
DEN OF THIEVES



Den of Thieves

Rumours & Hooks

Jester, the charismatic boss of a gang of *Port Brax* thieves down by *Dungart Way*, is seeking fierce warriors to respond to recent attacks on her crew.

Udan the Slip, guild boss of the *Sumptown Rats*, has declared war on their criminal rivals the *Dungart Dukes*. Rumour has it the dukes are looking to recruit extra muscle to bolster their forces.

Dungart Dukes

“Jester” (5½ ft blonde, left leg limp, never without a knife somewhere on her person) leader of the *Dungart Dukes*, a small but expanding cutpurse gang in Port Brax, needs help. Her gang of miscreants has crossed knives with the *Sumptown Rats* (the largest and most proliferate gang in the city, controlled by *Udan the Slip*, Rogue 6, inhumanly agile Dex 19) one too many times, and now Udan wants her dead.

In recent weeks, twelve of Jester’s gangers have been murdered; stabbed in back alleys, strangled in steam baths, tossed off rooftops, etc – grizzly, public deaths meant to intimidate and undermine Jester’s leadership.

And the strategy has been successful; more than half of the dukes have gone into hiding or intend to depart the port on the next ship out. Those that remain believe in Jester’s leadership, and will fight with her (expecting to be made trusted lieutenants, should the gang survive), but all agree more swords are needed if the dukes are to endure.



For his part, Udan has decided enough “brother thieves” have died, and now means to target Jester and her top lieutenants directly. To this end, he has hired a highly secretive and successful trio of cold blooded killers – identical triplets that masquerade as a single person – going by the name *Belor*.

At the start of the adventure, two of Jester’s most trusted henchmen (Griego and Morgara) have been killed in the last four days (Griego thrown from a rooftop, Morgara cut down in a back alley). Word on the street is that both were killed by a lone warrior.

Jester is offering 1,000 gp to hire competent mercenaries with a range of skills to (i) protect her and her remaining lieutenants (*Corben*, *Lucia* and *Brohk*), (ii) identify and locate the assassin, and (iii) kill him with extreme prejudice.

The guild boss is convinced that Udan's assassin knows all of the dukes, and that the only way to get close to the hitman is via (expendable) third parties.

Jester, AC 13 (leather), HD 5, Knife 1d6+2, 19: special, S10 D16 C10 I14 P15 W15 Ch15, L8, Mv 30 ft. 2 knives, 1d3 doses of *Ghoulseen Admixture* (LFG p.33), caltrops. Jester causes critical hits on a 19-20 attack roll. Backstab, Skirmisher and Finisher abilities like a 5th level Rogue, may choose from the following tricks three times per combat: *Blinding Powder*, *Hidden Blade*, *Quick Reflexes*, *Smoke Bomb*, *Rapid Dose*.

Lieutenants, AC 12, HD 2+2, Shortsword 1d6+1 19: disarm, S13 D15 C10 I11 P13 W9 Ch10 L4, Mv 30 ft. 1d2 firepots (LFG p.102).

Where to Begin?

The nature of this adventure is open ended. PCs might approach their task in a number of ways, some of which are outlined below. The Belor assassins have a plan and intended timetable (see p.10), but like all plans, it won't survive beyond first contact with the PCs.

Random Encounters

As the PCs navigate the city, there is a 30% chance of a random encounter every 12 hours (or other interval of the GM's choosing). If an encounter occurs, roll 1d20:

1d20	PORT BRAX ENCOUNTERS
1	A body crashes to the ground in front of the travellers with a horrendous thud! Looking up, 1d3 humanoid shadows can be seen making a quick getaway across the rooftops.
2	6d10 gangers (a mix of Red Hooks, Sumpstown Rats and Dockside Valkyries) have broken into a massive

	fisticuff, turning the street to chaos. No-one has drawn steel yet, but things are escalating quickly.
3	A blustering wind is blowing today, swaying the elderly and tipping objects off tables. Leaves and dust whirl across the ground.
4	Raised voices, followed by ringing steel, can be heard from around the corner of a narrow side alley.
5	A motley assortment of 2d6 pirates are swaying down the street, rum bottles in hand. They are all crew of the <i>Dreadnought</i> , an infamous and feared raiding galleon.
6	Muffled voices can be heard from a very dark, sheltered alleyway. Shining a torch inside reveals two men lowering the body of a third into a sewer manhole. They look to be in a hurry. Any onlookers receive a curt "Get outta here, scob" along with an angry gaze.
7	Eddie "Two Shanks", a ganger with the Red Hooks, sidles up to one of the party. He introduces himself, hands the character a white fishing hook, and says "Message from the boss. He wants a word. Don't go leavin' town without droppin' by", and departs.
8	Storm clouds are rolling in fast. The wind has picked up dramatically, and great peals of thunder begin to echo off Lake Argos.
9	3d6 Dockside Valkyries are lounging about outside the <i>Moontide Inn</i> , "No room at the inn today" one remarks, giving the party a wink and a "move along" thumb motion.
10	1d6 priests of Shennog (night goddess) are moving slowly down the road, followed by 4d10 members of the Sunless with a coffin on a small wagon. They are humming a sombre dirge.
11	2d4 Warriors of the Unbroken are on patrol, slowly moving down the road. Passers by either nod at them with a smile, or shrink away down side alleys.

12	A desperate fight between 5d6 Sumptown Rats and Red Hooks has broken out at this cross road. Knives are flashing and iron cudgels smashing. Locals are running for cover!
13	A large number of temporary market stalls have been erected along this street. Along with clothing and spices, some vendors also offer a range of illegal goods (hidden blade sheathes, poisons, etc.).
14	Two commoners, <i>Rabby and Wilcott</i> , are arguing over a cage of chickens. Rabby says the chickens are his and were stolen from him. Wilcott says he bought them fair and square.
15	While walking the street, the sound of laughing voices can be heard from a sewer grill nearby.
16	5d6 Red Hooks make a beeline for the party. <i>Guska</i> (Rogue 3), the leader, has decided the party should pay a “weapons tax” for crossing their turf (5 gp per weapon).
17	This street is a bottleneck for two major roads and is especially crowded, with travellers having to squeeze past each other. There is a 50% chance of pickpockets.
18	3d6 <i>Grey Skulls</i> (minor thieves' guild) are running a high stakes dice table in a sheltered alcove. The leader, <i>Addar</i> (Rogue 4, patchy bleached blonde hair) welcomes anyone with gold.
19	A street urchin, <i>Narfex</i> (Nydisian, 8 yrs old, Dex 15) approaches the party and asks them to lean in close. If they do, he whispers that a man in beggar's clothes is following them. He then looks at them expectantly (hoping for a coin).
20	Highlord Ipsgrave (city ruler) is in this square with 4d10 city watch (Fighter 1-2) and 2d4 Unbroken (Fighter 3-4). A small crowd has gathered. Ipsgrave is opening a new gallows, building goodwill with plenty of amicable chit chat, hand shaking and baby kissing.

Gathering Information

If the PCs wish to seek out information about the assassin, there are at least three ways of going about it:

1. *Tavern Rumour Mill.* The PCs visit various watering holes, primarily but not exclusively in the murder districts (labourer and residential quarters), piecing together information from titbits and second hand accounts. One or more Cha (Information Gathering) checks, and 2d6 gp, may be required for each attempt at the GM's discretion.
2. *Inquiries with Contacts.* Certain contacts might be canvassed for relevant information (eg: members or associates of the Sumptown Rats [or even their rivals, the *Red Hooks* and *Dockside Valkyries*], city watch, beggars and other street folk with their ear to the ground, etc. One or more Cha (Persuasion) or Str (Intimidate) checks, and/or 1d6 gp, might be required for each attempt.
3. *Inquiries with Eye Witnesses.* If the PCs visit the vicinity of the murders to speak with potential eye witnesses, they may make checks similar to (2) above.

If the information gathering process is a success, the party learns one useful piece of information (or two on a great success). Roll 1d4:

1. The murderer is a clean shaven, olive skinned Midlander/Argosan (or other culture fitting the GM's world), with light brown hair.
2. The murderer is approx 6 ft tall, medium build, with a scar on his forehead (Belor

2 & 3 have replicated the scar that Belor 1 suffered years earlier).

3. The murderer fought with twin swords, and wore leather armour with steel shoulder pauldrons.
4. The murderer defeated his mark with little trouble. The victim grew increasingly unco-ordinated as the fight progressed.

If the party searches for physical clues at either of the lieutenants' murder sites (in an alley off *Warbrin Way*, and thrown off the roof of the *Gilded Goat* tavern), some useful details might be revealed. Dried blood of the victim, as well as the murderer, is present at one scene. If the blood is tested (Int (Apothecary) test with the proper gear and 2d6 hours), the character learns that one blood splatter was poisoned (the victim's; *Elderberry Toxin*, LFG p.33), and the other blood (Belor 3) shows residual traces of an

old retrovirus linked to respiratory disease (*Greybeard's Huff*, which Belor 3 suffered when young, the other triplets did not contract the disease).

Tipping off the Assassins

At the GM's option, each time a PC makes inquiries about the assassin, there is a 30% chance word gets back to the Belors (who have informants, including members of the rats, keeping an ear to the ground about potential reprisals from the dukes). On a terrible failure, the chance increases to 60%. Roll 1d6:

1. *Attacked.* 4d6 *Sumptown Rats* are sent to kill or injure the PCs, led by *Miscra* (shaved head Varnori female with thievery brands, 4 HD, 1d2 doses of *Ghoulseen Admixture* LFG p.33).

Sumptown Rat, AC 12, HD 1, Shortsword 1d6 19: disarm, S10 D13 C10 I11 P13 W9 Ch10 L4, Mv 30 ft. Sumptown Rats have a 40% chance of carrying 1d2 firepots (LFG p.102).



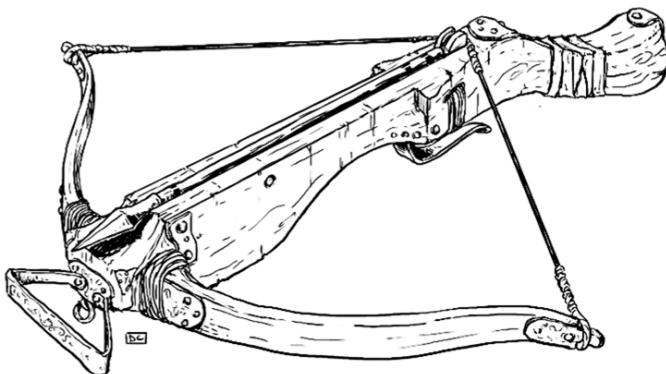
2. *Followed*. Belor 3 locates and shadows the party for half a day (or night), observing their activities and attempting to gauge their threat level before reporting back to his brothers. Note Belor 3 is an expert infiltrator and gains adv on hiding related checks (see p.11). If discovered, he flees.

3. *Poisoned*. A cook, bar wench, etc on Udan's payroll and working at the inn where the PCs are staying, attempts to poison one of the PCs (*Golden Scorpion* toxin in food/drink; ingested, 1d4 hours, reduces target to zero hp and causes 1d4 Str loss. (*Luck* (Con) save to negate hp loss). The toxin admixture manifests as stroke like symptoms. An apothecary examining the victim might determine the real cause (blood test, 2d6 hours, *Int* (Apothecary) test at disad unless familiar with the remote *Suurat Jungle* scorpion or rare poisons).

5. *Meeting*. The assassins send a messenger to the party, making arrangements to meet at *Morrigan's Den* (Midlands p.66, a tavern considered "neutral ground" that rivals gangs meet at, run by *Morrigan*, a female of breathtaking beauty, Bard 6).

Belor 2 goes to meet with the party to personally attempt to persuade them to ditch their assignment with Jester. Under no circumstances will Belor attack. When it is time to leave, a stablehand appears with a swift horse for Belor to depart on (if the party pursues him and he needs to escape, you might adapt the **Rooftop Rumble** encounter on p.8).

6. *Pre-emptive Strike*. The Belors decide the best strategy is to kill the PCs ASAP. They launch an ambush as the PCs are travelling the streets, Belor 1 from the rooftops, Belor 2 surges out of a sewer grate, and Belor 3 in disguise as an old lady. The triplets strike to kill, but will flee if clearly outclassed or if any of them are slain.



4. *Warning*. The cook referred to in entry 3 leaves a message in the PC's room, a scrawled parchment note (Belor 2's handwriting): "*Leave the city by dawn or we'll bury you in the sewer.*"

Setting a Trap

The PCs might try to draw the assassin into a trap, perhaps by parading one or more of the lieutenants (and/or Jester) in public, hoping to bait him into attacking. The various dukes are reluctant to play bait however, and understand that being herded together increases the risk of attack. They will take some convincing to co-operate with such a plan (*Cha* (Persuasion) check at disad vs Will).

If this strategy is adopted, Belor 1 attempts to kill one or more of the targets at whatever public venue the PCs lure him to (per timeline p.10).

Belor 1 may or may not suspect a setup, depending on how conspicuous the PCs are, and whether the Belors have obtained any intel on them (eg: due to the PCs making inquiries, etc). If he suspects a trap he brings back up (3d6 *Sumptown Rats*). Either way, Belor 1 prefers to attack the target with a heavy crossbow and poisoned bolt (1d3 doses of *Purple Worm* venom, Luck (Con) save or dead), shooting from a rooftop at 300 – 400 ft range.

After taking his poisoned shots, Belor 1 flees. The GM might transition this to the **Rooftop Rumble** (p.8).

Hole Up

If the PCs decide to hole up with Jester/Lieutenants and wait for the assassins to come to them, Jester can offer a little used safehouse as the site; an empty merchant's home on *Butterwood Lane* in the market quarter.

The rats recently took ownership of the building but have rarely used it, except to stash the occasional piece of stolen property. Alternatively the PCs might arrange their own bolthole.

If the PCs use the Butterwood site, they are free to make changes to the interior of the house (including setting traps, etc), but are not permitted to change the exterior (which must continue to blend into the neighbouring homes, hiding in plain sight).

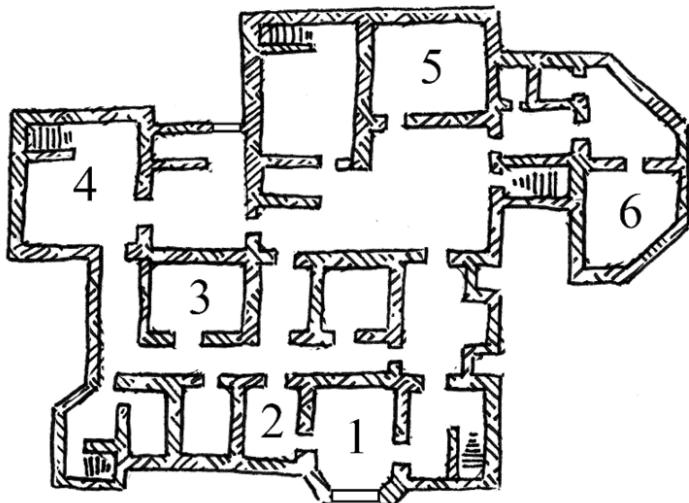
The house is half brick, half wood, similar to early Tudor houses. The front and back doors are reinforced oak, with master locks (disad on picking attempts) and may be barred (5 x Str checks at disad to break). Entry is via the front or back door, the many windows with wooden shutters, or by removing roof tiles to enter the roof cavity.

Doors and windows are not marked on the map, excepting the front and back doors. Every room or hallway with an external wall will have one or more windows.

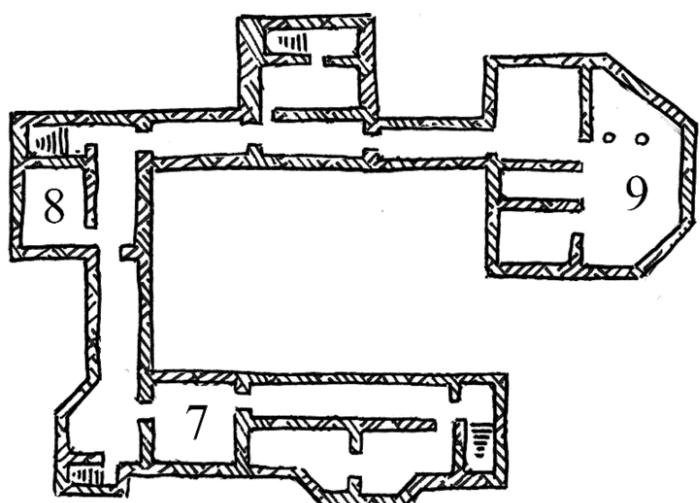
Room key:

- (1) *Entry Hall* (grand entry chamber, appointed with painting and vases on alabaster plinths).
- (2) *Sitting Room* (some comfortable reclining couches and tea table)

FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



(3) *Music Room* (collection of medieval instruments)

(4) *Study* (walls and bookcases of books, secondary stairs in corner)

(5) *Kitchen* (benchtops, pantry, chairs)

(6) *Dining Room* (long table, chairs, crockery cupboard)

(7) *Games Room* (card tables, darts)

(8) *Secondary Bedroom* (small bed, wardrobe, desk, door may be locked)

(9) *Master Bedroom* (large bed, walk in robe, desk, chair, expensive rug and paintings (1d6 x 300 gp), door may be locked).

If the PCs hole up here for long enough, eventually the Belors come for them (Day 4+), attempting to sneak in through the rooftop. They bring 3d6 Sumpstown Rats with them (who remain atop nearby buildings) as backup, a fighting rearguard, or to provide a distraction.

Disrupting the Next Attack

The PCs might wish to follow (secretly or otherwise) one or more of Jester's lieutenants, or Jester herself, hoping to be on hand when an assassination attempt is made.

Further to the Belors' timetable (p.10), this strategy is eventually successful, with Belors 1 & 3 attempting a quick kill and getaway. Subject to the target being on the street at some point, the attack comes from above, shooting poison bolts at the victim until the PCs intervene.

The exact time and location of the attack is flexible, but the default is at dusk below *Korrin's Belltower* in the residential quarter; a particularly crowded district of winding alleys. The assassins attack from the rooftop of the belltower and nearby buildings, shooting at the target and PCs,

before eventually making their escape across the rooftops of the city.

The belltower is 80 ft high and scaling it requires a Str (Athletics) check (half movement, or at disadvantage for 2/3 movement). Failing a check results in a fall from about halfway through the current movement. Alternatively, PCs might simply return fire, scale nearby buildings, throw grappling hooks or use the tower's internal stairwell (city clerks are inside the belltower, and will protest adventurers barging in).

Rooftop Rumble

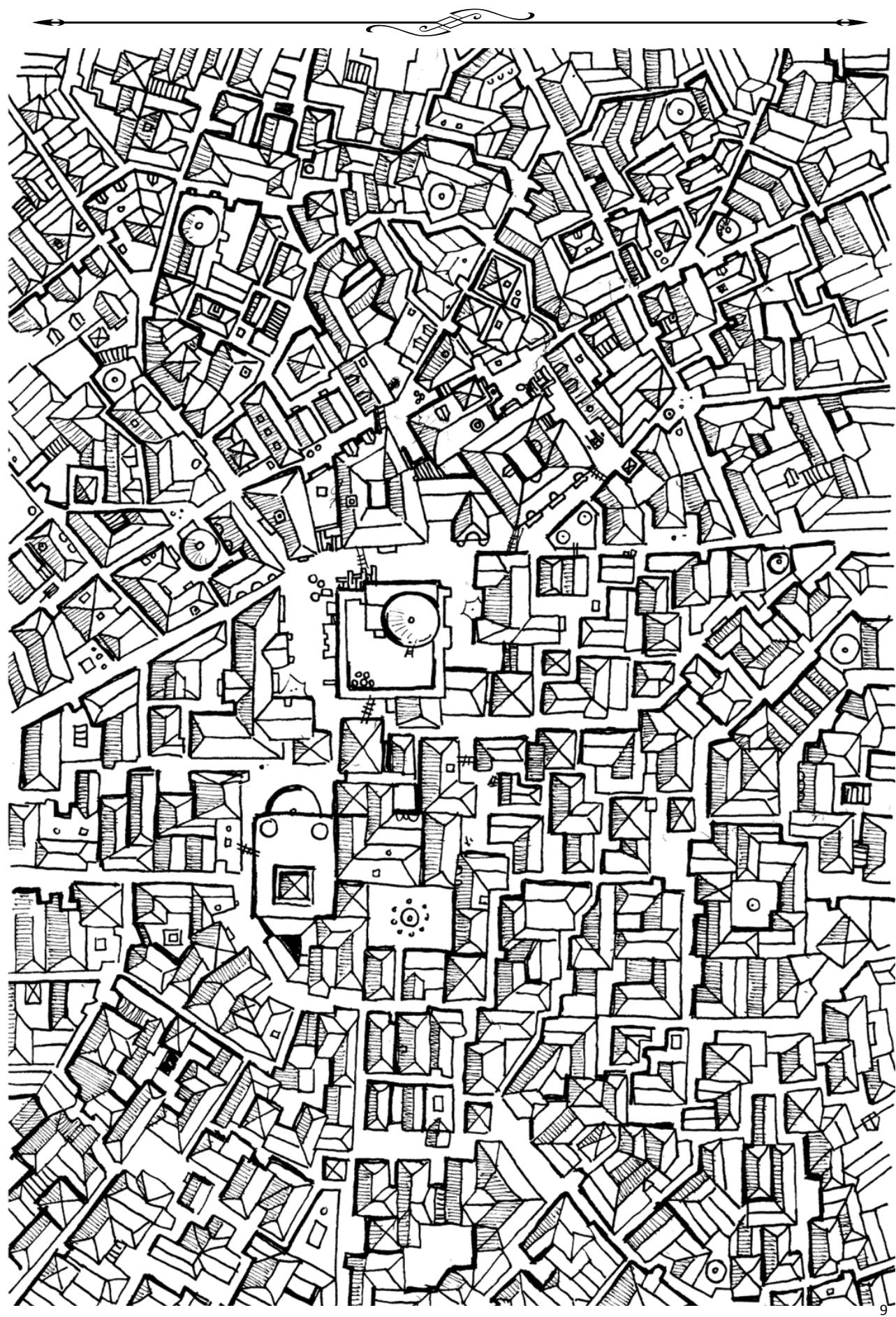
Assuming there is some kind of confrontation on the rooftops, the map on p.9 depicts the streets and buildings for the battle to range across.

Note many of the buildings are close enough together that a PC can attempt to leap across (Str (Athletics) or Dex (Acrobatics) check or fall, buildings are 1d3 x 10 ft high). Additionally, the map includes ladders/planks positioned across gaps, sturdy eaves, and other outcroppings to assist with movement (left by chimney sweeps, burglars, etc).

If one or both of the Belors are slain, the remainder flee, seeking to escape. The brothers are experts in disengaging, and if not grabbed or otherwise restrained, may make a Dex check at the end of a round to transition into a Chase scene.

For the purposes of a Chase (LFG p.83), the following complications might ensue:

- *Large Crowds*
 - Street: Funeral procession, shepherd with herd of bison, packing up street stall.



- Rooftop: Chimney sweeps playing cards, meeting of star gazers, flock of bats.
- *Dangerous Hazards*
 - Street: a boisterous bar fight engulfing passers by, gang of 1d6+2 thugs, falling debris from above, starving or rabid dog pack, startled horse kick, glass from a broken window.
 - Rooftop: barbed wire, collapsed chimney rumble, poison snake nest in drain, Sumptown rat rearguard take pot shots at the PCs, 1d3 bear traps to discourage break & enters).
- *Obstructions*
 - Street: horse and cart, chain link fence, stack of barrels or crates, slippery from overflowing drain or other spill.
 - Rooftop: faulty roof tiles, broken lantern oil slick, caltrops dropped by the assassins/rats derelict roof in danger of collapse, 1d4+1 private sentries on duty.
- *Third Parties*
 - Street: 1d4 beggars, 1d6 city watch, an overly amorous drunkard, tired woman a with broom trying to separate two fighting cats.
 - Rooftop: depressed money lender, 1d3 rats fire crossbows at the party, cranky old gent smoking his pipe ("get off my roof!").

The Assassins

The Belors are in their early 20's, identical triplets, heralding from another city where they trained as assassins during their teens, under the auspices of a secret assassins' guild. They take great pains to masquerade as a single person and conceal their individual identities. The Belors are relatively unknown in Port Brax, except to high ranking underworld figures such as Udan.

While on a mission, the triplets dress the same or wear disguises as other people. They may or may not carry the same weapons as their brothers, depending on their need at the time. On some occasions the brothers will carry identical heavy crossbows, but at other times will be armed with their favoured loadout.

The brothers are loyal to themselves, their guild, and no-one else. Ruthless and methodical, they mean to engage in sufficient murder for hire to fill their coffers, then retire to a quiet life beyond the sea. If all goes well, this will be their last job.

The triplets' plan is straight forward, but like most plans, will change in response to their opponents. In this case, the Belors strategy is as follows:

1. On the day the PCs are hired, another duke is slaughtered, ostensibly by a single assassin.
2. On Day 2, the assassins seek out the location of one or more lieutenants.
3. On Day 3, a lieutenant is attacked and killed, unless prevented by the PCs. If prevented by the PCs, they learn 1d4 hours later that a different lieutenant (or other duke) was killed at the same time, elsewhere in the city (descriptions suggest the same assassin that the PCs

foiled, but in truth another of the triplets).

4. On Day 4 the assassins seek to locate Jester (75% chance each day, modified by actions taken by PCs to hide her, assuming they can convince her to go into hiding).
5. Assuming the Belors locate Jester, all three assassins come for her the same night.

Ambushing the Party

If the Belors are aware that the PCs are hunting them, they might seek to lure the party into a trap by using Belor 2 as bait, particularly if the PCs appear oblivious to the fact that there are three of them. When the trap is sprung, all three Belors attack, along with 3d6 *Sumptown Rats*.

Belor Stats

Belor #1, AC 13 (leather), HD 6, Heavy crossbow 4d8+2, 19: special, S15 D15 C11 I14 P14 W13 Ch9, L12, Mv 30 ft. 1d3 doses of *Fireblood* poison (LFG p.33), climbing gear, caltrops, hand axe, shield slung over back.

Belor #1 is an expert sniper, ignoring long range penalties and inflicting double damage dice (inc above). On a Nat 19 the target must roll on the *Injuries & Setbacks* table (players may choose to make a *Luck* save to negate). Major Exploit Protection, Backstab, Skirmisher and Finisher abilities like a 6th level Rogue, may choose from the following tricks three times per combat: *Choking Dust*, *Cat's Grace*, *Blind Sense*, *Quick Reflexes*, *Smoke Bomb*, *Rapid Dose*.

Belor #2, AC 13 (leather), HD 8+4, 2 x Greatsword 1d12+3, 19: daze, S16 D15 C11 I14

P14 W13 Ch9, L10, Mv 30 ft. Dagger, climbing gear, caltrops.

Belor #2 is a fearsome close combatant. He has Major Exploit Protection and the Fighter Adaptable ability, with the Two hander style. He may change styles four times per combat. Gains *Off Turn Attacks* when staggered.

Belor #3, AC 14 (leather), HD 7, 2 x Scimitars 1d8+1, 19: disarm, S12 D17 C11 I14 P14 W13 Ch15, L12, Mv 30 ft. Dagger, climbing gear, caltrops, disguise kit, 1d2 doses *Whisperfog*.



Belor #3 is an expert in infiltration, impersonation and disguise, gaining adv on Deception and Stealth related abilities. Belor #3 has the Bard abilities Inspire Greatness and Rally, which he may choose from up to 4 times per

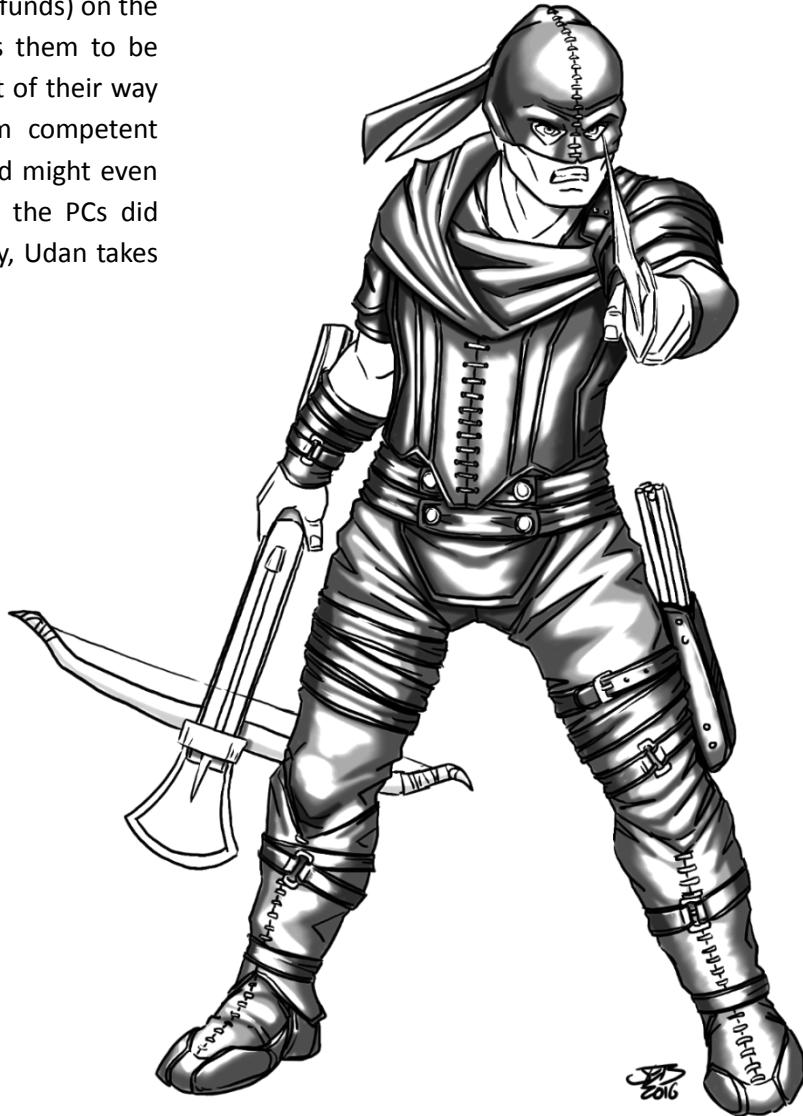
combat. May parry missile weapons by making a Luck (Dex) save. Major Exploit Protection.

If the brothers suspect they are walking into a trap, they arrange for 3d6 *Sumptown Rats* to accompany them as backup.

Aftermath

The Belors do not give up as long as they live. If they are driven away, they retreat to safety, bind their wounds, recruit more rats and/or other mercenaries to aid them.

If all three are killed however (3 x Carry Loot and 3 x Valuables, LFG p.136, 147), Udan decides he has expended enough energy (and funds) on the dukes, and magnanimously allows them to be (for now). Unless the PCs went out of their way to kill rats, Udan considers them competent mercenaries, no more, no less, and might even offer them work in the future. If the PCs did slaughter more rats than necessary, Udan takes note and holds a long grudge.



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