved or sold only by the person with the freight documents. If you own the documents, you own the cargo." The trader pauses, as if to make sure that you understand. You nod, and he continues, "I bought the cargo, and I had the papers."

"Had?" you ask.

"Had," he confirms. Sadness, anger, and determination show in his expression. "The freight documents were stolen. A bold yet successful event, unfortunately. An employee of a rival threatened me with a dagger in the open street and made off with the papers."

"Why don't you go to the City Guard?" you ask. "What help could I provide that the guards could not?"

Rogobald smiles contentedly. "You are truly a clever person. Given the boldness of the theft, people would view my accusation as an awkward attempt to denounce my rival, who commands great respect. Cloak-and-dagger games come with the territory. Even if everybody knew about the theft, nobody would ever admit it. A man like me must be able to solve problems like this without calling for the guards."

"And that's where I come in," you muse.

He nods. "You are right, my friend. It is said that you are skillful and smart, daring and determined, and ready to act... for the right price." (141)

49

Your head is throbbing...

You have tried three times to break into houses and three times you have failed, but tonight is a new low point in your career as a burglar. Houses just don't suit you. You are a child of the street, a vagabond, a rogue. In the streets, you are nobody's fool, but when you try to move around in somebody else's house...

You sigh quietly, and the man stops pacing for a moment. He looks at you disparagingly, giving you an opportunity to size him up. He is at least sixty. His hair is gray and sparse, and his beard is trimmed so as to emphasize his distinctive chin and divert attention from his high brow.

Unlike the image in the large painting behind him, the trader does not look especially commanding nor does he possess an air of unflappability. He looks around nervously with fearful glances, and he tugs at his hat while he paces, as if trying to clear his mind.

He takes a deep breath and suddenly seems transformed. He starts to speak with more authority. "It's not safe here anymore. Not now! Murna and I are leaving..."

One of the two servants in the room interrupts him hesitantly, hopping nervously from one foot to the other. "Master Tagkrammer, are you sure it's not safer *here*?"

The trader pauses, and you cringe in sympathy—you can see the storm brewing in his eyes. The red-headed Thorwaler woman leans casually against the door and shows almost no interest in the conversation. Instead, she stares blankly at a kitschy painting of an idyllic summer landscape with lush grass, bubbling waterfalls, and two white horses. The painting's subject, an elf who is reclining on the back of one of the horses, wears an innocent expression and seems to be gazing at the painter with longing. It grabs your attention. Far-away lands! You never really liked the thought of leaving the alleys of Havena, but now wish you could be far away from here, away from this study with its large, intimidating desk and its almost-obscenely expensive armchairs. Far away from the shelves filled with scrolls and the countless paintings whose worth you can barely guess at. Far away from the trader who is glaring at his frightened servants as about to erupt.

Compared with these pitiful fellows, you feel almost relaxed, maybe because you know that you are not the target of the trader's rage. Not for the moment, at least, as it will most likely start with the poor fellow who dared to interrupt his master.

Surprisingly, the expected scolding does not take place. Instead of screaming at the boy, the trader takes a deep breath, calms himself, and pats the boy's shoulder.

The trader says "Maybe you are right..." but he does not get any further, as utter chaos breaks out (125).

50

Never push your luck! You learned this lesson in the school of hard knocks, every time you landed in the filth of the gutter. This time you know better—or too much. Too much?

You hear a voice say, "You know too much!" Were you thinking out loud? No, that was somebody standing behind you...

Darkness enfolds you as you pass out and land in the gutter... (108).

51

You toss a silverthaler onto the table, grab the dice cup, and make the dice dance...

Make a check using *Gambling (Dice)* (SGC/SGC/INT) with a penalty of 2. If you are successful, turn to **98**. If not, turn to section **36**.

52

You try to swim up without angering the shark. But how do you avoid angering a shark? You are not even sure that this is a striped shark. Yes, sailors have described it to you, but you are no zoologist.

Make a *Fishing (Saltwater Animals)* check (DEX/AGI/CON). If you are successful, turn to section **135**. If not, turn to section **101**.

53

You pull open the door, which smashes into a large wardrobe. You lunge inside, but the two occupants are sitting at a table on the opposite wall and have enough time to react. They leap at you without warning. This surprise attack should have given you the advantage, but now you are the one lying on your back with a knee pressed on your throat, buried beneath two surprisingly strong fellows. You slowly black out (49).

54

"Isn't it obvious, my friend?" Rogobald asks, amusement in his voice. You shake your head.

"Two witches, an elf, and a magical girl from the sea. They all have magic inside them, just like Murna. Why do you think she wears the collar? Her own father placed it on her and prevents her from ever showing herself outside. People in Havena don't like magic. The public ban against magic, the superstitious sailors, the Blessed Ones of Praios—everyone here hates magic. But I understand that magic leads to true power—power that soon will be mine."

Rogobald's mad laughter makes you shiver (104).

55

You try to turn the knob and push the door, but nothing happens. The door is locked and you do not have the key, but you do know how to pick a lock.

If you have a pick, turn to section **92**. If you do not have a pick, you cannot open the door without alerting everybody in the kontor, and must go on (168).

56

Inside you see a small table with countless candles, two chairs with high backrests, a straw-covered bed, and a small window covered by wooden shutters, but all of your attention is focused on a red-haired woman who stands with her back to you. You are not sure, but something about her seems familiar. You take a closer look. Her trousers are tailored to emphasize her legs, and she is currently removing a somewhat expensive-looking blouse. As you watch, it slides from her shoulder and drops to the bed, revealing an elaborate tattoo that extends across her back and down both shoulders. You know you have seen something like this before, but where?

A scratching sound brings you back to the present. You have broken into a stranger's house, and peering through doors at people in bedrooms is not a good idea.

Do you stay where you are (208), enter the room (112), or lose yourself in daydreams again (21)?

57

You are just about to push down the door handle and return to the hallway when you hear steps outside. Do you try to hide behind the reading chair and stay as quiet as possible (106), or do you remain behind the door (10)?

58

You are starting to like the role of the hero. You imagine yourself as a brave champion, a courageous explorer who walks into danger without fear, investigating frightening places. And then you enter what must surely be a chamber of terrors. Make a Courage check.

If you succeed, turn to section **191**. If not, turn to section **85**.

59

You pick the lock as if you've been doing this since you were a child. Well, come to think of it, that is basically all you did as a child...

You open the door a crack and listen. When you are sure that nobody has noticed you, you ease yourself carefully through the door and enter the southern part of the large warehouse (80).

Noise Points

You enter through the southern door on the ground floor. A floor plan of the warehouse is at the end of the book. It reflects what Rogobald has told your hero about the building, and you can use it to orient yourself while you search. The map also includes a set of seven circles labeled *Noise Points*. When you take certain actions or fail certain rolls, you must mark off one or more of these Noise Points. When all the circles are full and you must cross off yet another Noise Point, turn to section 127, regardless of what else happens in the section you are reading.

The Maps

A map of Havena is on the inside front cover, and maps of two buildings are at the end of the book. One building is the kontor (the warehouse), the other is a building that you might visit later.

60

With the heightened senses of a frightened child you take one step after the other, picking your way slowly through the field of rubble. Out of the corner of your eye you see what look like tentacles growing from the ground and snaking towards you across the floor. But when you turn to face the danger, nothing is there. Something ahead glows ominously and the mist opens up above you, letting the light of Mada's Sign shine down upon you.

You have to blink when you look up, but you think you see a shadow far above you on the wall. It looks like a man wearing a torn, billowing cloak. Is it a manifestation of evil or simply of your own fear? You shield your eyes with your hand, blink, and look again, but the figure has disappeared...

With a shiver, you continue on your way until you reach the altar on the other side. The dense fog closes in again, hiding the moon and casting the temple into gloomy twilight (173).

61

A moment later you sit leaning against a large wooden crate, rubbing your aching wrists. In front of you stands a tiny man, not two feet tall. The creature looks like an old man with a too-large head in a too-large three-cornered hat, but despite his wrinkly skin and crooked back, his body seems to be that of a child of six. His skin shimmers in disconcerting pastel hues of green and blue, and he wears red and white striped pants and a dark brown oil coat.

"Who are you, Mister...?" you ask, but you pause too long, making the *Mister* too much of a question.

The little man interrupts you, saying "Klabauter! I am not a *Mister*, but a klabautermann! My name is..." The klabautermann hesitates and then apparently decides not to tell you his name, after all. He continues, "You can call me Klabauter. First name *Klabauter*, last name *Mann*." He smiles as you give an understanding nod.

"Oh, my apologies, then, Mister Mann." This time, the title flows from your lips.

Klabauter stares at you angrily, puts his fists on his hips, and starts to rant, "Only Mann, no Mister! Just call me Klabauter Mann."

You pause again, angrier than before, but this time with yourself. "Klabauter Mann?" you lament. "How stupid of me! Of course. What was I thinking?" The little man looks at you with a blend of bashfulness and pity.

"Just say Klabauter," he says, "Klabauter is fine. That's my name. Yes, that's my name. Just Klabauter."

You don't quite believe him, but you are glad that the little man is no longer raging—at least for now (195).

62

You sneak across the room and climb the stairs carefully. At the top, you stare into the hallway to make sure that it's empty (100).

63

"Down there, on the street!" you hear someone cry from the window. Time to get away! You take a few hesitant steps at first, to gauge the extent of your injuries. For a brief moment you think that the dense fog will help cover your escape, but then you hear shouts and footfalls coming your way. You hurry through the streets, rushing to stay ahead of your pursuers.

Suddenly somebody attacks you from the side. A stumbling, red-haired woman punches you hard but then slips and falls into a pile of fish. Shocked, you flee through the wide streets and narrow alleys, ducking through a small gap between two houses. You run, stumble, and then slip yourself (3).

64

The crates are nailed shut, but a crowbar sits on one of them. Do you want to open the crates (143) or ignore them (175)?

65

You are sure that the footfalls are approaching from the alley to your left. You don't want to run back and you don't want to run right into your pursuers' arms, so you have only two choices. You can run further down the street (181) or go to your right (129).

Sections with Branches

Some sections give you a choice as to how to proceed. In this case, your story continues either with section 181 or section 129, depending on which course of action you choose.

66 ○ ○ ○ ○

If you are visiting this section for the fourth time, turn to section 30. If not, decide what you wish to examine. Do you look at the desk (198), the armchair (136), the shelves (171), the paintings (9), the fur (103), or the antlers (84)?

67

Some puppets are damaged slightly and some remain unfinished. You are fascinated by the obvious skill that went into their manufacture. You are spooked by two marionettes without clothes, each consisting only of a wooden ball for a face and several wooden bars. A sailor is missing both of his arms, a princess' dress is shabby and torn at the right shoulder, a three-legged crocodile is lying on its back on the floor, and

four rusty knights have not yet received weapons from the puppet makers. You are impressed by these life sized puppets' realistic wooden heads and perfect proportions. A dirt-covered puppet of a poor merchant looks especially realistic and reminds you of Rogobald, except that it is missing the bushy brows and the large nose... Suddenly the merchant puppet charges you with arms raised, throws you to the ground, and crushes you beneath its weight (14).

68

"Hmm," Trode murmurs in thought. "What have you heard?"

You tell them what you know about the two witches, the mermaid, and the elf. You explain how the bodies had peculiar puncture wounds in their necks and were strangely drained of blood.

"You know an awful lot!" Alrik says suspiciously. "Are you involved with these murders?"

"No, no," you assure him, "Almost everybody knows that much." The two guards look at you sternly for a long moment, then they break out laughing again.

"Well, don't worry, boy," Alrik says, smiling, "Not even a fly would think you were the killer."

Alrik continues laughing while Trode says soothingly, "Don't tell anyone, but the guards hardly know more than you. A Blessed One of Praios examined the body and is convinced that both red-haired women had no magic at all. If you don't want to make a fool of yourself, you better stop saying that the Vampire of Havena killed two witches."

You thank him for his advice. Trode asks you amicably to leave, and then adds, "I have told you too much already—and if you don't go, my friend Alrik here will die of laughter. Then I really *would* have to arrest you for murder."

Upon hearing these words, Alrik collapses in laughing fits. He beats one fist on the table and drops his mead jug to the ground. It seems best to continue on your way (210).

69

Suddenly the woman steps away and vanishes from your field of view. Somebody clears their throat behind you, and then you feel a sharp pain in the back of your head. You black out (49).

70

You see little as you look through the keyhole. A panel on the other side of the door covers the lock, which is no surprise, since you had to move an iron panel on this side to take a look. Looking *at* the lock is much more interesting than looking *through* it. The lock is exquisite. Its material is especially robust, and the craftsmanship is unequalled. You are impressed by the mechanism even though it is simple and the lock seems easy to pick. If you have a pick, you can try to open the lock (19). You can also ignore the door (100).

71

The wood breaks with a loud smash and the smell of fish intensifies. A quick peek into the barrel explains why: the barrels contain dead fish. Record a Noise Point and return to section 80.

72

You struggle to take a few more steps but then lose your balance. You throw yourself forward to get over the protective brick wall, but realize too late that your landing will probably hurt. Make a *Body Control (Jumping)* check (AGI/AGI/CON) with a penalty of 4. Do you succeed (138), or fail (105)?

Skill Checks with Penalties

A skill check with penalty works almost like an unmodified skill check. The only difference is that the penalty decreases the effective value of all three attributes for the duration of the check. In this instance, the *Body Control (Jumping)* check is made as before, but this time, the relevant attributes each count as four lower.

73

You are a fast swimmer, considering that you never really learned to swim, and you shoot past the shark like a natural-born athlete. Your short moment of pride passes quickly, however, when you realize that swimming will not make you any money. Picking pockets, acting, fencing, singing—these are the talents that earn coins. But who would pay to see someone swim circles around a shark?

As your hand reaches for the lowest rung of the scaffolding, your thoughts turn to the more practical issue of leaving the water quickly. Luckily for you, stairs off to the right of you lead up into the dark. Your

feet leave the water just as the shark's jaws snap shut, closing on empty air. You don't stop to rest until you have climbed the ladder and stretched yourself out on the two upper crossbars (186).

74

You kick the door in desperation—a situation that is not made any easier by the water—when suddenly the bar slips to the side and slides down, unlocking the door. You surface for air and then swim back to the door to force yourself through the narrow gap.

The room beyond must have been an entrance room with several other doors leading out. Empty picture frames hang from the walls, and a rotting dresser leans against the wall. Unused candles drift along the floor in the weak current. You feel burning pain in your lungs, and your muscles ache in the cold water. You cannot remain here much longer. You see stairs to your right and follow them with quick strokes until you reach the surface again.

You breathe deeply as you pull yourself from the water and find yourself standing in a dark corridor (115).

75

It is dark inside. A flickering candle casts light from somewhere beyond your field of vision. You see a large wooden wardrobe, a heavy armchair, and a wooden shelf. A bear rug lies on the floor. You cannot tell if anybody is inside the room, but if you were spotted, somebody could be in there planning to ambush you. You take a moment to plan your next action. Do you enter the room (182), or turn away (100)?

76

Breathe. Just breathe. At least you did not black out this time, even though Rogobald probably thinks you did. Whistling quietly, he works on the iron collar with a saw while Murna cries softly.

Her situation is not enviable, but yours has improved a little. Rogobald does not even look at you. And the fall broke a chair leg, freeing your right hand from the chair. You're free! And angry, and desperate. So angry and desperate that you find a calm determination that you have never known before. Your fingers touch the cold steel pommel of your weapon, which Rogobald tossed carelessly next to the chair. Your tense muscles strain against the ropes on your left side. Quietly and cautiously, but without hesitation, you roll to the side, jump up, and get back to your feet. You then smash

the rest of the chair against a wardrobe with one blow. Rogobald spins around in surprise.

Do you wave your weapon to challenge him (16), attack him (119), or try to kick his knee to take him down (41)?

77

The alley to the right of the kontor is narrow—less than six feet wide—and almost completely dark. You wait a moment for your eyes to grow accustomed to the meager light filtering in from the street. Quietly and carefully, you sneak through the restrictive alley until you reach the quay wall that separates the alley from the intersecting channel. At this point you must start climbing. Make a *Climbing (Walls)* check (COU/AGI/STR) with a penalty of 2 due to the lack of handholds on the slippery wall.

If you succeed, turn to section 131. If you fail, turn to section 157.

78

You won't enter this room again (168).

79

"Well, friend," he says, "we must make a decision and act quickly, since the criminals have been warned. You search the warehouse. It is in Salterel Alley, first building on the right at the quay wall. You can hardly miss the place, as the name *Tagkrammer* is written above the side door. Take a look around there, friend. I will follow soon."

You are excited. The night promises to be interesting. A triple payday is in the making, and you might even rescue a rich damsel in distress. You go happily on your way (222).

80

You are near the southern wall of a large warehouse that takes up almost the entire ground floor of the building. The space is illuminated by two oil lanterns suspended from support pillars in the middle of the room. Their glow casts the room in a gloomy twilight. The room holds countless barrels piled right up to its 12' high ceiling. A pungent fish odor hangs in the air.

Do you want to open one of the barrels (179), or ignore them and look for a way to leave this part of the warehouse? Alternatively, you could cross to the north side of the warehouse (114), sneak up the wooden

stairs on the east side (212), or head towards a double door in the southern wall (20).

81

Your kick misses Rogobald's knee, but your momentum throws you down and you land on your behind. Rogobald closes on you before you can finish standing up and makes one attack against you, which you cannot parry. After that, regular combat rounds begin (16).

82

You leave the chest behind. You have grown accustomed to the spooky shadows, the ruins, the frightening trees reaching out of the dense fog, the grimacing gargoyles, the wind howling through the holes in the walls, and the icy cold that brushes your skin like the breath of Death. The Undercity is not a nice place during the day. At night it seems to be a place of nightmares.

You are relieved yet somewhat surprised to see the fog clear 20 feet ahead, where you see a two story house with a flooded lower floor. The building looks just like dozens of others you have seen on your way here, but the sign hanging above the former entrance, swaying in the wind just a foot above the water, tells you that you have reached your destination: *Garthelta's Puppet Theater*.

You can see the building quite well, even from your vantage point in another ruin on the other side of a street flooded by 16 feet of water. The house must have been impressive at one time. Despite years of moss growth and the large holes in the walls, you can still picture the crimson tiles glittering in the light of Praios' Disc. Half a dozen beams jutting from the front of the building probably once served as anchoring points for various marionettes, to attract audiences. You can almost hear the laughter of children running joyously through the alleys and stopping here to gaze at the colorful creations. The building is much gloomier now, covered as it is by graying plants, chipped plaster, rotting wood, and moldy lichen.

You think that the theater must have been on the west side of the house, to your left. This area has no windows, but you can see another entrance just above the surface of the water.

The other part of the building probably served as the store and the workshop, or maybe Garthelta's living

quarters. You cannot be sure how the rooms were divided, but you are sure that the building offers many hiding places for evil characters like Rogobald – or a burglar like yourself, for that matter. Even though your record might be terrible, this time you will succeed.

Now you must decide how to enter the building. A fallen tree connects the building you are using for a hiding place with Garthelta's Puppet Theater. With a bit of skill, you could reach the other building without getting wet (23). If you prefer to reach the ground floor by swimming and diving, you must decide to enter through either the former theater entrance (146) or the entrance to the other half of the building (209).

83

You pause for a moment, impressed with yourself. Even though the gloomy voice was startling, you stood your ground bravely. But isn't fear useful sometimes? Who says that staying here is the smart thing to do, even if courage demands it?

Do you try to escape as quickly as possible (29) or do you wait a little longer (206)?

84

An impressive twelve-point buck trophy hangs from the wall. It must have been a noble beast whose antlers certainly impressed rival animals and drove away many enemies. But the fur rug in the middle of the room makes you wonder just how useful those antlers really were, in the end. A less impressive animal would have been passed over in the hunt. It can be an advantage to walk through the streets without being noticed (66).

85

You shout out before you manage to clap your hands over your mouth. You stumble one step backwards and fall, landing on your behind. Only then do you realize that something is standing right in front of you (1).

86

You sit down gallantly next to the Thorwaler, flash your warmest smile, and turn confidently towards the pretty woman—only to see how much a mix of anger and scorn can change a face. Her expression makes you swallow what would have been your charming



opening. The woman turns away determinedly, and you are stung by her wordless rebuff.

You could talk to the guards sitting across from you (154), or go over to the people playing dice. There is still one seat open (192).

87

Rather meekly, you tell your story about the botched burglary, leaving out some of the more embarrassing details. You look for anger, rage, disappointment, or sadness in the other man's face, but he clearly struggles to keep a neutral expression. Rogobald's icy mask begins to falter when you mention that you were able to escape only because some unknown individual attacked the kontor. He starts laughing and slapping his thighs, and his eyes begin to tear up. The trader is amused, the last reaction you would have expected.

You pause and look at the man questioningly, which makes him laugh even harder. It is some time before he regains control enough to explain.

"My friend," he says, "I am sorry that you feel bad because of my little trick, but you performed quite well—beautifully, in fact! I thank you and I am glad to finally be able to tell the truth to someone clever!" You continue looking at him quizzically.

"You have performed your role in my plan perfectly, friend, I can assure you! I will fool you no longer, but before I give you the truth, you must promise to not to tell anyone."

The man waits for your nod, then sits down on a large crate and begins to tell his story. "For years," he says, "there have been rumors that the trading house of Tagkrammer, and especially its head, Wigur, was taking part in evil deeds. People say Tagkrammer deals with intoxicating herbs from the south, contraband that was forbidden during the war against the Northmarches, and even lethal poison. The cargo I have been talking about does exist, but it is not mine, and I am not interested in the freight documents to claim the cargo. Rather, I wish to put a stop to these criminals. I am not really a merchant, as I claimed to be. I work for the City Guard, which recruited me because I would not be recognized as one of their own. I told you a fairy tale so you could distract the Tagkrammers for me, and maybe even find the evidence needed to arrest them. While you searched the upper floor, I searched the ground

floor. Unfortunately, I couldn't find anything, and then you were captured. I could have let the Guard collect you and then free you myself later, but I needed to create a distraction.

Now that we have met again, it is even more important to secure the documents as proof before they can destroy them. Old Wigur is a cunning and careful man. Without that evidence, we cannot press charges against him and his criminal gang. You will not allow them to get away with their crimes, will you, friend?"

Allow a criminal to get away? If it was a scallywag like yourself, the answer would be obvious, especially since you are no hardened criminal. You steal only from the rich and never wanted to hurt anybody. Let this drug and poison merchant have his way? You can't do that! Of course, there is also that reward to think about.

You agree (130) ... or do you? His story sounds like one of those wild plots used by that silly cow Aedine Conneleigh Fremling in her books about her quaint investigator, Shenrik Holsen. Is his story too unbelievable? Maybe you should not agree so enthusiastically, and end the partnership now (26).

88

The door to the room is ajar. It's dark, but you sneak boldly inside anyway. You notice a draft coming from a separate chamber that turns out to be an outhouse built into the side of the house. Looking out through the latrine, you see the end of the jetty that runs in front of the kontor, and beyond that, the dark waves of the channel in the fog. Whoever built the house and the jetty had too much money, in your opinion.

In a secluded corner you find a large wooden bath tub that can probably be filled with water from the channel via a complicated procedure. You try to imagine bathing in water drawn from a channel that people use as a sewer, but nevertheless, you envy the inhabitants of the kontor. Whoever lived here had a much more comfortable (and much cleaner) life than you ever had. You leave the room with a jealous glance (100).

89

Even though you do your best to open the wooden hatch that extends from the ceiling to just above the floor, you manage to push it open only about a thumb's width. Through the crack you see water flowing gently by, about 18 feet below you.

Holding the hatch open is very tiring, so you close it carefully (168).

90

The open door is almost insulting. A seven year old could break into this warehouse. Next to the entrance you find a full oil lantern standing on a table, along with flint and tinder, almost as if someone placed it here for you. You make a spark and light the lamp quickly, close the lantern, and adjust the lens to illuminate a narrow area in front of you. This burglary is proving less than interesting. Your first three attempts at burglary failed horribly, you know, but despite that—or perhaps because of it—you feel cheated. Even if you find the papers here, this stroll will hardly qualify as a successful burglary...

You raise the lamp and reconsider. Things might be a bit more complicated. Surrounding you are hundreds of boxes, some of them piled up in absurdly high towers. It cannot be easy to find documents when you have only a rough idea of what they contain.

You sigh as you grab the first box and start to open it, but you do not get very far. A horrible high-pitched voice makes you jump.

“Don’t you dare, you clumsy goblin. Get away! This is my home!”

You put the box back. Who was that? You shine the lantern around quickly. Suddenly you see a tiny man sitting on a pile of boxes and shaking his fists at you. The creature looks like an old man with a too-large head in a too-large three-cornered hat, but despite his wrinkly skin and crooked back, his body seems to be that of a child of six. His skin shimmers in disconcerting pastel hues of green and blue, and he wears red and white striped pants and a dark brown oil coat.

Do you try to calm him down (204), or do you become angry (38)?

91

You pull back the cloth and almost jump. The painted scene of a farmhouse parlor does not frighten you, but the giant wolf looking in through the window scares you as much as it does the painting’s subjects, four

farmers who stare at the monster in horror as they reach for their pitchforks.

You calm yourself enough to take in the loving details that lend the image life—the atmospheric lighting, the candelabra blown down by the wind, and the glowing light of the full moon.

You find an inscription in the frame that reads: *The Wolf of Winhall* by Cüye Guucarn. You enjoy the image for a few moments longer and then cover it up again (160).

92

You wipe your hands on your shirt and sit down in front of the door knob. The mechanism is robust but delicate. Is it the work of dwarves? Well, it won’t be easy to pick the lock, but then again, a good lock promises rich loot... Make a *Pick Locks (Bit Locks)* (INT/DEX/DEX) check with a penalty of 2.

Do you succeed (177) or fail (13)?

93

Eyes! The table is covered in painted wooden eyes, countless nails, and a variety of tools for beating eyes into puppets. Hammers, tongs, and files of all sizes hang next to the stumps of centuries-old paintbrushes, in front of a window above the workbench. Most metal parts are covered in rust and the wood has begun to rot, but the evidence of a creative mind at work has endured over the centuries. You wonder if these puppets were the work of a single artist, or several.

Suddenly, you notice a shadow out of the corner of your eye. A massive shape rushes at you and throws you to the ground (14).

94

You suddenly find yourself at a dead end. A nine-foot wall rises up in front of you, and you hear footfalls echoing through the streets behind you. There is only one way out of here. You must climb the wall. Luckily, somebody left a wooden crate nearby. It looks sturdy enough to support your weight while you try to climb. Make a *Climbing (Walls)* check (COU/AGI/STR).

Do you succeed (149), or fail (6)?

Skill Checks

Besides eight attributes, your hero also has a list of skills. Whenever you attempt a skill, you must make a *skill check* to see if you succeed. Incidentally, the procedure described below also applies to casting the spells of a mage or performing the miracles of a Blessed One, but neither of those appears in this adventure.

To make a skill check, you need a *skill*, its *skill rating* (SR, for short), and the values of each of that skill's three associated *attributes*. In this case, you are trying to *Climb*. If you are using the character provided with this adventure, your *Climbing* SR is 6. The three attributes that go with the *Climbing* skill are COU, AGI, and STR, and you must make an attribute check for each. Remember, a skill check succeeds if you roll less than or equal to the relevant attribute on 1D20.

Failed checks are a problem, but they don't automatically mean that you failed the skill. To help achieve success with skill checks, you have a pool of *skill points* (SP) that you can deduct from rolls that are too high. The pool of SP available for each skill is equal to that skill's specific SR. *For example, if your character's Climbing SR is 6, you have 6 SP that you can spend for this skill check.* Now, let's say that your hero has a COU of 10, but you roll a 12, which is 2 points greater than your attribute. By spending 2 points of your SP for that skill, you turn the failure into a success. If you fail any more rolls in this skill check, you can continue spending SP until you run out. If at any time you do not have enough SP to adjust a failed roll into a success, the skill check fails. If you succeed at all three rolls (whether or not you had to spend SP to do so), you succeed at the skill check. Note that the next time you must make the same skill check, your entire pool of SP is available again.

95

The lock yields with a quiet clicking sound, and the door opens slightly. You glance inside quickly. After making sure that nobody is in the room, you slip inside and shut the door carefully but not quite all the way. Nothing would be worse than getting locked inside by a door that snapped shut unexpectedly. You inhale sharply at the sight of some very impressive furniture, which is illuminated by the room's two oil lanterns.

Hazy light from three large windows falls on the huge desk and leather armchair that dominate the room. Next to the desk sit two more armchairs. Several shelves stand between the countless paintings on the walls. A giant wardrobe stands in a niche next to the door. The fur of an imposing stag covers the floor, and its antlers fill the space above the door. You begin to search the room eagerly (66).

96

With the heightened senses of a frightened child you take one step after the other, picking your way slowly through the field of rubble. Out of the corner of your eye you see what look like tentacles growing from the ground and snaking towards you across the floor. But when you turn to face the danger, nothing is there. Something ahead glows ominously and the mist opens up above you, letting the light of Mada's Sign shine down upon you.

You have to blink when you look up, but you think you see a shadowy figure far above you on the wall. It looks like a man wearing a torn, billowing cloak. Is it a manifestation of evil or simply of your own fear? You shield your eyes with your hand, blink, and look again, but the figure has disappeared...

With a shiver, you continue on your way until you reach the altar on the other side. The dense fog closes in again, hiding the moon and casting the temple into gloomy twilight (173).

97

Your assumptions prove correct. The stairs don't fall apart beneath your feet, but the boards do bend and creak loudly. You try to be as quiet as possible by avoiding the middle of each step and setting your feet on the edges over the wooden frame. This slows your progress somewhat, but in the end you reach the corridor at the top of the stairs.

Record a Noise Point and turn to section 168.

98 ○ ○ ○ ○

Victory! You win!

You gleefully take the six silverthalers from the center of the table. After subtracting your bet, you find you have won 5 silverthalers. Add 5 silverthalers to your character sheet, and then cross off an empty circle in this section.

If you have only crossed off the first or second circle, you can play one more round (51) or say goodnight, grinning contentedly (162). If you have crossed off the third circle, turn to section 207. If you have crossed off the fourth circle, turn to section 120.

Sections to Cross Off

One or more circles appear after some section numbers. Whenever you visit such a section, cross off the next available circle. This record reminds you that you have visited that section before. If you return to the section, follow the directions.

99

You almost fall, but you manage to hold on and traverse the trunk. You sneak around the house until you find an open window. Inside, you see a dark, empty corridor with several doors. You do not want to be caught outside, so you do not hesitate to climb into the house (115).

100 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

The second floor corridor is empty, but the rooms are filled with life. You hear muffled voices and see weak light coming through all the doors but one, on the northeast side. You must remember to be very careful.

Six doors lead from the candlelit room. One leads northwest (88), one west (118), one southwest (25), one northeast (140), one east (219), and one south (163). You can also go down the stairs (124), or climb up another set of stairs (183). If you have returned to this section for the fifth time, turn to section 4.

101

You have no idea how to deal with the shark, so you work your way up the stairs. As your head clears the surface and you begin to pull yourself up, the shark's powerful fins catch on your leg and drag you back into the water. You take a deep breath, draw your dagger, and dive to attack the beast (8)!

102

You give it your best, but you fail to open the lock—and then your pick breaks in the keyhole. You toss the broken piece away in disappointment. You will not be able to go this way, but you can try your luck again on the other side of the kontor. Now in a bad mood, you sneak to the narrow alley on the right side of the next building. Delete the pick from your character sheet and turn to section 77.

103

What is hiding under the rug? The answer is as simple as it is disappointing: Dust and wooden floorboards (66).

104

Rogobald looks at you with contempt and holds the saw up next to your face. "I would like to keep talking with you, friend," he says, "but Murna is waiting for me. The ritual can begin as soon as I finish removing her collar."

"Ritual," you mutter hoarsely. Your dry throat prohibits any more sound.

"Oh, ritual might be a bit pompous," Rogobald admits airily. He pulls some objects from his pocket—two taps, of the kind you might use to collect sap from a tree. "I simply drive this into her pale neck and wait for the warm blood, and all her magic, to flow from her body." You stare at the metal taps in horror.

Rogobald's face is somewhat more pensive. Then he asks, "What do you think, friend? Will I ever grow accustomed to the taste of blood?"

Do you scream (161), spit in Rogobald's face (220), or try to kick him (137)?

105

You land badly on your shoulder, throwing dirt in all directions. Soil and grass fill your mouth. Luckily, you did not land on the pavement. You suffer only 2 DP. Subtract 2 from your life points directly ignoring PRO.

You pick yourself up and duck through the gap between two houses (170).

106

You sneak carefully but quickly behind the armchair and wait there. You hear muffled voices, but you cannot discern what they say. Then somebody rattles the door latch. Your heart skips a beat, but the door does not open. Eventually, you hear footsteps moving away.

You wait for a while, sweating profusely. Finally you leave the room, making sure that the corridor is empty (168).

107

"Have you never seen a klabautermann?" Klabauter asks jovially, as if he had never been angry with you. This klabautermann is just like the ones in those stories told by sailors—erratic like a flood, and moody like the ocean.

"No," you admit. "But I would never expect to meet a klabautermann in a warehouse. I thought klabautermann lived on ships." You regret your words at once as the little man begins to cry. Big tears run down his wrinkled, greenish-blue cheeks. You know you have said something terrible.

"Ships! Ships..." Klabauter howls, in a voice that sounds as if you are pulling the nails from his toes. Then he blinks the tears away, looks around suspiciously, and raises his chin. "Ships are bad places, I can tell you," he says. You nod, but you do not understand.

"Ships are evil. They do terrible things. They..." Klabauter explains. You start to back away, and knock down a pile of crates as you do so.

"They..." Klabauter begins, but suddenly he jumps towards you and grabs your cheeks in his small, cold hands, pulling them like bread dough as he whispers into your ear, "They roll!"

"They *roll*?" you ask, surprised. Klabauter throws himself on the ground and holds his stomach.

"Yes, they roll," he continues with an agonized voice. "Roll from larboard to starboard and back again, and they tilt up and down, up and down. Every time I think about it, I feel sick." He starts making choking sounds as if throwing up.

"You get seasick?" you ask, as surprised as you are amused. Klabauter notices your tone. He jumps up angrily.

"Don't you get seasick?" he asks belligerently. "Have you ever been on a ship before? Do you even know what you are talking about when you mock me?"

You raise your hands in defense. The little fellow is mad, no doubt about it. You would love to get out of here, but the thought of your reward holds you back. You are looking for something, and maybe Klabauter can help you.

Which story do you think will best convince the klabautermann to help you find the documents? Do you tell him about freight documents that the owner of the warehouse stole from a merchant (17), or do you go with the more dramatic option and say that the papers are evidence that can be used to catch evil criminals (189)?

108

You start to worry about your head. How often can you be knocked out without suffering serious damage? The pain in your head makes you pessimistic, but worrying won't help you. You blink. Where are you?

At first, you think a pile of crates several yards high is growing from the wall to your left. Then you realize that the wall is actually the floor, while the ceiling and what you thought was the floor ten yards below you are shabby walls, and the wall to your right is in reality the 30' high ceiling of an old, musty warehouse.

You try to get up but find your hands and feet bound with firm rope. Your situation isn't pleasant, and the high-pitched singing that fills the warehouse does not make it better.

"What do I have here? A dumpling, bound like a beefsteak olive. And I *am* hungry..."

You have never heard of a demon of bad cooking or bad singing, but the pain in your head and ears makes you believe in a Netherhell ruled by chefs that sing with falsetto voices. "Can you stop singing?" you plead.

You hear the thumping of boots, and then the voice speaks again. This time it roars in your ear. "Are you awake?" it yells.

You flinch and then hiss angrily, "Of course I am! How could anyone sleep with all that terrible singing and shouting?"

The voice laughs: "Oh, somebody has a problem..."

"I know that. I am lying bound in the dirt!" you shout.

Its response comes with a false politeness that makes your blood boil. "No, I don't mean that," it says. "You have a problem with your manners!"

There is only one course of action: free yourself from the ropes, jump up, attack the owner of that horrible voice, and either tear him to pieces or strangle him. You happily picture yourself following through on this idea, but eventually you reconsider. Then, in a calmer voice, you say, "Could you please release me?" (61)

109

You barely manage to suppress a sneeze. Sheep's wool can be truly demonic stuff...

Angrily, you knot the bag and shove it to the side (175).

110

You open the wardrobe door and realize that you are standing in front of a puppet graveyard. The rusty hinges break, and the door smashes to the ground. Wooden splinters fly as the door crumbles to pieces. Time has taken its toll here in the wet marshland. You could try to take these masterfully crafted marionettes with you, but that would probably destroy them. It is sad that these puppets will never be used again...

You push the thought aside and look around in the wardrobe. The upper shelf holds countless pieces of

wood and metal for puppet frames and heads. On the other side of the wardrobe, two shelves appear to have been removed to make space for a painting that is now covered. You carefully pull the cloth aside and admire the piece of art. Was it made by one of the puppet makers who worked here? Or was the image used as inspiration for a saber-tooth tiger puppet?

The painting's subject, a majestic animal with knife-like teeth, sneaks through a snow-covered mountain landscape, lurking and salivating. Its yellow eyes stare at its unseen prey, and its open mouth suggests a frightening roar that paralyzes any who hear it. You shiver, even though it is only a painting...

As you look at the picture, you glimpse a shadow out of the corner of your eye. A massive shape rushes you and throws you to the ground (14).

111

You turn around, open the door, and listen for sounds in the corridor. The honeybold asks you to take him with you as you leave, but its verse is so long that you never learn what rhymes with "numb bugbear" (168).

112

You grab the door handle, but then you hesitate. How would the woman react if you just walked in? You think you are quite charming, but it is very unlikely that she will forgive you for barging in on her, and she would no doubt scream. To avoid detection, you would have to overpower her, and you really hate that idea. Burglary is bad enough, but attacking a person in their own home is much worse. It would cost you several years of your life—if they did not hang you outright.

You let go off the handle uncertainly. Suddenly you hear a voice (21).

113

After you have exchanged a single blow, the Thorwaler steps on an especially slippery cobblestone. The momentum of her attack combined with the slippery surface causes her to stumble forward. You cannot hide your bold grin at seeing the startled expression on her face. You avoid the dagger easily and sidestep to let the woman slide past you. Without a sound, she smashes into a barrel that sways, falls, and buries her in a mountain of stinking fish.



The scene is quite funny, but you remember that there are at least two more pursuers after you. Do you clear out (166), or do you linger, unable to resist saying something humorous which you just made up (40)?

114

You sneak over to the north half of the warehouse. Make an *Intuition* check.

If you succeed, turn to section 175. If you fail, turn to section 43.

115

You are standing in a dark corridor that is illuminated only by hazy moonlight. At the east end of the corridor narrow stairs lead to the ground floor, which is drowned completely beneath the water of the river delta. After all you have suffered to get this far, you are in no mood for a swim. You decide to leave the empty corridor through one of the two doors on this level.

Do you take the western door (150) or do you try the door that stands partially open in the north wall (22)?

116

You are not sure how much time has passed. Half an hour... An hour? There is no temple nearby to ring an hour bell and no local night watch to call out the time, so you can only guess how long you have been sitting in this bush with nothing but a rat for company. You begin to lose your patience and wonder what you are waiting for. Then again, would you prefer that someone catch you while you are breaking in? Do you follow through with your plan (90), or give up on collecting your reward and get away (50).

117

"You're joking, aren't you?" Trode asks dryly.

"If you are trying to pull our leg or waste our time," Alrik adds, "then you'd better get lost before we get angry."

"No, wait!" you plead, trying hard to think of something to say. Finally, you open your mouth and speak.

"Is there anything new about the bodies?" (68)
"What can you tell me about the Vampire?" (24)
"Am I in trouble?" (185)

118

Soft light shines out from under the door, along with the quiet singing of a playing child. Have you entered the lair of a ring of human traders?

Do you charge into the room (176), or peek through the keyhole first (31)? Alternatively, you could ignore the room and think of something else to do (100).

119

You ram into Rogobald and push him towards the marionettes. Make a *Feat of Strength* (*Pushing & Bending*) check (CON/STR/STR).

If you succeed, turn to section 28. If you fail, turn to section 180.

120

"Not so fast!" hisses the old man to your left. "I knew you were a cheat," he growls, jumping to his feet.

The other players do the same. Suddenly the mood of the group turns openly hostile. The other players clench their fists and teeth menacingly. It's only a matter of time before somebody throws the first punch.

But then the room suddenly goes quiet. Your fellow players relax a little and back off. You feel a strong hand on your shoulder.

You turn around slowly and see Trode and Alrik. The two guards give you an admonishing look. "Who's causing trouble?" they ask.

"Not me," you say meekly. "I haven't cheated anybody." For a moment, you wonder whether you even believe yourself, since your last sentence sounded more like a question than a statement...

"Who has cheated whom?" Trode asks while Alrik keeps a firm hold on your shoulder.

"Well," the old man murmurs, "We didn't actually catch anyone, but ..."

"But?" Trode asks skeptically.

"That one is luckier than Phex would ever allow!" the old man says, his voice gaining confidence.

The guards look at each other for a long moment and then start laughing so loud that Alrik sprays spittle all over you.

“Lucky? Our little Phex child here?” they howl.

Suddenly, the mirth returns to the Heroes’ Refuge, even if it is all aimed at you.

“Get out of here,” Alrik whispers to you as he pushes you roughly into the other corner of the tavern (162).

121 ○

If you have been here before, turn to section 139. If not, turn to section 57.

Sections to Cross Off

One or more circles appear after some section numbers. Whenever you visit such a section, cross off the next available circle. This record reminds you that you have visited that section before. If you return to the section, follow the directions.

122

Rogobald does not respond to your questions. Instead, he takes a rusty saw from a drawer and stands up. “Don’t you think it would be a bit cliché to tell you about my plan?” he says. “This is not a story by that horrible writer, Aedine Conneleigh Fremling.”

You try but fail to shrug innocently. The ropes around your wrists don’t allow for it.

Rogobald pats your shoulder encouragingly. “Of course it would be cliché,” he continues, “but as I see it, we still have some time left....”

He taps the saw against Murna’s collar (172).

123

Even though you have never set foot in a school of Hesinde, you always knew that Aventuria was much larger than the harbor district of Havena, the place where you were born. Yes, your chosen trade is illegal, but it has its advantages, too. You can stay in bed whenever you want to, but this also means that you never know where your next kreutzer is coming from. It is somewhat thrilling to steal from the rich and keep

the spoils for yourself, but... Well, to be honest, you do not really need the thrills.

You are surprised to have been cheated out of your promised reward. You are not usually resentful—if there are winners, there must also be losers, and Phex would just advise you to be on the winning side. But your simple way of life has changed forever. Your anger is no doubt driven by lesser motives, but you are probably doing society a favor—just like a true hero. You like to imagine what it must be like to be a hero, never thinking of yourself but only the importance of the task at hand. True, there would probably be some advantages, but it is exciting to imagine a life beyond stealing from harbor rabble and running occasional errands for somebody who thinks he’s better than you.

To be honest, you have no real idea what heroes do, but you are sure that they do not simply wander the streets and visit taverns. A hero goes abroad—you know that much from the many tales you hear from sailors—but you never imagined yourself setting off on an adventure. Before that fateful meeting in the Heroes’ Refuge, you believed your world would always stop at the borders of the harbor district.

The harbor district seems to get smaller every day. The crafters who live to the north have little sympathy for scallywags like you and would beat you as soon as look at you. You do not want to mess with the nobles, who all live on the eastern side of the city. The City Guard gives them special protection. The Great River marks the southern border of your world. Thanks to a misstep while balancing on a quay wall one day, you learned that you are a pretty good swimmer. Nobody taught you how to swim, but water was never your element, and you were never very excited about your childhood friends’ ideas of signing on to work a ship and see foreign lands. You also never wanted to make a trip into the swamp west of Havena to see the old city, which has been flooded for centuries. But now?

Now you are sitting on a raft made from three tree trunks tied together, and drifting on a branch of the Great River deeper and deeper into the flooded Undercity, the spooky old part of Havena. You feel like a lone fighter, a brave hero leaving home for distant countries...

Well, you are not *that* alone. Klabauter is clutching your right calf and whining, cursing both his fate and his upset stomach. And then there is the mysterious raftsmen, an old, hunched man who poles the raft

forward despite his blindfolded eyes. Klabauter says the raftsmen are indeed blind but able to talk to the animals and listen to the swamp, so he can find his way in the Undercity without help.

This fact alone makes you queasy—maybe you are not as brave as you had thought—but Klabauter is very sure of the raftsmen's skills, at least when the raft isn't shaking alarmingly (occasionally, as you drift slowly through the ruins of the Undercity, the raft grinds against an old wall or a rotten roof hidden inches below the surface). Bats flutter through the dense fog. Scant moonlight filters through the fog. Bubbles gurgle up through the swampy water in many places. Moss and stunted bushes cover the small islands and the rough walls that still stand above the water. Not a single flooded, multistory house is intact, but some retain enough of their structure to reveal their original function, and metal signs still hang above some flooded doorframes.

"Can you see the tower to your right?" the raftsmen asks, pointing. You follow his outstretched finger with your gaze and see something that might count as a tower. "Avoid that place," he says, "A powerful sorceress rules there."

A short time later, the raftsmen utters a prayer to Efferd, the god of the sea. His next words are not so cheering. "A dark cult that worshiped a sea serpent once held rituals in the area between those gnarled trees. People say the cult disappeared, but who can be certain?"

You don't care who can be certain. You just know that coming here was a bad idea.

"Did you hear that?" Klabauter asks with a shiver in his voice.

"Smugglers," the raftsmen answers with a sneer, "They take no interest in people like us, most of the time. If we stay quiet."

Klabauter claps his hands over his own mouth (200).

124

You head down the stairs, pass through what looks like a broom closet, and come to a corridor (168).

125

A rock crashes through one of the cozy study's precious glass windows, and glittering shards of glass rain down



onto the floor. A second stone, wrapped in burning cloth, breaks through a different window. It misses everyone by a wide margin but flames catch and start to spread across the floor, posing a great danger not just to the countless documents in the study, but to the whole kontor. The red-haired woman rushes past you to stomp out the fire.

The trader begins roaring commands. "You," he yells, pointing at one servant, "Get Murna from her room. I will take her to my city villa." He points at the other man and yells, "You, guard our guest. When you have extinguished the fire, watch for further attacks and cover our retreat." The trader then hurries out of the room, shouting "And protect the kontor!" over his shoulder as he goes.

Two of the four possible opponents have left the room. The red-haired woman is busy putting out the last of the flames, and the remaining servant eyes you uncertainly. This is your chance to get away! Charging to the stairway seems like a bad idea, as you would have to get past the guard, and then you might run into the merchant or the other, much stronger looking servant. Escaping through a small broken window this high above the ground is not without risk, but it is the only other exit, and you are pretty wiry, after all.

Without further thought, you take three long strides and hurl yourself through the empty window frame. Make a *Body Control (Jumping)* (AGI/AGI/STR) check with a penalty of 1.

If you succeed, turn to section 174. If not, turn to section 153.

126

The door to the small storage area stands slightly ajar, and you can enter soundlessly and without difficulty. The small room is even darker than the large storage room. You can make out the silhouette of a desk to your right and what look like several long poles to your left. You take a moment to figure out that the poles are boat hooks. Near the poles you find several long ropes and two carefully folded nets. This stuff reminds you of a painting you once saw of a gladiator from the Al'Anfan arena. He was dressed like a fisher armed with spear and net, and fighting a wild beast. How skillfully would you fight armed like that? You push away the thought. The poles are too long and the net too awkward to be of any use to a burglar.

You open the desk and find only a closed inkwell, two long quills, and half a dozen sheets of parchment. You take everything in the desk, pack your loot neatly away, and sneak back into the warehouse (175).

127

"Who's there?" someone shouts. Two men approach, both armed with daggers. One of them carries an oil lantern next to his face. Behind them you see yet another figure, making both escape and combat futile. You stand no chance against three armed men, for even if you managed to defeat one, the other two would overpower you. You don't even want to think about what they would do to somebody who killed one of theirs. You have enough worries at the moment wondering what they might do with a thief. You find out soon enough, for just as you raise your hands to show your peaceful intentions, one of the men knocks you out with a powerful punch to the chin (49).

128

Rogobald collapses with a groan. Blood seeps from his mouth and the many wounds to his body. The Vampire of Havena is finished. Exhausted, you slump down next to the workbench.

"Is he dead?" Murna asks uncertainly.

"Yes," you answer. You take a deep breath and collect your thoughts. You just killed a man, a deed you never would have thought possible. You expect guilt, regret, sorrow, or pity, but you feel only emptiness. You look at the ropes that still bind Murna, at the saw discarded on the ground, and finally at Rogobald the Monster, the power-hungry vampire who drained the blood of spellcasters so he could become one himself.

You feel contempt for him, hatred for his deeds, and satisfaction for having stopped him. Feelings of vengeance spread through your body, seeming both hot and cold at the same time. People like him must be killed. They don't deserve to live. All of them must die...

Murna catches the wild look in your eye. "Will you kill me, too?" she asks with a small, trembling voice.

"Of course not," you answer. "Why would I?"

Her tearful answer makes your heart go numb, “Because I can use magic—like the evil witches and monsters in the Undercity. Am I a monster, too?”

You turn back to Rogobald, but all of your anger, hatred, and vengeance are gone. You even pity him now. What happened to him to make him that way? What made him kill four innocent people and kidnap a little girl? And what has happened to you, that you were able to kill a man? How are you any different? It is not your deeds, so it must be the reasons behind them.

What’s the difference between a hero and a robber when they meet in combat? When Rogobald hired you to commit a burglary, you were interested only in the money. When you met Klabauter, you were bent on revenge. But when you saw Murna—her pain, her sorrow, her impending death—you gained an inner calm and strength you had never known before.

Protecting the innocent—is that the task that Fate has chosen for you? Will you stay in Havena, snatching up crumbs that fall from the table? Are you just a vagabond lurking in dirty alleys? Or are you destined for greater things?

You climb back to your feet and start cutting the ropes that still bind Murna’s limbs.

“I am no worthless vagabond,” you whisper, more to yourself than to her. Then you add with a firm voice, “And you are no monster. Never forget that!”

Murna sits up, looks at you with tear-filled eyes, and nods.

The End (turn to page 57).

129

“Over there!”

The angry shout is followed by another, and your pursuers’ footsteps change from a steady walk to a quick run. Time to get away. You ignore your burning muscles and the pain in your hips as you run down the side alley. At the end of the street the neighborhood changes over to the simple huts of fishers. Nets are stretched out to dry between some houses, and coils of rope create tripping hazards on the slippery cobblestones. A short distance ahead, the road takes a sharp bend. Most of the huts are dark, but after you

accidentally knock over a bucket, causing it to roll noisily through the alley, you get the feeling that some residents might be watching you now. You come to a cross street. Make an INT check with a penalty of 2.

If you succeed, turn to section **218**. If you fail, turn to section **27**.

Attributes and Attribute Checks

Just as when playing *The Dark Eye*, you make most of the decisions in this solo adventure. You decide where to go and what actions to take. Sometimes an action’s outcome is uncertain. This is where the hero’s attributes and skills come into play. We explain skill use later, but for now, let’s take a look at your hero’s eight *attributes*. They are COU (Courage), SGC (Sagacity), CHA (Charisma), INT (Intuition), DEX (Dexterity), CON (Constitution), and STR (Strength). Each attribute has a value. The higher the value, the better the hero performs with that attribute. For example, a hero with a high STR and a low SGC is strong but not very smart, and a hero with a high INT and low COU is sensitive but cowardly.

When an action’s outcome is uncertain, you make an *attribute check*. In this case, you must determine whether the hero notices something, so the text instructs you to make an INT check. If you are using the character provided with this book, your hero has an INT of 14. To make an attribute check, roll one twenty-sided die (1D20 for short). If the result is less than or equal to your attribute’s value, the check succeeds. If the result is greater than your attribute’s value, the check fails.

Some checks must apply bonuses or penalties. For example, this check suffers a penalty of 2. A penalty reduces the effective value of the attribute for the duration of the check, while a bonus raises the effective value of the relevant attribute. In this case, the penalty of 2 means that you must roll 12 or less instead of the 14 you would otherwise need to succeed. Any result higher than 12 means that your check fails. Whether your check succeeds or fails determines which section you turn to next.

130

“Well, friend,” he says, “we must make a decision and act quickly, since the criminals have been warned. I will inform the City Guard while you search the warehouse. It is in Salterel Alley, first building on the right at the quay wall. You can hardly miss the place, as the name *Tagkrammer* is written above the side door. Take a look around there, friend. I will follow soon.”

You are excited. The night promises to be interesting. There might be some money in it, and maybe you can perform a service for your neighborhood. You go happily on your way (222).

131

Even though there aren't many good handholds, you manage to climb the front of the neighboring building quite quickly. You hold your breath as a boat drifts out of the fog, but the gray mist and the darkness keep you from being discovered. You exhale slowly and then jump gracefully to a narrow jetty in front of the building. You sneak on until you reach the large double door, which, to your great joy, has been left ajar. You don't hear a sound inside, so you dare to enter (175).

Noise Points

You enter through the southern door on the ground floor. A floor plan of the warehouse is at the end of the book. It reflects what Rogobald has told your hero about the building, and you can use it to orient yourself while you search. The map also includes a set of seven circles labeled *Noise Points*. When you take certain actions or fail certain rolls, you must mark off one or more of these Noise Points. When all the circles are full and you must cross off yet another Noise Point, turn to section 127, regardless of what else happens in the section you are reading.

132

You pull open the door and charge inside. The young girl looks at you with fear. Golden curls frame her pale face. Her rosy cheeks and clever eyes are the only specks of color on her white skin. You wonder whether this child has ever been allowed to see the light of Praios' Eye.

You try to think of some calming words but the girl begins to scream louder and more shrilly than you thought possible. You cover your ears and almost miss the sound of quick steps coming up behind you. You feel a sharp pain at the back of your head and black out. The child's horrible screams fade away... (49)

133

The door is open just a bit. You peek inside but can't see anything. There are no sources of light inside, but you think that you can see wooden shelves that have been covered with wire mesh.

If you slip inside, turn to section 187. If you retreat, turn to section 168.

134

This time you resist the urge to admire the puppets stored here and leave the room at once (37).

135

You seem to remember that striped sharks normally hunt prey their own size—fish, seals, and careless birds floating on the surface. They attack larger prey only when they are desperate or hunting in packs. This shark seems to be alone, and you hope that he will be impressed by your size. You turn, stretch out your arms and legs, and move slowly towards it, trying not to think about those rows of teeth. The shark gets dangerously close but then turns away. Relieved, you thrust yourself upwards and escape to the spectator seats (150).

136

You check the armchairs top-to-bottom, looking for any irregularities. Once you decide that they're safe, you sit down in one of them. How did they manage to make them so soft? You lean back, close your eyes, and enjoy the silence for a time... zzzzz...

You wake with a start. These armchairs are wicked traps for an exhausted, inattentive burglar... zzzzz...

Shaking yourself awake again, you stand up and move away from the chairs, feeling triumphant at having escaped such a perfidious trap (66).

137

You throw a strong but clumsy kick at Rogobald and miss. You were simply too angry and too desperate to focus. You have never felt so afraid and helpless.

Without a word, Rogobald punches you in the face with enough strength to knock over the chair. The impact knocks the air from your lungs (76).

138

You hit the soft grass with your feet and do a graceful shoulder roll. Luckily you did not land on the cobblestones just a few feet away. Phex helps those who know how to help themselves!

You pick yourself up and disappear through the gap between two houses (170).

139

You open the door quietly and return to the corridor (168).

140

Warm candlelight streams through a finger-wide gap beneath the door. You hear sounds coming from inside. Do you want to sneak inside quickly (190), peek through the keyhole (56), or look somewhere else (100)?

141

You shiver. Why do you always get taken in just because somebody flatters you and promises you money? You have tried breaking into buildings before just because a so-called friend told you to. That first time, you were caught by the servants, and you were lucky to end up badly beaten instead of in the hands of the City Guard.

Your second try ended fifteen feet above the cobblestones on the slippery front wall of the house you tried to enter. You screamed as you slipped and fell, and the heap of straw you landed in kept you well hidden from the inhabitants that woke up to investigate the disturbance. You made it out of that one with only a broken leg.

"That's it," Rogobald whispers into your ear conspiratorially as you retreat around the corner of the opposite house. Like the kontors on either side, the building you want to break into has four floors, double doors facing both the street and the channel, and pulleys for moving wares into the second floor of the building through wooden hatches that are now closed.

"The pulleys are too high up to reach," Rogobald explains. "Even if you could reach them, I would not suggest entering through the upper floor. Yes, the fog

is now covering the second floor and would therefore hide you, but if it lifts for just a brief moment, you would be left hanging, so to speak, and visible to all. Plus, we don't know how well the hatches have been secured." You nod in agreement.

He continues, "The door on the front is no doubt locked, but maybe you can use this." He hands you a small iron lock pick (record this on your character sheet). "The entrance facing the channel may be less secured—if at all—but to get there, you must sneak through the alley and climb back along its facade just above the water line. It's risky, but it could get you inside."

You scratch your chin in thought. Simply entering the building will be difficult enough, but that was to be expected for a reward of 40 golden ducats. "What else do I need to know?" you ask. "Where will I find the freight documents?"

"I do not know for sure," your employer admits. "I



believe that the building is a typical Havenan kontor. The ground floor, which serves as the warehouse, has a 16' ceiling. The second floor probably has smaller storage rooms for precious cargo—hence the need for the hatch and the pulleys. Most traders use the third floor as office space and as accommodations for any workers who sleep in the kontor. I would store items of great value there, but only if they were secured... Most people use the top floor only to store items that are resistant to the weather.”

“All right,” you nod, trying to push away your doubts and gather your courage. “Then I will begin. We will meet at the arranged place, and I will bring your freight documents.”

“May Phex be with you,” Rogobald says in a whisper, and he disappears into the alley.

Do you want to try your luck with the entrance facing the street (199), or the one facing the channel (77)?

142

You slam into Rogobald. He stumbles, using the workbench to catch himself. Before he can right himself, you are upon him. You may make a free attack that Rogobald cannot parry. Then regular combat rounds begin (16).

143

The lid opens with a loud creak. Startled, you look around, but nobody comes to investigate. The chest contains simple bolts of linen. Stealing linen does not seem very interesting, so you close the lid as quietly as possible.

Record a Noise Point and return to section 175.

144

With a soft clinking sound, the brittle pick breaks in the lock. You curse. You feel that you are very close to your goal, but you just cannot open that damn door.

You look around in disappointment and see the thin legs of an older man. Looking up, you see that he clutches a large tome in his bony fingers. He lifts the book, and you see anger and fear in his eyes. Then he slams the book down on your brow, making your head snap back. Even though the blow does not manage to knock you out, you are struck senseless when the back of your head hits the wooden door frame. You go limp (49).

145

The doorknob is covered in a thick layer of dust, and a very old spider web stretches across the door frame. This door is clearly not opened often, but at least it is unlocked. You enter the dark chamber, which contains nothing but some empty shelves. No, wait. A canning jar sits on one shelf, reflecting the light from outside. You close the door and cast the room in darkness again. The floor feels soft, but not because of carpet. You kneel down and discover that even the wooden boards are covered in a thick layer of dust.

Suddenly, two wooden shutters fly open on the south wall. For a brief moment, the pale light of Mada shines into the room. Then the shutters slam closed.

Your heart pounds. This spooky scene has given you quite a fright. Then you hear a low voice coming from the darkness in front of you.

“I am the one they call the vampire,” it says, “because I thirst for blood.”

Make a Courage check! If you succeed, turn to section 83. If not, turn to section 29.

146

It doesn't take you long to reach the western part of the building. Before you can dive down to the entrance, you admire the artfully-carved wooden beams above the waterline. Neither time nor water has damaged them. You see small figurines and elaborate masks in the carvings. They don't tell a story, but they do give an impression of the virtuosity and creativity you can expect in the puppet theater.

After taking a deep breath, you push off from the side and swim down to the door with two fast strokes. It hangs from its hinges and poses no real obstacle.

With relief, you push yourself inside and try to find your way. You reach a large room through a narrow corridor. A flat pedestal sits in front of you, and behind you is what looks like a steep staircase. You don't need much imagination to picture the colorful stage and the audience, which would have been seated behind you near the stairs.

Before the great flood, this dark corridor led customers into the world of the puppet theater. Crowds of curious spectators climbed the steps while puppeteers hid behind props to present a play with hand or stick

puppets, or even marionettes controlled from wooden scaffolding which you can barely make out under the dark roof.

You are just about to surface when you see something out of the corner of your eye. Is something moving in the shadows (211)?

147

Time might be running short, but you should not rush things. You could hide behind a bush on the other side of the street and keep an eye on the house (116). Or, if you think hiding is just a big waste of time, decide whether you should enter the building (90) or abandon your plan (50).

148

Rogobald does not respond to your futile pleading or to your threats and curses. Instead, he takes a rusty saw from a drawer and stands up. "Oh, I would like to let her go, friend," he says. "Yes, I almost regret having kidnapped her. But she is the most important part of my plan."

"What plan?" you ask (172).

149

With the grace of a cat, you jump to a crate and from there to the wall, using your momentum to carry you up. You swing your legs like a pendulum and wind up sitting on the wall, which is much wider than it looked.

You look down from where you are sitting and think you see the sparkling surface of a body of water. A channel on the other side of the wall is probably too narrow to navigate but definitely too wide to jump. Running along the wall seems to be your only option for escape. To your right, the coping ends at a three-story warehouse. Its unwelcoming outer wall offers almost no handholds. To your left, the wall extends so far that its end is lost in the gray of the fog. You notice a second wall that meets yours at a right angle. Behind that wall, you would gain at least some temporary shelter from your pursuers, even though it is only a few bricks wide.

Before anybody can see you, you balance at the intersection of two walls. One more step....

Skill Checks with Bonuses

A skill check with a bonus is almost the same as an unmodified skill check. The only difference is that the bonus increases the effective value of *all three* attributes for the duration of the check. This *Climbing (Walls)* check is made as before, but this time, the relevant attributes each count as three greater.

Make another check using *Climbing (Walls)* (COU/AGI/STR), this time with a bonus of 3. If you succeed, turn to section 203. If you fail, turn to section 72.

150

You are standing on the highest row of spectator seats in a small puppet theater – or at least that is what it looks like it used to be. Now the room is mostly flooded. The only parts that remain above water are the highest bleachers on the audience side and a large wooden scaffolding on the opposite wall where the puppeteers once worked.

The fog lifts a bit and the light of Mada's Sign filters in through the ceiling, casting the room in gray twilight. There isn't much up here but it would be dangerous to enter the water, judging from the shark's fin that breaks the water occasionally, and you really don't want to deal with that.

Luckily, another door leads to the other half of the building (115).

151

You love rummaging through other people's dressers. They contain so many interesting and worthwhile things just waiting to be stolen. Usually the contents of dresser drawers can tell you much about their owners. These drawers tell you mainly that the owner of the desk has the most boring job in the world. The average life expectancy of a typical dragon slayer, warlord, or pirate must be less than half that of the average trader, but if you had to work here, you would surely feel the need to drown yourself in the channel after one day to escape the torture.

There are enough invoices, balance sheets, exchange rate lists, tax assessments, import laws, and trade partner correspondences here to bore you to death several times over. You find no secret door and no locked drawer...Even a stuck drawer would offer some excitement, but no, there is nothing. You are sure that you have just searched the least exciting desk in all of Aventuria.

You turn away in disappointment (66).

152

The wooden floor of the warehouse must consist of about a hundred boards, but you are lucky enough to step on the only one that creaks loudly. You are sure that you have just alerted everyone in the house.

Record a Noise Point and turn to section 80.

153

Just as you start to jump, you notice a pulley off to the left that might help break your fall. At the last moment you push yourself to the side, sail through the air, and grab the metal hook at the end of the rope. You swing outward and then back again, smashing against the kontor's outer wall. You lose your grip, slip from the hook, and fall 15' to the street, hitting the ground hard. Your uncontrolled landing sends a jolt through your bones, and you wind up with gashes in your knee and

elbow. Reduce your life points by 5. You slowly get to your feet (63).

154

"Trode, is your shift over already?" you ask, knowing how stupid your question sounds. You sit on the stool next to Trode, order three jugs of mead, and toss a silverthaler on the bar.

"What are you up to?" Alrik asks suspiciously. "You know that we aren't on duty. Are you trying to find out who is patrolling tonight? Or whether a crackdown is planned?" You open your eyes wide and wave away the accusation.

Trode lowers his head conspiratorially and whispers, "Information like that would be worth a lot more, if you know what I mean..."

You try to play innocent. "No, no, I am an honest burgher," you start to say, but the guards' loud laughter interrupts you. Trode wipes a tear from his eyes, and Alrik remarks with a chuckle that this was the funniest thing he has heard in a long time.

"Mead, and then entertainment. Now we owe you one, boy," Alrik says, still trying to control his laughter. "What do you want to know?"

What do you want to ask the guards?



"Is there any news about the bodies?" (68)
"What can you tell me about the Vampire?" (24)
"Am I in trouble?" (185)
"You haven't yet told me whether your shift is over."
(117)

155

This is the smallest room on this floor. It is illuminated by half a dozen candles. All the items necessary to clean the kontor are stowed carefully in the corner. A staircase leads to the upper floor. Do you want to climb to the upper floor (62) or look around (201)?

156

As anybody in the L-shaped corridor would be on the way to the hen-house anyway, you hurry out without a backward glance. Luckily nobody is here, and the clucking of the chickens fades away. Maybe next time you will stumble into a dog kennel... (168).

157

Even though there aren't many good handholds, you manage to climb the front of the neighboring building quite quickly. You hold your breath as a boat drifts out of the fog, but the gray mist and the darkness keep you from being discovered. You exhale slowly, jump gracefully to a narrow jetty in front of the building, and then slip on the wet wood. With a groan you smash down onto the planks. You wait to see if there is any reaction, but your fall seems to have gone unnoticed.

You get back to your feet and sneak on until you reach the large double door, which, to your great joy, has been left ajar. You don't hear a sound inside, so you dare to enter (175).

Noise Points

You enter through the southern door on the ground floor. A floor plan of the warehouse is at the end of the book. It reflects what Rogobald has told your hero about the building, and you can use it to orient yourself while you search. The map also includes a set of seven circles labeled *Noise Points*. When you take certain actions or fail certain rolls, you must mark off one or more of these Noise Points. When all the circles are full and you must cross off yet another Noise Point, turn to section 127, regardless of what else happens in the section you are reading.

158

You ask Klabauter to describe the man, and receive a good description of Rogobald of Garlishgrotz, the man who hired you to break into Tagkrammer's kontor and find some freight documents.

"He wrote something above the door?" you ask curiously.

"Yes, he did," Klabauter says. "But I have not read it. It is above the northern door, on the outside wall."

Rogobald wrote Tagkrammer's name on the warehouse? Why would he do that? You sit down on a crate, accidentally crushing an empty box as you do so, and gather your thoughts.

Someone—you are beginning to doubt that he is who he claims he is—contacted you and hired you for a burglary. Unfortunately, the kontor was full of so many people that your break-in was bound to fail, especially as you are hardly an expert in the field. Your chances of stealing the papers were bad from the beginning—if the papers ever even existed.

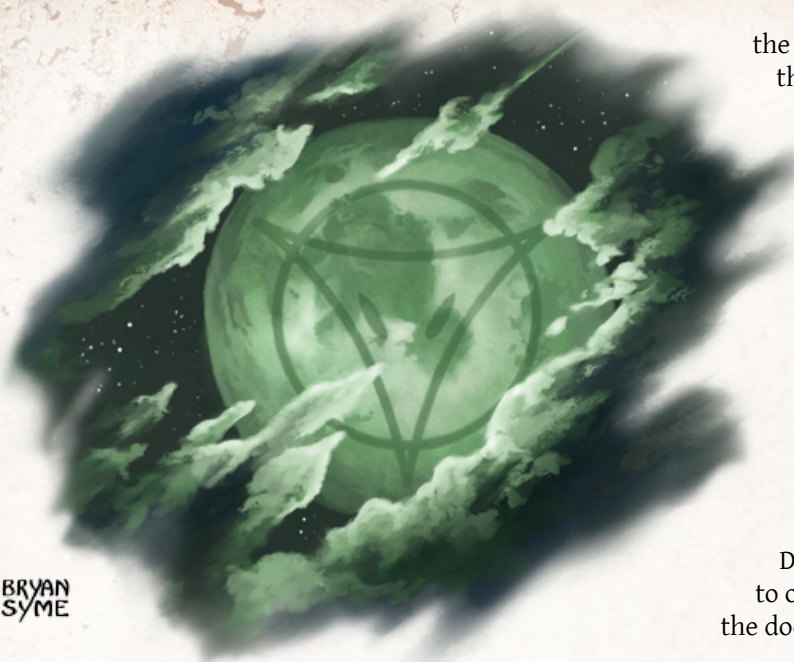
Why were you really hired to break into Tagkrammer's kontor? You are quite sure that you don't know the real reason. When you met Rogobald for the second time, you literally ran into him, and he seemed surprised to see you. Then he sent you here, to search this ruined warehouse that he himself marked with the name *Tagkrammer*. Your search might have taken the whole night if you hadn't met Klabauter by chance. Rogobald probably does not know that he exists. You are sure that the burglary is part of a bigger plan. Maybe it was supposed to fail? You are also sure that Rogobald wanted to keep you busy all night, probably because he was planning something that he did not want you to disturb...

A quiet whistle startles you, and you look up. Klabauter climbs back inside through a hole in the roof and then makes his way back down to you with great leaps from one pile of crates to the next.

"I have told you," he says, "that sometimes city guards come here because they suspect that somebody might be up to something." You nod. You think that you now know what the klabautermann is trying to tell you.

"Well, tonight seems to be such an evening," you agree (45).

BRYAN
SYME



159

The ruined temple to Efferd must have been a splendid building. Majestic marble pillars once supported the ceiling in the main hall, and a giant bust of Efferd, lord of the sea, used to adorn the altar. Gwen-Petryl stones would have been set in braziers, filling the room with their cold, bluish light. Not much remains of that old splendor now. The roof has collapsed, a third of the statue has sunk into the muddy ground, and the pillars stand at such odd angles that you doubt their stability. A cold gust of wind rushes through the ruins, making you shiver. Did a shadow just move?

Startled, you draw your weapon and begin to move further into the ruin. If there is really a vampire in Havena, who says that he cannot attack you from ambush?

Do you proceed down the middle of the ruined hall (96), or stay in the shadows close to the wall (60)?

160

Do you want to look at the painting on the north wall (91), the east wall (7), or the south wall (214)?

When you are finished with the art, you leave the room (121).

161

You shout. It sounds barely human, filled with so much anger and desperation. You have never felt so afraid and helpless. Without a word, Rogobald punches you in

the face with enough strength to knock over the chair. The impact knocks the air from your lungs (76).

162

The guards are also busy talking with somebody, so you retreat to the empty table in the corner (48).

163

You study the door curiously. It is not much different than the others, but the doorknob and lock are of a higher quality.

Do you peek through the keyhole (70), try to open the door with a pick (19), or ignore the door (100)?

164

You ignore the room's furniture as you sprint to the door and push it open. Beyond you see an iron cage with a blond girl within. Out of the corner of your eye you see a shadow. A massive body slams you from behind and throws you to the ground (14).

165

"Well, friend, it's in Salterel Alley, first building on the right at the quay wall. You can hardly miss it, as the name *Tagkrammer* is written above the side door. Take a look around there, friend. We'll meet again at midnight in the Heroes' Refuge."

That man is really very naive, you think to yourself.

Of course you will take this second chance. If you find the papers there, Rogobald need never know how badly you failed your attempt to break into Tagkrammer's kontor. And even if this second attempt fails, this naive man will not doubt your integrity. You go happily on your way (222).

166

You remind yourself to be careful as you sprint down the alley. Even though luck was on your side tonight and nobody was harmed (well, besides a few dead fish), you cannot afford to be careless. Aventuria is a dangerous place. It might have few many princesses to save, and even less treasure to find—at least, that is how it seems to you, especially when you consider your always-empty purse—but there are probably lots of dragons guarding their golden hoards jealously.

You have never seen a real dragon, but you know they are real, just as you believe in the Twelvegods. And of those, *Phex*, the lord of thieves, has always been your favorite. You have never seen him manifest—how could you, since he lives among the other gods in a splendid place called *Alveran*—but you can always feel him near you. *Phex* supports those who are cunning and know how to help themselves.

You always had a knack for helping yourself, even though you have rarely left Havena's harbor district. You have certainly never seen the mysterious Undercity, which is rumored to conceal demon-worshipping cultists. It is a known refuge for the enchanting green- and blue-skinned merfolk, and you have heard many tales of sea monsters inhabiting the Undercity, too. Several years ago, the City Guard drove a living sea serpent away from there—or so you have been told.

You realize that you have heard much more about the world than you have seen yourself. The Empress? She lives in remote Gareth, capital of the Middenrealm. Mages? They are supposed to live everywhere, but magic is forbidden in Havena, so you do not know if you have ever met one. Dwarves? People say they exist, too, but they live in dark mines beneath giant mountains and cannot swim. It is no wonder that they avoid the harbor. Elves, witches, mermaids? Well... (94)

Aventurian Terms

The Dark Eye is set in Aventuria, a fascinating continent brimming with adventure. The land's many kingdoms use many currencies and measurements. There are gods, mystical creatures, and famous personalities—each with their own names or special terms. If you encounter a term you don't recognize, don't worry. Most terms appear more than once, and their meaning should become clear from context. Some Aventurian terms, such as the names of gods, are explained where they occur, while others are summarized here.

The harbor city of Havena is part of the Middenrealm, a traditional feudal kingdom with a temperate climate. For currency, people use *ducats*, *silverthalers*, *halers*, and *kreutzers*. 1 ducat = 10 silverthalers = 100 halers = 1,000 kreutzers. *Kontors* are trading posts owned by foreign merchants. They are part headquarters, part warehouse, and part showroom (and

sometimes even part residence, depending on the owning family's preferences).

Middenrealms measure distances in feet, yards, and Midden-miles (one Midden-mile is equal to one kilometer).

Believers in the Twelvegods do not normally use the word "sun." Instead, they tend to refer to that hot, glowing object in the sky as *Praios' Disc* or *Praios' Eye*, in honor of *Praios*, the lord of the gods. Similarly, people normally refer to the moon as *Mada's Sign* or a variant thereof.

167

Make a *Feat of Strength (Breaking & Smashing)* check with a penalty of 3 (CON/STR/STR).

If the check succeeds, turn to section 74. If the check fails, turn to section 216.

168

You are in an L-shaped corridor illuminated by four candles that are almost completely burned down. As you round the corner, you see four doors in the otherwise empty hallway.

The doors lead to the north-west (133), north-east (55), south-west (196), and south-east (18). You also notice a rather large, heavy wooden hatch in the northern wall (89). Of course, you can also return to ground floor via the creaking staircase (194).

169

You kneel down quietly and peer through the keyhole, but you can't see anything. Somebody must have hung something in front of the keyhole. You listen to the argument for a few moments more, but you cannot see inside.

If you ignore the door, turn to section 100. If you choose to open it, turn to section 53.

170

"Maybe I should avoid running through narrow alleys in the dark," you think to yourself. Just as you leave the alley, another shadow rushes towards you. This one is larger than that other shadow, which proved to be the Thorwaler...

Something hits your head hard, and you black out (33).

171

The shelves hold some interesting souvenirs from foreign countries. A bottle holds a model of a Bornish ship that bobs on magical waves breaking against the bottle's sides. You also see the pelvic bone of a large human (or maybe a small ogre), an ornate, curved dagger from the Lands of the Tulamydes, a can smelling of exotic herbs from the Forest Islands, an exotic orcish horn, an arrow made by firnelves (if you believe the label), and a model of the City of Light in Gareth from the years after the disaster, when parts of an elvish flying city had crashed down. In addition to those exciting items, you see large tomes thick layers of dust. Their heavy spines bear titles such as *Math for Traders*, and *The Compendium of Cabbage, Wood—Resource of the Future*, and also *Merchant Prince and Peddler—Aventurian Economics*. Titles like these should keep anybody from opening them. However, it does not seem likely that the papers are hidden in these books, so you decide to look somewhere else (66).

172

"You must think I am a monster," Rogobald begins, "because I have done many things no man should ever do." You look at him quizzically.

"Don't act stupid," he admonishes you. "The two red-heads in the basin, the elf, the mermaid—I am the one that people call the Vampire of Havena." Rogobald enjoys a chuckle at the expression on your face.

"Yes, who would have thought it was Old Surgander, a man as unremarkable as the silver signet rings he sells."

"So your name was a lie," you conclude.

"In part. Rogobald is my name. I lied only about my last name. And my social standing. And my occupation as a trader, my false eyebrows, and this (mostly false) nose. My plan required some cunning deceptions, but thanks to you, it succeeded. Again I thank you, friend."

You are staggered. You had your doubts about taking this job without knowing all the details, but now the full implication hits you like a sack of bricks.

"Don't look so sad, my friend." Rogobald pauses for a long moment, weighing the saw in his hand. Then he pats Murna's shoulder, leans down to her ear and says in a low voice, "I think he deserves to learn more. You won't run away, my darling, will you?" With a chuckle

he turns back to you. A tear runs down the girl's cheek, and she whimpers quietly.

"I have already told you that I killed the red-haired girls, the elf, and the mermaid. I wish it did not have to be so, but none of them was the right person. And then that dolt Tagkrammer asked me to replace his old seal with a new one. That is when I saw her. Little Murna... and her gift." You don't understand what Rogobald is talking about, but you decide not to interrupt him.

"I had hoped to get to Murna alone," he continues, "but old Tagkrammer keeps her hidden from the public. The little princess almost never leaves the house. Her own father keeps her locked in her room, like a little bird in a golden cage. I never could have managed to kidnap Murna from the Tagkrammers' kontor without your help."

"My help?" You blurt out before you can stop yourself.

"It was not hard to find the most incompetent burglar around, one who was poor and desperate enough to be fooled easily. I am no rich trader, and old Tagkrammer has never stolen any papers from me. It was all a ruse to convince you to break into the kontor. I waited on the other side of the street for the inevitable outcome. Your amateurish attempt went as expected, friend."

"The burglary was supposed to fail?"

"Yes—and it did. I knew that the break-in would unnerve old Tagkrammer. It did not take much to force him out of the kontor with his beloved Murna. It was I who fired the crossbow bolt, threw the stone with the burning rag through the window, and faked an attack on the kontor. Nervous Tagkrammer had no choice but to flee the kontor with his daughter. And once he did so, capturing her was a simple matter."

"Why didn't you simply disappear then? Why did you have me search the warehouse?" you ask. Rogobald furrows his brow, takes a deep breath, and gives you a paternal smile.

"Up to that point," he explains, "my plan had gone well. But I never expected you to get out of the chaos, friend. You should have been captured and handed over to the City Guard. But you fled and ran into me—quite literally. I had hoped that you would stay unconscious for a while. I barely managed to hide Murna in a nearby crate before you woke up and

started telling me about your various failures. The best course of action then was to have the City Guard catch you red-handed in the alleged Tagkrammer warehouse when they arrived to investigate my tip about a smuggling ring. I do not know how you managed to escape and find your way here.” Rogobald interrupts his thought with a hoarse laugh, “but now at least you can see the brilliance of my plan.”

You decide that you want to know more.

“Why did you kill those people?” (54)

“Why weren’t the other victims good enough?” (197)

“Murna has a gift?” (35)

173

You leave the temple behind and try to orientate yourself. Ahead of you, a few houses rise out of a stinking, foggy moor, lonely memorials of times past. The raftsman mentioned that you could find a path through the ruins there, so you walk towards their weathered walls. The path is actually a flooded street, but you manage to stay dry by leaping agilely from one upper floor to the next. At one point you must jump over a narrow alley and then crawl over a shattered bridge by balancing on a plank that groans under your weight.

And then suddenly you come across a wooden chest. Is it one of those legendary treasure chests you dreamed about as a child? It is just sitting out in the open in a dangerous area, after all. But there no dragon guards it. There is not even a gargoyle around to remind you of those scaly beasts.

Do you want to open the chest (215)? Or is it a trap to lure the greedy? Perhaps it would be smarter to simply ignore it (82).

174

Just as you start to jump, you notice a pulley off to the left that might help break your fall. At the last moment you push yourself to the side, sail through the air, and grab the metal hook at the end of the rope. You swing outward and then back again, smashing against the kontor’s outer wall. For a brief moment you dangle 15’ above the street. Then the pulley slips and you begin to fall, faster and faster as the rope plays out. You land roughly, but the rope slowed your fall enough to prevent serious injury. You pick yourself up (63).

175

You are in the northern half of the large warehouse, which takes up almost all of the ground floor. There is an exit, a tall double door, on the north wall. All the light in the room comes from two oil lamps that hang on supporting columns in the center of the warehouse, cloaking the room in flickering twilight.

When your eyes adjust to the dim light, you see piles of sacks and crates. You notice a smaller room in the northeastern corner of the warehouse. You can take a closer look at the smaller room (126), inspect the crates (64), or inspect the sacks (188). You can also sneak into the southern half of the warehouse (205) or exit through the door in the north wall (39).

176

With determination you push open the door. It bangs loudly against a commode. You glance quickly around. A child’s ornate bed and a colorful rocking horse sit against the windowless room’s opposite wall. A broad shelf holds at least a hundred wooden dolls. A carved wardrobe, a large table, two comfortable chairs, and a vast collection of toys round out the furniture.

Among all of this sits the most incredible child you have ever seen. She looks at you fearfully, her pale face framed by golden curls. Her rosy cheeks and clever eyes are the only specks of color on her white skin. You wonder whether she has ever been allowed to see the light of Praios’ Eye. But even stranger than her pale skin is the thick iron collar around her neck. You think that even orcs would not treat their captives so cruelly—especially not a child.

You try to think of some calming words but the girl begins to scream louder and more shrilly than you thought possible. You cover your ears and almost miss the sound of quick steps coming up behind you. You feel a sharp pain at the back of your head and black out. The child’s horrible screams fade away... (49)

177

The lock snaps open with a clicking sound. You return the small tool to your pocket and slip through the door. Nobody else is in here, but the windowless room is lit by two lanterns that hold thick candles. You close the door behind you and take a look around.

Other than the small table with the two lanterns and a big reading chair covered in greasy leather, the room

seems to be empty. Then you notice three picture frames hanging on the walls. Each is covered with a heavy cloth (160).

178

Your left foot slips and you lose your balance and fall into the water, your arms flailing. The cold water is unpleasant, but at least you don't hurt yourself.

With a bit of disappointment, you gaze up at the tree trunk a few feet above you, so close and yet unreachable. Even if you could grab it, you could not pull yourself up. You have no choice but to use the house entrances that lie beneath the surface of the water.

If you try the door to the theater, turn to section 146. If you try the path to the adjacent building, turn to section 209.

179

The lids are nailed shut, but handily, you find a hatchet leaning against one of the barrels.

If you use the hatchet to open the barrels, turn to section 71. If you ignore the barrels, turn to section 80.

180

You charge towards Rogobald. He sidesteps and uses your momentum against you, pushing you into the marionettes. The dolls shatter from the impact and you get tangled in the thin strings. Rogobald makes two free attacks against you (which you can neither parry nor dodge). Afterwards, you can defend yourself normally (16).

181

"Over there!"

The angry shout is followed by another, and your pursuers' footsteps change from a steady walk to a quick run. Time to get away. You ignore your burning muscles and the pain in your hips as you run down the side alley. At the end of the street the neighborhood changes over to simple huts of fishers. Nets are stretched out to dry between some houses, and coils of rope create tripping hazards on the slippery cobblestones. A short distance ahead, the road takes a sharp bend. Most of the huts are dark, but after you accidentally knock over a bucket, causing it to roll

noisily through the alley, you get the feeling that some residents might be watching you now. You come to a cross street. Make an INT check with a penalty of 2.

If you succeed, turn to section 218. If you fail, turn to section 27.

Attributes and Attribute Checks

Just as when playing *The Dark Eye*, you make most of the decisions in this solo adventure. You decide where to go and what actions to take. Sometimes an action's outcome is uncertain. This is where the hero's attributes and skills come into play. We explain skill use later, but for now, let's take a look at your hero's eight *attributes*. They are COU (Courage), SGC (Sagacity), CHA (Charisma), INT (Intuition), DEX (Dexterity), CON (Constitution), and STR (Strength). Each attribute has a value. The higher the value, the better the hero performs with that attribute. For example, a hero with a high STR and a low SGC is strong but not very smart, and a hero with a high INT and low COU is sensitive but cowardly.

When an action's outcome is uncertain, you make an *attribute check*. In this case, you must determine whether the hero notices something, so the text instructs you to make an INT check. If you are using the character provided with this book, your hero has an INT of 14. To make an attribute check, roll one twenty-sided die (1D20 for short). If the result is less than or equal to your attribute's value, the check succeeds. If the result is greater than your attribute's value, the check fails.

Some checks must apply bonuses or penalties. For example, this check suffers a penalty of 2. A penalty reduces the effective value of the attribute for the duration of the check, while a bonus raises the effective value of the relevant attribute. In this case, the penalty of 2 means that you must roll 12 or less instead of the 14 you would otherwise need to succeed. Any result higher than 12 means that your check fails. Whether your check succeeds or fails determines which section you turn to next.

182

You carefully open the door carefully. You have trouble finding your way in the hazy light. In the dim light you can make out a large wardrobe, a bearskin rug on the floor, a comfortable armchair, a small table, two high shelves, a large bed, countless blankets, an old man, a small table with a candle, two large books...

The man's frightened scream makes you jump. How stupid of you! You walk backwards slowly while making calming gestures with your hands, but you trip on the bear's head, lose your balance, fall down, and smash your head against the corner of the wardrobe. It is almost a mercy that you black out and won't have to think about blood and throbbing pain (49).

183

The stairs, or at least the two first steps, look solid. You must proceed carefully, since the light grows dimmer as you climb. The stairs are thick and sturdy—well, all but one, anyway. That step makes a horrible creaking sound when you put your weight on it. Record two Noise Points and turn to section 42.

184

You draw your dagger, push yourself off from the lowest stair, and glide towards the shark (8).

185

"Hmm," Trode murmurs in thought, "I have no idea. You, Alrik?" The other guard grumbles but also shakes his head in thought.

"Do you have a clear conscience?" Trode asks, his voice surprisingly sharp.

"Of course!" you reply, trying to sound calm, not indignant. For a long moment the two guards stare coldly at you. Finally they start to laugh.

"Then all is well!" they say. "Now do us a favor and get out of here, before we hurt ourselves laughing."

You don't react immediately, so Trode pushes you off the stool (210).

186

You are standing on a narrow wooden scaffolding that is similar to others you have seen being used in the harbor to change shingles and repair chimneys and the

like. A large hole in the ceiling admits a little of Mada's light, allowing you to look around.

This room used to be the auditorium of a puppet theater, but now it is almost completely flooded. On the south wall, you can see the upper end of the auditorium steps between the seats, which are mostly under water. You are standing on the scaffolding that was used by the puppeteers during their performances. You could easily jump into the water from here, but the striped shark's fin that occasionally breaks the surface makes you think twice about that.

Luckily, a hatch in the east wall leads to the next room (22).

187

You push yourself quickly into the room. There is enough light to take a closer look at the shelves. The whole room is stacked with crates that contain... live chickens! Be careful. If they notice you....

Too late! The birds wake up and cluck loudly. Record three Noise Points. If you leave quickly, the birds might calm down—that way, if their chattering summons one of the inhabitants of the kontor, at least you won't be here (156). Or you could stay and take a look around (32).

188

You kneel down in front of one of the linen sacks and start working on the rough rope that ties it shut. It takes you a long time to undo the knot, but you finally succeed. When you open the sack, woolen fluff flies everywhere, spreading quickly around the room and tickling your nose. Make a *Self-Control (Ignore Disturbances)* check (COU/COU/CON)!

If you succeed, turn to section 109. If you fail, turn to section 5.

189

Once Klabauter calms down, you tell him a story about a ring of drug traffickers and human traders that pursues its dark machinations right here in the storehouse (when you tell a dramatic story, you like to do it right). You conclude your tale with a dramatic search for hidden evidence.

Klabauter scratches his chin while listening to you. When you finish, he grins at you and begins to laugh.

Minutes later, when he can speak again without making squeaking noises, he wipes the tears from his eyes and asks, "Who told you this nonsense, bonehead?" Even though that last word stings, you don't say anything. Instead, you look at him quizzically. Now that you think about it, the term *bonehead* might be appropriate, after all...

"Evil conspirators are meeting here, between *these* crates?" Klabauter says as he gestures grandiosely, "And you say that they are hiding evidence against themselves here?" He shakes his head. "I have lived here for twenty years, ever since my friend Leirix first showed me the place. The Tagkrammer family does

not own this house. Leirix said that it used to belong to a trader named Rastbürger, or something like that. The only humans that ever found their way here were some guards who were investigating a report of dark machinations. There was never any truth behind it, though."

He huffs in contempt. You expect him to rail against the city guards who rummaged through his belongings, but instead he just gazes slowly around.

"And then there was the man who wrote something over the door," he adds, almost as an afterthought.

Your ears prick up at the mention of writing (158).

190

You pull down the door handle, push open the door, and charge inside. You barely notice the furniture because all of your attention rests on the woman who stands in the center of the room with her back towards you. Her long, red hair falls around her shoulders as her blouse slips off her shoulder and lands on the bed. You have interrupted her as she was undressing. You should have knocked...

But you didn't. You try to stop your momentum, but it is too late. You stumble forward without control. The woman spins around, sees you, and punches you in the nose. You collapse, hit your head on the floorboards, and black out. You really should have knocked... (49).

191

You almost scream, but stop yourself just in time, for there is no danger here. Your initial feeling of panic gives way to a childish joy that you haven't felt for years, now that you realize where you are (1).

192

"We play Svellt Valley dice boltan," a toothless sailor explains to you, noisily slobbering a mixture of spit and chewing tobacco on the table. "The stake is one silverthaler per round." He looks at you dismissively and adds, "Cheaters go swimming in the harbor basin with a rock tied to their feet. Do you understand?"

Do you nod and sit down (12) or would you prefer to move on? If so, the red-haired woman is talking with an older man, but you could sit down to chat with the guards (154).



193

"No! You have already told me three different stories—do you think I am stupid?" you ask indignantly.

Rogobald begins to look angry and snarls, "You aren't smart enough to know when to obey." His fist smashes into your nose. Blackness surrounds you as you drop to the floor, unconscious. The punch causes 3 DP. Reduce your life points by three. If your life points fall to 0 or less as a result, turn to section 2. If not, turn to section 108.

194

You know that old stairs can be very noisy, and you try to sneak down as quietly as possible. Nevertheless, you must record a Noise Point (80).

195

"Have you never seen a klabautermann?" Klabauter asks jovially, as if he had never been angry with you. This klabautermann is just like the ones in those stories told by sailors—erratic like a flood, and moody like the ocean.

"No," you admit. "But I would never expect to meet a klabautermann in a warehouse. I thought klabautermann lived on ships." You regret your words at once as the little man begins to cry. Big tears run down his wrinkled, greenish-blue cheeks. You know you have said something terrible.

"Ships! Ships..." Klabauter howls, in a voice that sounds as if you are pulling the nails from his toes. Then he blinks the tears away, looks around suspiciously, and raises his chin. "Ships are bad places, I can tell you," he says. You nod, but you do not understand.

"Ships are evil. They do terrible things. They..." Klabauter explains. You start to back away, and knock down a pile of crates as you do so.

"They..." Klabauter begins, but suddenly he jumps towards you and grabs your cheeks in his small, cold hands, pulling them like bread dough as he whispers into your ear, "They roll!"

"They roll?" you ask, surprised. Klabauter throws himself on the ground and holds his stomach.

"Yes, they roll," he continues with an agonized voice. "Roll from larboard to starboard and back again, and they tilt up and down, up and down. Every time I think

about it, I feel sick." He starts making choking sounds as if throwing up.

"You get seasick?" you ask, as surprised as you are amused. Klabauter notices your tone. He jumps up angrily.

"Don't you get seasick?" he asks belligerently. "Have you ever been on a ship before? Do you even know what you are talking about when you mock me?"

You raise your hands in defense. The little fellow is mad, no doubt about it. You would love to get out of here, but the thought of your reward holds you back.

"Sorry, Klabauter," you say, "I meant no offense." Your words seem to calm the little man, and he nods contentedly.

"Do you know why I am here?" you ask. The klabautermann nods again, wiggling his ears in a humorous fashion.

"The funny person brought you here. He was here once before, when he painted those letters above the side door. 'Taghammer, it says, or something like that.'"

You ask Klabauter to describe the funny person, and he gives you a good description of Rogobald of Garlishgrotz, the man who hired you to break into Tagkrammer's kontor and then asked you to search this ruined warehouse for the freight documents. *Rogobald* wrote the name Tagkrammer on the warehouse? Why would he do that? And why did he want you to return? You sit down on a crate, accidentally crushing an empty box as you do so, and gather your thoughts.

Someone—you are beginning to doubt that he is who he claims he is—contacted you and hired you for a burglary. Unfortunately, the kontor was full of so many people that your break-in was bound to fail, especially as you are hardly an expert in the field. Your chances of stealing the papers were bad from the beginning—if the papers ever even existed.

Why were you really hired to break into Tagkrammer's kontor? You are quite sure that you don't know the real reason. When you met Rogobald for the second time, you literally ran into him, and he seemed surprised to see you. Then he sent you here, to search this ruined warehouse that he himself marked with the name *Tagkrammer*. Your search might have taken the whole

night if you hadn't met Klabauter by chance. Rogobald probably does not know that he exists.

You are sure that the burglary is part of a bigger plan. Maybe it was supposed to fail? You are also sure that Rogobald wanted to keep you busy all night, probably because he was planning something that he did not want you to disturb...

A quiet whistle startles you, and you look up. Klabauter climbs back inside through a hole in the roof and then makes his way back down to you with great leaps from one pile of crates to the next.

"What would happen if the guards found you here?" he asks. You open your mouth in surprise, and then answer him.

"They would think I was a burglar and arrest me, I suppose."

"Would you like that?" Klabauter asks out of curiosity.

"Of course not!" you answer brusquely.

"Then you should leave," he says nervously. "The guards are on their way here now." Turn to section 45.

196 ○

If you have been here before, turn to section 78. If not, turn to section 145.

Sections to Cross Off

One or more circles appear after some section numbers. Whenever you visit such a section, cross off the next available circle. This record reminds you that you have visited that section before. If you return to the section, follow the directions.

197

"My plan requires creatures that possess magic, my friend," Rogobald explains casually. "Two witches, an elf and a magical girl from the sea—their magic should have been sufficient. But they were too old, and their magic was too much a part of their nature. It is different with Murna. She is still young."

Rogobald gauges your terrified expression. With a casual gesture, he continues, "Two witches, an elf, and a magical girl from the sea. They all have magic inside them, just like Murna. Why do you think her

own father makes her wear an iron collar? Why do you think she never appears in public? The public ban against magic, the superstitious sailors, the Blessed Ones of Praios—everyone here hates magic. But I understand that magic leads to true power—power that soon will be mine."

Rogobald's mad laughter makes you shiver (104).

198

Anybody not sitting behind this desk would find its size intimidating. The painstaking organization of the stationery, tinder boxes, sealing wax, and dripping pan suggest a very tidy owner who abhors chaos. Whoever works here is disciplined and reliable—impeccable attributes for an honorable trader, an impression that seems to have been cultivated deliberately.

You nod to yourself and turn to examine the drawers in the desk. Some are no doubt locked. Others could hide secret compartments—or hidden traps.

Do you open the drawers (151), or search elsewhere (66)?

199

You check to see if you are being watched, but nobody is there. The fog is getting thicker, as if Phex is trying to assist you in your endeavor. You cross the wide street in front of the kontor hurriedly and sit down by the door. You look left and right to make sure that nobody is coming. Then you look up, and shiver. A dark shadow looms above you...

Do you retreat and run towards the alley to find another way in (15), or do you wait to see what happens (221)?

200

The raft comes to rest on a sandbank with a muted scraping sound. "Our journey ends here," the raftsmen says contentedly. "Follow the shallow water to the ruins of the old temple of Efferd. On the other side, you will find a path that leads through about a dozen of buildings to Garthelta's old house. There you will find the man for whom you seek."

"Are you sure? How can you know that?" you ask nervously.

"The swamp told me. The man you are looking for never tries to hide the signs of his passing." The

raftsman leans in and whispers conspiratorially, "They were floating in the water."

You hesitate. Suddenly your determination, and your anger for Rogobald, is gone. Do you still want to put your plan into action?

"Go, already," Klabauter pleads. "The quicker you go, the quicker we can leave this rocking torture rack."

The raftsman smiles pleasantly as he watches several new shades of green pass over Klabauter's face. Then he says to you, "Don't worry, boy. We will wait for you. Whether you return is another matter. I would be lying if I told you that the Undercity is not a dangerous place. But I have a good feeling."

The old man has a *good feeling*... Klabauter would probably kill to get off this raft... Everything about this situation is ominous. Nevertheless you begin to feel more confident. You have never been farther away from the harbor, but it is too late to start acting like a coward now. You step off the raft into the shallow water, which turns out to be knee-deep, and wade along the sandbank to the ruin.

"Be careful," you hear the raftsman murmur behind you. "May the gods be with you."

This is not so bad, you think. What could go wrong (159)?

201

The wooden buckets and drop cloths are high quality, but you don't see a reason to steal them. You are more interested in a very creepy painting that leans face-down along the wall in the shadow of the stairs. You turn it around to take a look at it.

A majestic mantichore, a legendary chimerical beast, sits in the foreground. A glorious mane surrounds its hideous human visage, which sits atop a lion's body. Its tail, tipped with the stinger of a scorpion, rises menacingly. Behind the mantichore, numerous eyes glow in the dark windows of a two-story house. Giant, bilious green serpents wind through the doors. Unnerving birds sit on the roof in the full light of Mada's Sign, which hangs alone in the starless sky. A shiver runs up your spine, and you understand now why the painting was left where it was.

You set it carefully back where it was and then leave the room before somebody catches you. You sneak

quietly up the stairs and make sure that the corridor on the upper floor is empty before proceeding (100).

202

Your muscles and your lungs are burning, and you are not getting anywhere. You flail in panic, but your actions carry you up, not forward. You surface in the center of the room—close to the shark, as it turns out. You had planned to reach the scaffolding quickly and escape from the water, but you underestimated the distance.

The shark swims close by and slaps you hard with its tail fin. You take a deep breath and dive beneath the surface again, drawing your dagger as you go. It seems you cannot avoid a fight, but at least you get to make the first attack (8).

203

You move forward gracefully for a few more yards and then drop down behind the wall. Make a *Body Control (Balance)* check (AGI/AGI/CON) with a penalty of 2.

If you succeed, turn to section 138. If you fail, turn to section 105.

Skill Checks with Penalties

A skill check with penalty works almost like an unmodified skill check. The only difference is that the penalty decreases the effective value of all three attributes for the duration of the check. In this instance, the *Body Control (Balance)* check is made as before, but this time, the relevant attributes each count as two less.

204

"Oh, then I apologize, Mister...?" You pause for a moment too long and make the Mister too much of a question, so the little man interrupts you.

"Klabauter! I am not a *Mister*," the creature seems to spit out the word, "but a *klaubatermann*! My name is ..." The klabauterman hesitates and then decides not to tell you his name, saying instead, "You can call me Klabauter. First name *Klabauter*, last name *Mann*." The creature smiles as you give an understanding nod.

"Oh, then excuse me, Mr. Mann." This time, the words flow from your lips.

Klabauter stares at you angrily, puts his fists on his hips and starts to rant. "Only *Mann*, no Mister! Just call me Klabauter Mann."

You pause again, even angrier, but this time with yourself. "*Mister Mann*? That sounds so stupid! What was I thinking?" you reproach yourself.

The little man looks at you with a blend of bashfulness and pity. "Just say Klabauter. Klabauter is fine. That's my name. Yes, that's my name. Just Klabauter."

You don't believe a single word, but you are happy that the little man has stopped raving, at least for now (107).

205

You sneak quietly into the southern half of the warehouse. Make an Intuition check.

If you succeed, turn to section 80. If you fail, turn to section 152.

206

"Is he in fear, did he disappear?" a thin voice asks.

"What?" you reply in surprise.

"It is much too dark to see, speak quickly, you cowardly flea," the voice rants with a plaintive whine.

"Can't vampires see in the dark? And doesn't my presence answer your question?"

"Questions, questions, everywhere, this is really not to bear," the voice whines. "If I was the real dead, you would be gone and bled. I am punished, that is true, not by light, but by you!"

What an unfriendly fellow.

"I can see nothing besides empty shelves and a glass of jam. Nobody is here. Who are you?"

"Shut up with your stupid jam, a glass of honey, is what I am. I am a bold, I am trapped, come and help me, that would be apt."

The honey jar? "Am I really talking to a honey jar?" you ask.

"Not this time, the jar can't rhyme! I was trapped here years ago, a honeybold, nowhere to go. I was free like the air and wind, now I am caught, I am pinned."

OK. You broke into a stranger's house to steal documents, and now you are talking to a rhyming honeybold that was trapped in a canning jar and left to rot in an empty storeroom. You know that the honeybold cannot know the location of the documents and wouldn't probably tell you if he did know. Taking him with you would be mad. What burglar would burden himself with a talking lump of honey? Since you don't envision a future career as a ventriloquist, and you want to stay as quiet as possible, the honeybold would prove a hindrance.

You should simply leave the room (111), but what if the honeybold starts to scream? It might be a good idea to get rid of him (44).

207

"Something strange is going on here!" the old man grumbles. His neighbor leans over and whispers in his ear, and he seems to calm down. You cannot tell which angers him more—your good luck, or his bad luck. He has not won a round since you sat down at the table.

Do you want to avoid the mood at the table and leave (162), or risk one more round (51)?

208

It is very risky, but you decide to linger. If only you could remember why she seems familiar ...

Something about her muscles, her harsh but beautiful features, her tattoos... She is a Thorwaler!

Briefly you catch a glimpse of her face and realize she is the woman from the Heroes' Refuge. What is she doing here?

Do you continue to watch her (69), turn to leave (21), or open the door and announce yourself—which is probably the craziest idea you have had all night (112)?

209

With a few strong strokes, you reach the door in the eastern half of the building. You take a deep breath and try to orient yourself in the dim green light provided by some glowing lichen. Phex seems to have favored you a little at least.

And it is definitely just a little, as you discover when you try the door. The unlooked-for light did make it easier to find the former entrance, but a wooden beam (visible through a through a hole created by a missing stone in the wall) blocks the door from the inside. You swim to the surface and take a deep breath (34).

210

The red-haired woman is having a conversation with someone at the moment, and the free seat at the gambling table is taken, so you decide to return to your empty table in the corner (48).

211

A dark shadow glides through the water. Only one creature has light and dark gray stripes. It is a striped shark! Is he sight-seeing, or hunting? You are almost out of air, so you must make a decision quickly.

You can try to pull yourself up the stairs carefully until you reach the surface and safety (52). Or, if the shark is not interested in you, you don't need to worry, in which case you could cross the room with a few swift strokes and climb the scaffolding (11). Then again, if the striped shark is hungry and sees you as prey, you will not be able to avoid a fight, so why not attack it first (184)?

212

The wooden stairs are made out of broad planks nailed to a simple wooden frame. You believe they are sturdy enough to carry heavy loads, though not without creaking.

Do you climb them (97), or stay on the ground floor (80)?

213

Rogobald rummages through the drawer until he finds a rusty saw. Then he stands in front of you and shakes his head in disappointment. "I would have expected more, friend," he says, "Useless pleading, empty threats—or at least some interest in my plan."

"What plan?" you ask automatically. You immediately regret your question, as you were trying to ignore the man, but it is too late now.

Rogobald's face lights up (172).

214

You push away the cloth to reveal a painting of an eerie night scene. The full moon highlights the rocky landscape in the background. A muscular female warrior stands on a rocky outcropping, her face bearing a sultry expression.

The woman wears a billowing red cloak, a rather tight top that reveals more breast than it hides, and a skirt made of an exotic striped fur, that is slit so high that the word *skirt* seems inappropriate. A bow and a quiver dangle from a belt (their lower parts must be in the woman's leg somehow). She holds her sword before her in the manner of a Rondra's Crest. The blade looks ridiculously thin next to her sturdy body. The inscription on the frame, which probably once showed the name of this painted male fantasy, has been deliberately scratched off. You can make out only the name of the artist—Cüye Guucarn.

Bemusedly, you return the cover to the painting (160).



215

You rub your hands nervously. A chest! A promising chest! A chest the size of a wardrobe! You open it excitedly, only to find that it is full of clothes, most of which disintegrate when you touch them. The dust makes you cough.

You begin to turn away in disappointment, but then you see something sparkle—gold ducats! Well, one ducat, but you pocket it anyway. A ducat is a small treasure... so you have actually found a treasure chest! You muse about the dragon that must be guarding it. It could be a small one, given the size of the treasure... Probably just missed it on the way in, you joke to yourself, but then you remember that small dragons have powerful magic, too. Better leave now (82).

216

You kick the door angrily, but the water slows your movements, and you are beginning to feel sluggish and weak. Instead of moving the beam, you snag yourself on a protruding nail and suffer 3 DP. Deduct 3 from your life points. If this reduces your life points to zero or less, turn to section 2. Otherwise, you swim quickly to the surface (34).

217

The door swings open easily with a quiet creak. You squint in the bright illumination of several oil lanterns, blind for just a moment. You do not see anybody in this room, which is otherwise filled with countless marionettes, but somebody must have been here recently.

You look around hurriedly. The room is about half as large as the adjacent puppet storage room through the open door in the north-eastern corner. Between the damaged or unfinished puppets there is a shelf of tools, a workbench and a high stool, two wardrobes, and a shelf holding jars, bottles, and wooden and cloth parts for puppets. Suddenly you hear a shrill scream from the opposite room.

If you rush to the door to investigate the scream, turn to section 164. If you want to take a look around, instead, you may examine the workbench (93), the wardrobes (110), or the puppets (67).

Thorwaler Woman

COU 14 SGC 10 INT 12

CHA 10

DEX 12 AGI 14 CON 13

STR 15

LP 31 AE – KP – INI 12+1D6

SPI 0 TOU 3 DO 7 MOV 7

Dagger: AT 12 PA 7 DP 1D6+1 RE short
PRO/ENC 1/0 (–1 MOV and INI, already included)

Actions: 1

Special Abilities: Quick-Draw

Advantages/Disadvantages: Increased Toughness / Decreased Spirit

Skills: Body Control 6, Feat of Strength 8, Self-Control 6



218

You hurry down the street towards the cross street when suddenly a shadow looms out of the fog. You take a step to the side and duck, and a gust of wind rushes past your head.

You stop running and turn to see a large woman rushing towards the spot where you had just been standing. Apparently she had hoped to take you out with a punch, but you avoided her attack.

She almost falls off balance when her swing misses you, but she recovers with surprising grace and draws a long dagger. Looking past the weapon, you recognize the red-haired woman from earlier. The Thorwaler glares at you like a raging bull.

You cannot avoid a fight. Unfortunately, she is probably the better fighter. Maybe you can save yourself with a determined attack. You draw your weapon and charge. After one combat round, turn to section 113.

219

Faint light shines from under the door and you hear two people arguing loudly over the rules for Svellt Valley dice boltan. Specifically, they argue about what happens if one player announces all sixes and the other player believes him.

Combat

The rules of *The Dark Eye* can handle complicated combats, but this solo adventure uses simplified rules. First of all, you are fighting against just one opponent. Who attacks first is clear (in this case, it's her) and there are no special maneuvers to worry about (your hero is an inexperienced fighter, and your opponent has not received any special training, either).

Solo adventures differ from group adventures in that you roll the dice for *all* combatants. This has the added advantage of helping you to learn the rules. Fights usually lasts several *combat rounds*, but in this case, you must turn to section 113 after just one round of combat. In other cases, one combat round leads to the next until either a certain condition ends the battle or because one participant surrenders (or dies).

Let's concentrate on just this combat round for now. Each round has two phases: your opponent's attack, and your attack. Note that both you and your opponent have an *Attack* stat (abbreviated AT), which is treated like an attribute, meaning you make an attribute check using the Attack stat. If this check fails, your opponent's attack misses you, and the attack ends. If this check succeeds, the attack might injure you.

When an attack succeeds, you can either *parry* it with your weapon or choose to *dodge*. To parry an attack, you need a successful check with your *Parry* stat (abbreviated PA). If you wish to dodge instead, you need a successful check with your *Dodge* stat (abbreviated DO). It is usually smarter to pick your best defense (the one with the highest stat). If you are using the sample character provided in this book, your best defense is Parry. Roll 1D20. If you get a result of 9 or less, your parry succeeds and your hero avoids the blow. On a result of 10 or greater, her attack hits you.

If the woman's attack hits you, you next roll to see how much damage her attack inflicts. From her stats, you can see that her weapon does 1D6+1 damage points (abbreviated DP). To determine the total DP inflicted by her attack, roll one six-sided die (abbreviated 1D6) and add 1 to the result.

Even though you are not wearing armor, your clothes do offer some protection. Look for your Protection rating (abbreviated PRO) on your character sheet. Subtract this PRO from the damage result to get the net damage caused by the attack. Finally, subtract *that* amount from your life points (abbreviated LP on your character sheet). If PRO ever reduces a damage result to zero or less, the target takes no damage from the attack.

Characters die when their LP are reduced to zero or less. After a fight, survivors must often wait for wounds to heal, usually by resting, drinking healing potions, or by seeking treatment. Rules for healing appear later in the adventure.

The second half of the combat round follows the same pattern, except that now it is your turn to attack. Does your AT succeed? If not, your half of the combat round ends. If yes, your opponent must defend herself. Roll 1D20 for her check with PA or DO—if it succeeds, the combat round ends. If it fails, roll your damage (1D6+4 DP, as indicated for the weapon listed on your character sheet). Subtract your opponent's PRO (1, in this case) from this roll to get the final damage. If the net DP is higher than 0, subtract that number from your opponent's LP.

Normally at this point the next combat round would begin, but this case is different. After finishing one combat round you must turn to section 113 at once.

Do you want to listen for a while and maybe take a look through the keyhole (169), charge into the room (53), or look for another exit from the corridor (100)?

220

You are disgusted. Overcome by anger and desperation, you spit into Rogobald's face. You have never felt so afraid and helpless. Without a word,

Rogobald wipes his face with his sleeve. Then he punches you with enough strength to knock over the chair. The impact knocks the air from your lungs (76).

221

You wait patiently, but nothing happens. The shadow looms above you like a skulking demon, ready to pounce on anybody entering the building. Soon you realize that the demon is only a gargoyle, a creepy stone statue created to drive away the fearful. You take another look around and then examine the lock.

It looks rather complicated, but you think that you can pick it. Make a *Pick Locks (Bit Locks)* check (INT/DEX/DEX) with a penalty of 2. Note that you have an Aptitude for this skill, which means that you can reroll one of the check's D20s and keep the better result (for more details, see *Core Rules*, page 163).

If you succeed, turn to section 59, if not, go to section 102.

222

You have no trouble finding Salterel Alley, even though you rarely visit the western side of the harbor district. The small buildings in this neighborhood, a large fishing village nestled within Havena, are shabbier than the grand, multi-storied homes on the eastern side of the harbor district. Certainly its inhabitants, mostly

fishing families and day laborers, are far less wealthy. That is why you rarely come here—there is more promising loot to be had in other parts of town.

This is said to be a close-knit community. Few people are out at this hour, and the fog is probably hiding your movements anyway, but you still feel that eyes are watching you from every house you pass.

The Tagkrammer warehouse is easy to find. It sits at the end of the alley, and the name *Tagkrammer* is freshly painted in white above the door. The warehouse is a not-quite-square, 30' by 30' building with a slightly sloping roof and a wide, locked gate on the east side, facing the quay. You are sure that the building has seen better days.

Weeds grow in thick clumps between the cobblestones in front of the gate. The stone building's plaster is crumbling in many places, and you are able to peer inside through a hole made by three missing bricks in the north wall, next to the narrow wooden door.

You crouch beside the door and take a look. Inside you see nothing but countless crates and boxes. The door hangs ajar and creaks in the strong breeze. Entering this building will be child's play.

Do you walk in (90), or do you hesitate (147)?



The End

Even with the assistance of Klabauter and the raftsman, it took you hours to get Murna back to the harbor. Unfortunately, Murna's happy reunion with her father was cut short when the red-haired Thorwaler woman attacked you and placed you in a devastating chokehold. You had almost passed out for what seemed like the umpteenth time this evening when Murna's kind words saved you from your predicament.

You related the story of the break-ins and your encounter with the Vampire of Havena as best you could. You are not a bard, but old Tagkrammer, his servants, and the Thorwaler—who stood looking at the ground abashedly the whole time—listened to your tale eagerly. Of course you had to tell the whole story again later, this time to the guards, Trode and Alrik, who began to take you seriously only after the Tagkrammers confirmed certain episodes of your adventure. Luckily, all were of the opinion that you should be forgiven your crimes, and the guards decided not to arrest you.

The Tagkrammer family expressed its gratitude by giving you a bag of shiny silver coins worth 20 ducats. To top it off, Master Tagkrammer offers you an apprenticeship as a scribe. This valuable proposition would grant you some stability, but you just don't see yourself working as a trade assistant. You never would have thought seriously about leaving the harbor, but you also never would have dreamed of becoming a true hero and saving a maiden. Sure, she is only seven years old, but a rescued maiden is a rescued maiden (and Murna seems to have taken a shine to you—nobody else can claim to have been invited for tea with her and her countless dolls).

Buoyed by your success, you decided to leave the narrow alleys of the harbor behind. You will go out into the world, see Aventuria, help those in need (like Murna), and occasionally find a stuffed treasure chest. And who knows? Maybe a real dragon will be sitting on one of them...

Your first true adventure turns out to be one of the most important experiences of your life, and your attitude towards fate has changed completely. You once thought you were merely Fate's plaything, but now you understand that people make their own destinies. Your attitude towards life has changed,

too. Your close encounter with death makes you feel, more than ever before, that life is worth living. Your attitude towards yourself has changed so much that you feel like a new person, and you doubt that you will remain in Havena much longer. Give your character 12 adventure points.

Epilogue

A shadowy figure rose from his seat as the last rays of Praios' Disc sank below the horizon. The Undercity may be unpleasant, but his kind prefers the darkness—at least while still at less than full strength. The hunger, the insatiable hunger for fresh blood... How it gnaws!

Oh, he could have fed upon the youth he had observed that day in the shattered temple—fed upon and killed, as he had done with so many others. But he resisted his craving and let the youth walk on, just as he ignored the man carrying the little girl, which might have otherwise been a truly delicious dessert. He did not often pay attention to the concerns of humans, but these humans were special.

He didn't care for the old man. He was weak and naive in his pursuit of power. How could he think that drinking the blood of the magically gifted would make him a powerful spellcaster? The humans in Havena lived in fear, but it was this very fear which strengthened their resolve. They no longer acted carelessly. They even interfered with his hunts. Rumors of his presence in this harbor city by the Sea of Seven Winds were very dangerous. The old man had been a thorn in his side, but killing him would not have put an end to the rumors. Then the youth arrived.

He could feel the young person's determination from his vantage point on the wall, and came to understand that this youth could be the solution to all of his problems. So he allowed the youth to live and go on to destroy the old man, thus creating a convenient explanation for the legend of the Vampire of Havena. He just had to wait for the story of the monster's demise to spread.

It was difficult, and the hunger nearly drove him mad, but it is finally at an end. The long night stretches before him—a night during which he will finally be able to slake his thirst...

Appendix

Havena, Harbor City of Many Traditions

“Even though we have been conducting trade for many years, the young Prince is a breath of fresh air in the city, like I haven’t felt in a long while.”

—a trader from Havena, 1039 FB

“An Undercity that was created by the great flood and now teems with legendary creatures and hidden secrets? Sounds like we should take a look.”

—a mage from Brabak, 1038 FB

Region: Middenrealm, Principality of Albernia

Inhabitants: 30,000 humans, several dozen elves and dwarves, and some merfolk

Governance: Town magistrate who rules with the Council of Elders and the Council of Captains; seat of the Albernian Prince, Finnian u Bennain.

Temples: All Twelvegods except Firun; large Efferd temple; Boron Isle (temple and Boron yard)

Trade and Commerce: Trade town with large harbor, place of business for ocean and river boats, many kontors and wharfs.

Special: Large trade harbor; cursed Undercity (drowned ruins); Prince’s palace; Ruada’s Honor (a warrior’s academy), naval cadet school; splendid temple of Efferd; Boron Isle; Princess Emer Bridge over the Great River; Castle Fairymell; cave of the giant turtle Lata, which is sacred to Efferd; magic is forbidden in Havena, but recently the prohibition has been relaxed to allow for healing magic.

Mood in the City: Belief in Efferd; freedom-loving; enterprising; suspicious of magic; enmity towards the Northmarches; ambiguous feelings towards the Empress and the Middenrealm.

The capital of Albernia sits in the swampy delta of the Great River and has suffered many misfortunes. The Great Flood destroyed wide swathes of the city 300 years ago, and the ruins of old Havena still lie beneath the waves. Magic has been outlawed in the city ever since, as it was thought to be the cause of the calamity. Havenans fear Boron, god of death, more than do other Adventurians. They worship Efferd with fervor, hoping that he will avert other such disasters.

Today, Havena is one of the largest trading ports on the west coast. Stern guardsmen and nimble pickpockets

roam the busy streets of the city. The young Prince rarely spends time in the capital, lending weight to his title of *Finnian the Seafarer*. Havenans are as freedom-loving as all Albernians and feel a deep connection to the sea, as Efferd is the patron of the city. In addition to humans, the city is home to a few merfolk, a peaceful race of sea-people. In days past, wealthy Havenans kept merfolk as slaves. According to rumor, some still do.

Havena is comprised of two districts (the *Old City* and the *New City*) and ten boroughs. The boroughs of the Old City, which existed before the time of the Great Flood, are home to poor, simple folk. Only the rich and powerful can afford to live in the New City. As its name implies, this district was built in the wake of the Great Flood.

The city has many sights and special places to visit. Rahja Park, with its flowerbeds and beautiful trees, is a popular place to relax. It is the exact opposite of the City Park of Havena, which people avoided for a time after a series of grisly murders a few decades ago. The city remodeled the park recently and members of the public now stroll along its pleasant and inviting paths once again. Havena’s famous imman team, the Havena Bulls, is one of the most traditional imman teams in the whole of the Middenrealm. The alleys and taverns around the team’s huge stadium often erupt in Netherhellish chaos after Havena loses a game to a visiting team.

Boron Isle is a frightening place. Visiting the island is not forbidden, but to get there, you must be willing to pay a fisher a small fortune for transport. The island is the site of an old temple of Boron, about which people tell many dark stories that hint of undead Blessed Ones, vampires, and even ghosts. No burgher of Havena sets foot there voluntarily.

The famous tower of the sorceress Nahema rises from the fetid water like a memorial. If, as people say, the Undercity was cursed by Efferd, then this is especially true of the tower. Few who enter it are ever seen alive—and sane—again. Nevertheless, the tower attracts many seekers of fortune and other self-styled adventurers in search of the lost treasure of the legendary sorceress.

Albernians refer to the swamp country surrounding the Great River as *Muhrsaep*. It is home mainly to refugees,

bandits, and river pirates, but the burghers of Havena like to share tales of the beasts, fairies, and bog bodies that kill anything they catch within its borders.

Havena has been the scene of memorable events in recent years. As mentioned previously, a series of shocking murders took place in the City Park many years ago. Many innocent daughters of the city were kidnapped by pirates and sold to a sea serpent-worshipping cult to be sacrificed.

During the Year of Fire, a time when no Empress sat on the throne and the Middenrealm was on the brink of destruction, the freedom-loving Albernians decided to rebel. They proclaimed their own kingdom and made Havena its capital. Albernian waged a bitter



war against the Realm, but mostly against the neighboring province of the Northmarches. Refugees flooded into Havena during those dark times, and the city's population swelled to more than 30,000. The consequences of this war can still be seen and felt today.

Recently a blue, shining meteor appeared in the sky over the city, and people feared that it would smash into Havena. Fortunately the meteor came down in the swamps near the city, sparing Havena from another disaster. It was believed to be a Gwen-Petryl stone, and its fate remains unknown. Rumor says that the Church of Efferd recovered the holy stone and hid it in the halls beneath the temple where it is now guarded by Lata, the giant turtle that serves Efferd. Some say that thieves obtained the rock, broke it up into many pieces, and sold the pieces for a hefty profit.

The Rogue As Hero

Rogues are the kings of crime. They are at once thieves, burglars, charmers, and rakes. The city's alleys are their home and nobody knows its neighborhoods better. They know where to sell stolen goods or buy forbidden items. The guards from their neighborhoods know them well, and are often willing to turn a blind eye in exchange for a piece of silver....

Fate can turn a rogue into a brave adventurer in many ways, and your character's career need not end with *The Vampire of Havena*. The following tips can help you on your way to further adventures in *The Dark Eye*.

Where Do Rogues Come From?

Rogues usually have no home, or perhaps just have difficulty staying in one place for long. Some of them grow up as urchins who learn to steal before they can walk—a necessary evil in families faced with crushing poverty, though not all rogues have families. For some, the streets are the only home they know—as little children, they had to learn quickly to survive, and those who found a space in an orphanage were the lucky ones.

Not all rogues are children of the streets. Some come from middle-class or even wealthy families, with parents that are able to buy them apprenticeships, and many rogues have siblings and other relatives in proper jobs. Somewhere along the way, they began

to have dealings with the underworld. Maybe they spent too much time with the wrong people—people who pretended to be friends to take advantage of their abilities or social standing. Maybe young rogues-in-the-making were simply rebelling against overly-strict parents (or parents who had no clear vision for their child's future). Some rogues are ashamed of past crimes, or have addictions (drugs, alcohol, or gambling) or crushing debts that can only be sustained with illegal activities. Maybe they suffer a mixture of all the above, or simply hear the call of adventure or crave the excitement of danger.



Living in the Shadows

The *wrong friends*, a hunger for adventure, growing up on the street—all have made rogues who they are today, and now they earn their living from fraud, burglaries, or smuggling. Capture means a trip to the dungeons—or the gallows. Many see rogues only as common criminals, but there is often more to a rogue than meets the eye. They are driven not by a hunger for profit, but by a desire for new challenges. Though rogues often are criminals, they avoid violence. They know how to deal with others of their ilk, but they don't view themselves as thugs or cutthroats. Their "rogue's honor" doesn't allow it, which is one reason why everybody in the underworld likes them.

Paths to Adventure

Rogues are always looking for risks, a habit that often forces them to leave the alleys which they call home. Some fall prey to overconfidence and make powerful enemies—enemies who can afford to send mercenaries after them. Maybe a new Guard captain forces the guards to stop turning a blind eye, cutting off the rogues' opportunities. Maybe they avoid capture narrowly, only to find their faces on wanted posters everywhere. When it becomes too dangerous to stay at home, rogues must seek adventure elsewhere.

The Skills of a Rogue

Perception, *Pick Locks*, *Pickpocket*, *Stealth*, and *Streetwise* are the bread and butter of a typical rogue. In addition, there are other skills you shouldn't forget, depending on your background and your focus.

The classic *cat burglar* or *second-story person* needs *Climbing* for getting up a wall (and *Body Control*, for when you fall). The skill specialization *Pick Locks (Combination Locks)* and the special ability *Disarm Traps* are useful for opening complex locks, such as those found on safes.

Gamblers find their thrills in various games of chance, and sometimes give their luck a little boost with the special ability *Cheating*. And where would *confidence tricksters* be without *Empathy* and high ratings in *Commerce* and *Fast-Talk*? A charming rake possesses aspects of gamblers and confidence tricksters, seeking not only risks while stealing, but also with various kinds of games, particularly the game of love. You know how to move through high society and have high ratings in *Etiquette* and (often) *Seduction* and *Gambling*.

Other special abilities, such as *Counterfeiter*, *Fencing Stolen Goods*, or *Horse Faker*, lend your rogue some flair.

Smugglers must earn a living by avoiding borders and tolls, and you come to know the patrol routes of border soldiers and every hidden path you can use to avoid them.

Rogues often round out their repertoire with other skills. Nature skills such as *Orienting*, *Survival*, or *Tracking* can be very useful, depending on the terrain in which you find yourself. For example, a smuggler from Havena will spend a great deal of time on the water, so you should know *Swimming* and *Sailing*. You should also take special abilities like *Area Knowledge* or *Terrain Knowledge*. Knowledge of certain smuggling paths could qualify as a trade secret.

Names

Your hero's name can be very important. The following sample Albernian names are suitable for the character provided in this book, but feel free to invent a name of your own.

Albernian Names

Male First Names: Aedin, Belfionn, Berynn, Conlai, Connar, Cuilyn, Daerec, Efferdwin, Elfwin, Faerwyn, Fin(waen), Glennir, Illaen, Lidhwaen, Meredin, Morgan, Muir, Peranwyn, Raidri, Rhys, Sidhric, Targuin, Travien, Ywain

Female First Names: Branwen, Bridget, Bronwen, Egberta, Elwyn, Eorwen, Erwina, Fiana, Finris, Garthelta, Ilka, Kyna, Lynn, Maeve, Maire, Malva, Margoris, Muirisc, Sidra, Yedda

Family Names: Aendruw, Arberdan, Bruadhir, Caelman, Engstrand, Fidian, Fingorn, Hollbeerer, Inveric, Kevendoch, Sandström, Schladromir, Vialigh, Wolter



Character Sheet

Personal Data

Name _____

Gender _____

Race _____ Human

Date of Birth _____

Age _____ 17

Hair Color _____

Eye Color _____

Height / Weight _____

Profession _____ Rogue

Culture _____ Middenrealm

Social Standing _____ Free

Place of Birth _____ Havena

Family _____

Characteristics _____

COU	SGC	INT	CHA	DEX	AGI	CON	STR
10	12	14	13	14	15	12	10

Advantages Aptitude (Pick Locks), Fox Sense, Luck I, Nimble

Disadvantages Misfortune, Negative Trait (Greed, Curiosity)

General Special Abilities Area Knowledge (Havena: Old Town, New Town), Disarm Traps, Foxian

Life Points

(Racial Base Stat + CON + CON)

Stat	Bonus/ Penalty	Bought	Max
29			

Arcane Energy

(20 for Spellcaster + Primary Attribute)

-			
---	--	--	--

Karma Points

(20 for Blessed One + Primary Attribute)

-			
---	--	--	--

Spirit

(Racial Base Stat + (COU+SGC+INT)/6)

2		X	
---	--	---	--

Toughness

(Racial Base Stat + (COU+CON+STR)/6)

0		X	
---	--	---	--

Dodge

(AGI/2)

9	+1	X	
---	----	---	--

Fate Points

Stats	Bonus/ Penalty	Max	Current
3	+1	4	4

Experience Level

Experienced

AP total	AP available	AP spent

Character Sheet

Game Stats

Encumbrance

0

COU

SGC

INT

CHA

DEX

AGI

CON

STR

10

12

14

13

14

15

12

10

SKILLS

Skill	Check	ENC	Impr.	SR	R	Notes	Skill	Check	ENC	Impr.	SR	R	Notes
Physical Skills COU/AGI/STR p. 188-192							Knowledge Skills SGC/SGC/INT p. 201-205						
Body Control	AGI/AGI/CON	yes	D	7			Astronomy	SGC/SGC/INT	no	A	0		
Carousing	SGC/CON/STR	no	A	4			Gambling	SGC/SGC/INT	no	A	7		
Climbing	COU/AGI/STR	yes	B	6			Geography	SGC/SGC/INT	no	B	1		
Dancing	SGC/CHA/AGI	yes	A	1			History	SGC/SGC/INT	no	B	5		
Feat of Strength	CON/STR/STR	yes	B	0			Law	SGC/SGC/INT	no	A	0		
Flying	COU/INT/AGI	yes	B	0			Math	SGC/SGC/INT	no	A	6		
Gaukelei	COU/CHA/FF	yes	A	0			Mechanics	SGC/SGC/DEX	no	B	3		
Perception	SGC/INT/INT	maybe	D	8			Myths & Legends	SGC/SGC/INT	no	B	5		
Pickpocket	COU/DEX/AGI	yes	B	7			Religions	SGC/SGC/INT	no	B	4		
Riding	CHA/AGI/STR	yes	B	0			Sphere Lore	SGC/SGC/INT	no	B	0		
Self-Control	COU/COU/CON	no	D	6			Warfare	COU/SGC/INT	no	B	0		
Singing	SGC/CHA/CON	maybe	A	0									
Stealth	COU/INT/AGI	yes	C	5			Craft Skills DEX/DEX/CON p. 206-213						
Swimming	AGI/CON/STR	yes	B	5			Alchemy	COU/SGC/DEX	yes	C	0		
Social Skills INT/CHA/CHA p. 193-197							Artistic Ability	INT/DEX/DEX	yes	A	0		
Disguise	INT/CHA/AGI	maybe	B	2			Clothworking	SGC/DEX/DEX	yes	A	0		
Empathy	SGC/INT/CHA	no	C	5			Commerce	SGC/INT/CHA	no	B	4		
Eitquette	SGC/INT/CHA	maybe	B	2			Driving	CHA/DEX/CON	yes	A	0		
Fast-Talk	COU/INT/CHA	no	C	6			Earthencraft	DEX/DEX/STR	yes	A	0		
Intimidate	COU/INT/CHA	no	B	0			Leatherworking	DEX/AGI/CON	yes	B	0		
Persuasion	COU/SGC/CHA	no	B	0			Metalworking	DEX/CON/STR	yes	C	0		
Seduction	COU/CHA/CHA	maybe	B	2			Music	CHA/DEX/CON	yes	A	0		
Streetwise	SGC/INT/CHA	maybe	C	10		Asking Around	Prepare Food	INT/DEX/DEX	yes	A	0		
Willpower	COU/INT/CHA	no	D	6			Pick Locks	INT/DEX/DEX	yes	C	7		
Nature Skills COU/AGI/CON p. 198-200							Sailing	DEX/AGI/STR	yes	B	1		
Animal Lore	COU/COU/CHA	yes	C	0			Treat Disease	COU/INT/CON	yes	B	0		
Fishing	DEX/AGI/CON	maybe	A	0			Treat Poison	COU/SGC/INT	yes	B	0		
Orienting	SGC/INT/INT	no	B	5			Treat Soul	INT/CHA/CON	no	B	0		
Plant Lore	SGC/DEX/CON	maybe	C	0			Treat Wounds	SGC/DEX/DEX	yes	D	0		
Ropes	SGC/DEX/STR	maybe	A	0			Woodworking	DEX/AGI/STR	yes	B	0		
Survival	COU/AGI/CON	yes	C	0									
Tracking	COU/INT/AGI	yes	C	0									

Attribute Modifiers

	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
COU	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
SGC	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
INT	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
CHA	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
DEX	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
AGI	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
CON	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
STR	7	8	9	10	11	12	13



Skill Points	Quality Level
0-3	1
4-6	2
7-9	3
10-12	4
13-15	5
+16	6

Languages

Garethi III, Isdira I, Thorwalian II

Scripts

Kusliker Signs

Character Sheet

Combat

7

MOV

29

LP

9

DO

13

INI

2

SPI

0

TOU

COU

10

SGC

12

INT

14

CHA

13

DEX

14

AGI

15

CON

12

STR

10

Combat Techniques	Primary Attribute	Impr.	CSR	AT/RC	PA
Bows	DEX	C	6	8	
Brawling	AGI/STR	B	12	12	8
Chain Weapons	STR	B	6	6	
Crossbows	DEX	B	6	8	
Daggers	AGI	B	10	10	7
Fencing Weapons	AGI	C	6	6	5
Impact Weapons	STR	C	6	6	3
Lances	STR	B	6	6	3
Pole Weapons	AGI/STR	C	6	6	5
Shields	STR	C	6	6	3
Swords	AGI/STR	C	12	12	8
Thrown Weapons	DEX	B	10	12	
Two-Handed Impact Weapons	STR	C	6	6	3
Two-Handed Swords	STR	C	6	6	3

Combat Special Abilities

Alertness, Combat Reflexes I,

Feint I, Improved Dodge I, One-Handed Combat,

Precise Shot / Throw I, Precise Thrust I, Quickdraw

Close Combat Weapons

Weapon	Combat Technique	Damage Bonus	Base DP	Overall	AT/PA Mod.	Reach	AT	PA	Weight
Unarmed	Brawling	AGI/STR 14	1D6+1		0/0	short	6	3	
Dagger	Daggers	AGI 14	1D6+2		0/0	short	6	8	1
Saber	Swords	AGI/STR 15	1D6+4		0/0	medium	13	9	1.5

Ranged Weapons

Weapon	Combat Technique	Reload Time	DP	Ammunition	Range	Ranged Combat	Weight
Throwing Dagger	Thrown Weapons	1 action	1D6+1	1	12	12	1

Armor

Armor	PRO	ENC	Add. Penalties	Weight	Travel, Combat, ...
Sturdy Clothes	1	0	-1 MOV, -1 INI	2	

Shield/Parrying Weapon

Shield/Parrying Weapon	Structure Points	AT/PA Mod.	Weight
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Life Points

Max

Current

29

29

1/4 lost
(+1 Pain)

1/2 lost
(+1 Pain)

3/4 lost
(+1 Pain)

5 or less
(+1 Pain)

0 or less = Hero is dying

Condition

Level I
(-1)

Level II
(-2)

Level III
(-3)

Level IV
(Incapacitated)

Confusion

Encumbrance

Fear

Pain

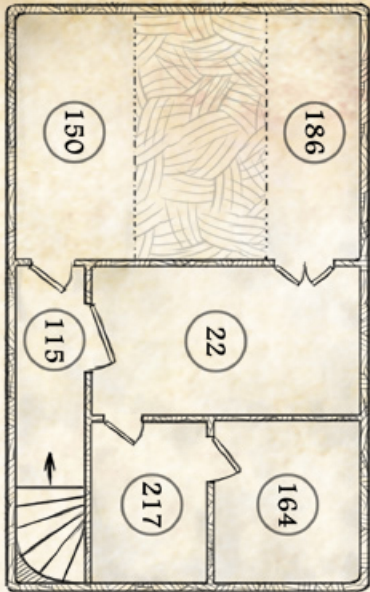
Paralysis

Rapture

Stupor



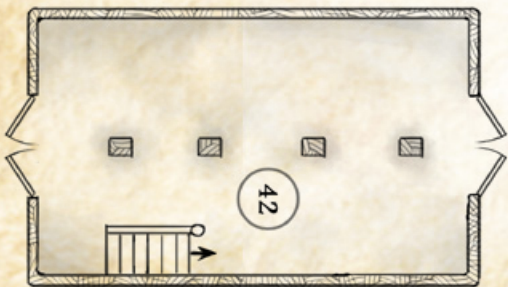
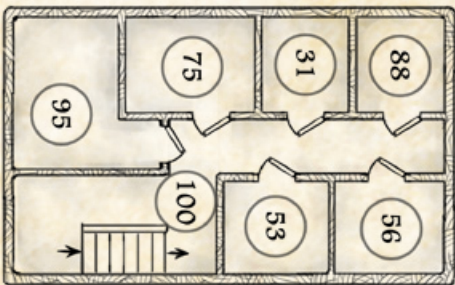
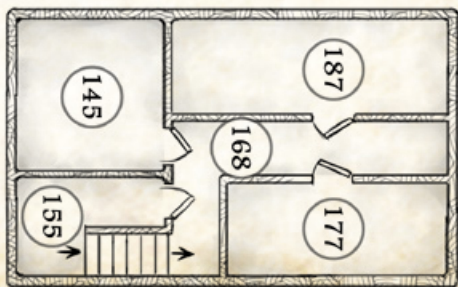
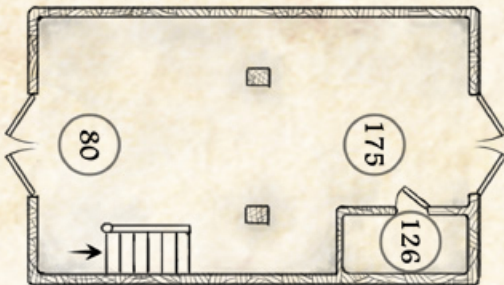
Puppet Theater Upper Floor



Noise Points ○○○○○○○○



The Tagkrammer Kontor





The Vampire of Havena

by Sebastian Thureau

You hear the muffled sound of footfalls on wet cobblestones, followed by the sound of heavy boots stepping through puddles. You've lost track of your pursuers, but you're sure they haven't lost track of you. How can you escape? Alarming shadows form in the thick fog that billows through the dockyards of Havena. You cannot trust your eyes, and you trust your ears even less. Too many sounds echo in the streets—the hiss of an alley cat, the flapping wings of an old raven, footsteps that seem to approach from every direction....

The Vampire of Havena is a solo adventure that lets you dive into the action when other players are not available. Every chapter presents new challenges, and you will need to muster all of your abilities if you wish to escape with your skin intact! Familiarity with the world of Aventuria is not required. This scenario includes a ready-to-play character and rules for play. All you need are pen, paper, and some dice. For a better understanding of the setting, see the *Aventurian Almanac*.

Onward to adventure!



Solo adventure for a thief with honor

Genre: Detective Story, Mystery

Prerequisites: none

Location: Havena

Date: Sometime between 1038 and 1040 FB

Complexity (Players/GM): Low/-

Suggested Hero Experience Level (if you use your own hero): *Inexperienced to Competent*

Useful Skills

Craft Skills



Physical Skills



Combat



Living History



For a better understanding of the terms and rules introduced in this adventure, see the *TDE Core Rules*.



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