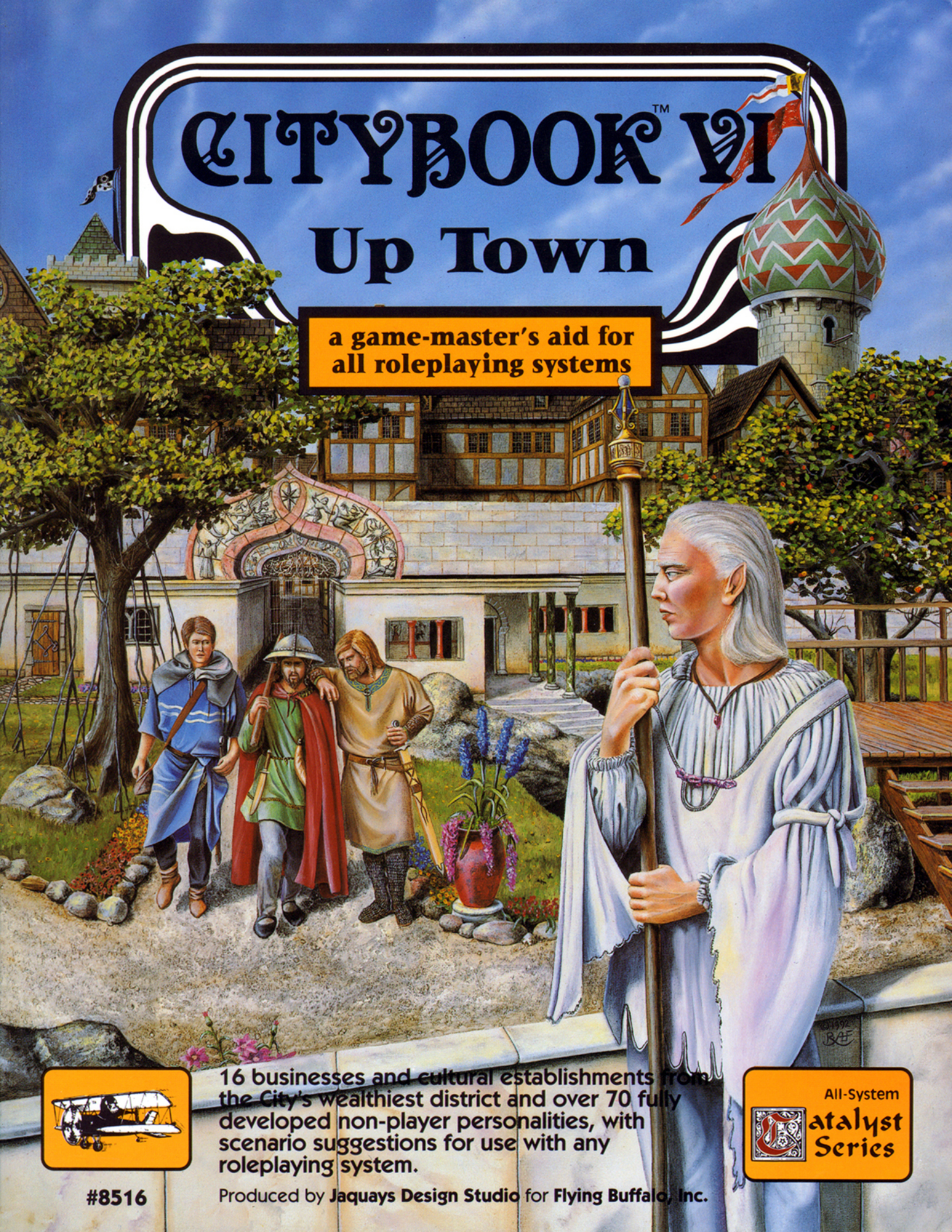


# CITYBOOK™ VI

## Up Town

a game-master's aid for  
all roleplaying systems



#8516

16 businesses and cultural establishments from the City's wealthiest district and over 70 fully developed non-player personalities, with scenario suggestions for use with any roleplaying system.

Produced by Jaquays Design Studio for Flying Buffalo, Inc.



All-System  
**Catalyst**  
Series

# CITYBOOK™ VI

## Up Town

a game-master's aid for  
all roleplaying systems

*Edited by Paul Jaquays  
& Randall G. Kuipers*

16

*fully-described businesses, organizations  
and cultural establishments for use with any  
roleplaying system, including over 70 completely  
developed non-player personalities to interact  
with your players' characters in City adventures.*

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Published by  
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Produced by  
**JAQUAYS  
DESIGN  
STUDIO**

### More Credits

**Cartography:** Paul Jaquays, Ruta Jaquays, Randall G. Kuipers  
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**Layout & Pasteup:** Randy R. Cox, & Paul Jaquays  
**Dedication:** To the loyal fans of CityBook who have supported it for 10 years, & encouraged us to continue onward in ever greater explorations of our City.  
And a special thanks to Matt Russell and Mike Lyons of Russell Creative Group who greatly facilitated the production of this book.

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**A Catalyst Product**

— a catalyst to spark your Imagination —

**On the cover:** Aril'na' Aroe, master, or perhaps the victim of Amaranthine's Rest casts a wary eye upon a trio of road-weary adventurers who have come visiting his gardens of magic and mystery.

# Introduction



Wealth, Prestige, Power. To many, these symbolize the ultimate goal of the adventurer. Yet... upon reaching that lofty goal, where does one go to hobnob with the wealthy? Where can one flaunt one's hard-earned prestige, wield power amongst one's new-found peers, or just spend all that loot in one place?

Why to *Up Town*, of course! Home of wealthy nobles, merchant princes, patrons of the fine arts ... and patrons of adventure.

Welcome then, o' urban adventurer. Welcome to the artfully cobbled streets, fountained plazas and finely bred folk of the City's better quarter. Needless to say, that despite their bluer blood and the rich cut of their clothes, the upper crust of society are sprinkled liberally with more than a few flakes and crumbs.

Of course, if you've been slumming in *Sideshow*, the inhuman district set forth in *CityBook™ V*, then you'll need to clean up a bit, brush the exotic hairs (and slime) off your clothes ... or better yet, change into something elegant, in keeping with your new neighbors.

Don't plan on coming in from the wilds, looking like you just crawled out of some hole in the ground and expect to be welcomed into the courts of nobles, the salons, or even the fine shops this district has to offer. In *Up Town*, appearances do matter, as does one's pedigree, one's important friends, and of course, the size of one's money vault.

## The Rules (OK, no rules)

If you make regular trips to the City, then you will find things comfortably the same. Peruse and pick those establishments which best suit your needs.

If this is your first visit to the world of the City, then let's talk about what you can expect to find in its streets. As with all Catalyst™ books, everything is described in "generic" terms. What that means is that no game-specific numbers, statistics or magical spells are given. CityBooks are written to provide a variety of people, places and things for your game adventures. It is up to you as Game Master (GM) to add the numbers (if needed) and make the modifications (if any) that will fit them into your preferred game system and adventure world. The coding system explained in the section entitled *GM Guidelines* should make this easy. And please, do feel free to modify, edit, expand and otherwise change things to fit your needs. After all we write these things to encourage your creativity, not stifle it.

Continuing on... this CityBook is arranged by general categories of establishments. Those places that deal with the district (or even the City) as a whole will be found under *Community Services*. Those that provide food, drink, rest and fun come under the heading of *Lodging & Entertainment*. Those that sell a service or product more useful to an individual (as opposed to the whole City) gather together under the banner of *Personal Services*.

## Chance Encounters

As in *CityBook IV: On the Road*, we've added a pair of characters who move throughout the streets, plazas and salons of

*Up Town* with no real need for an establishment of their own. These "*Chance Encounters*" are sure to provide a few motivations for adventure.

## Converting to Your Needs

*Up Town* needs the adventurers from your world to finish bringing it to life. And that world need not be one of medieval fantasy. With a change of costume (and perhaps a few appropriate props), the fantasy folk of the City can step into nearly any game genre. It doesn't take much to imagine the remote Aril'na'Aroe as the proprietor of a strange 1920s health spa ... that draws its curative and *other* powers from the elder being that sleeps below it; or to transform the *Lost Inn* into haunted hotel in some European backwater hamlet; or to move the races at *Harrow Downs* to some futuristic alien world.

## Less Links, Plays Great

Something's different this time. We've loosened the cross linkages between establishments in *Up Town*. Some GMs have found it cumbersome to un-link establishments and characters from each other. Nevertheless, you will still find several influential characters moving in and about the various establishments. How could it be a CityBook without them?

And remember, CityBook establishments are designed to stand alone. None of them depreciate in play value if pulled free of their linkages.

Again, these places are *yours* to play with, to change, to warp, reform, deform, defame and kill. You can do anything you desire with them and we won't cry. This CityBook is yours. All we ask is that, in whatever form, you make our ideas and imaginings a part of your world of adventure.

## Fairly Standard Closing Paragraph (or so)

As each author adds an establishment, the legend and lore of the City continues to grow. Already plans are in place for the next two additions to the world that holds *your* City. Be a part of it when it happens. And let us know how you feel about what we've been doing, both right and wrong.

As always, the editors of CityBook are on the lookout for talented writers with innovative, creative ideas for the CityBook line of products. If you think you have the skill and professionalism it takes to be a contributor to CityBook, send a 9" x 12" self-addressed mailing envelope with enough postage to cover two ounces mailing weight to: CityBook Authors' Guides, c/o Flying Buffalo, Inc., P.O. Box 1467, Scottsdale, AZ 85252-1467. Address specific questions to CityBook Editor, care of the same address. A self-addressed, stamped envelope ensures a reply.

Once again, we bid you welcome to our little corner of imagination ...

# GM Guidelines

**S**ince *CityBook™ VI: UpTown* is a generic role-playing aid, no game-specific statistics for NPC's or monsters are given. However, as an aid to the GM who must convert our descriptions into game mechanics, we have provided the following guidelines to help you adapt *CityBook VI: UpTown* to your favorite game system. Keep in mind that this is now *your* book; if you wish to change anything, go ahead!

## General Attributes

It isn't necessary to give each non-player character (NPC) in *CityBook VI: UpTown* complete attributes such as Power, Luck, Wisdom and so forth. However, should you choose to do so, you will note in the character descriptions such phrases as "very strong," "quick," "stupid," "beautiful," etc. By noting these phrases and reflecting them in the NPC's attributes, you should come out with a fairly accurate set of statistics for the person in question.

## Fighting Prowess

At times, player adventurers will probably get into fights with non-player characters. We have provided a seven-level coding system to describe how well a particular *CityBook VI* NPC can fight. In some cases, the combat ability of an NPC is given in terms of a specific weapon or weapons (e.g., Kurtt von'Orion of *Marianrose Conservatorium* is Good with darts, and Average with melee weapons). In other cases, the fighting prowess is overall (e.g., Kurtt's wife, Elaina von'Orion is Poor overall).

There are two ways to randomize for the fighting prowess of an NPC. You can roll 1d6 for the attribute (6 means the character is an Excellent fighter) or you can roll 1d100 and use the percentages given after the ratings to determine the NPC's skill level. Remember, the percentages refer to how well that NPC stacks up in relation to all other fighters in your average world. Therefore, a "Poor" fighting prowess would account for about 40% of all fighters met, and an "Excellent" prowess would only fit about 4% of the fighters. If you put a "Poor" fighter into your campaign, we expect that 60% of the rest of the fighters in your world can soundly thrash him.

These are the codes for fighting prowess:

- Poor.** Unfamiliar with combat arts; can be easily wounded or killed. (01 - 40%)
- Average.** A run-of-the-mill type, but certainly no mistaking him for a hero. (41 - 59%)
- Fair.** Better than average and will acquit himself adequately. (60 - 74%)
- Good.** Can go one-on-one with seasoned veteran fighters. (75 - 84%)

- Very Good.** This person can cause a lot of trouble in combat. (85 - 95%)
- Excellent.** If blood is spilled, it's not likely to come from this character... (96 - 100%)
- Legendary.** This character's skill with weapons goes beyond mortal limits. Bards will sing tales of his or her fighting prowess for generations to come. (101%+)

## Magic Ability

To determine the expertise with which an NPC uses magic power, *CityBook VI: UpTown* employs a seven-level system similar to the one for fighting prowess. This is listed in the NPC descriptions as "Magic Ability," and will be followed by a listing of the particular areas in which the magic-user might be competent in (see "The Eight C's of Magic" below). If an NPC has no Magic Ability listed, then none exists.

The codes for Magic Ability are:

- Poor.** A hedge wizard or apprentice. Might very well turn himself into a frog. (01 - 40%)
- Average.** Competent, but hardly a world-shaker. Only a few spells at his command. (41 - 59%)
- Fair.** Possesses a wider range of spells. Effective, but not powerful. (60 - 74%)
- Good.** Knows numerous spells in many categories, and is versatile in their use. (75 - 84%)
- Very Good.** Knows powerful spells in most of the Eight C's. Formidable. (85 - 95%)
- Excellent.** Not a person to cross. Can easily command almost all the known spells, and might be able to turn the party into anchovy paste with a single gesture. (96 - 100%)
- Legendary.** Skills may exceed mortal limits. Found only in god-like beings or heroes out of mythology. Spells? Who needs mere spells with power like this? (101%+)

Given the diversity of magic systems in fantasy gaming, it is impossible to assign specific spells or powers to any magic-using NPC in this or any other *CityBook*. However, spells or powers can be broken down into categories of magic, regardless of what game system you use. Thanks to Michael A. Stackpole, *CityBook* has the "Eight C's System" to give some idea of what type of magic a particular NPC might wield.

- C1. Combat Magic.** Any spell used primarily in an offensive/defensive manner in combat.
- C2. Curative Magic.** Any spell used to heal wounds, cure diseases, stop poison damage, etc.
- C3. Clairvoyant Magic.** Any spell used to detect things:

secret doors, magic, hidden or trapped items, etc.

- ❑ **C4. Conveyance Magic.** Teleportation, levitation, flying, telekinesis spells, etc.
- ❑ **C5. Communication Magic.** Any spell used to communicate or convey information, including: telepathy, translation, hypnosis, magic reading spells, etc.
- ❑ **C6. Construction Magic.** Any spell which uses matter or energy to “build”: wall spells, protective fields, stone-shaping spells, etc.
- ❑ **C7. Concealment Magic.** Any spell which serves to hide or misdirect: invisibility, illusion, shape-shifting spells, etc.
- ❑ **C8. Conjunction Magic.** Any spell which produces a condition or entity: light spells, weather control, demon-summoning spells, etc.

Keep in mind that a character with Magic Ability need not always be a sorcerer. An NPC could possess certain magic abilities as a result of owning some device or from some form of supernatural intervention. You can also use the Magic Ability Chart randomly by rolling either 1d6 or 1d100 (as was suggested for the Fighting Prowess chart) to judge the level of a magic-using character, and 1d8 to determine the areas on the “Eight C’s” list in which the character may be competent.

## Locks

Light-fingered thieves and pilfering rogues are ever-present in the world of fantasy, and run rather thick in this *CityBook*<sup>TM</sup>. To help the GM deal with these types, *CityBook* uses a system to code the difficulty of any locks encountered. These codes appear in the text when a reference is made to a chest, door or similar locked item (e. g., “locked<sup>3</sup>,” which means the lock is “Fair”), and usually on the maps themselves in reference to doors.

The codes for locks are as follows:

- ❑ **1. Poor.** An orphan with a hat-pin could open this lock. (01 - 40%)
- ❑ **2. Average.** A little tougher to jimmy this open; just adequate. (41 - 59%)
- ❑ **3. Fair.** Takes some effort to open. (60 - 74%)
- ❑ **4. Good.** Particularly tough. Probably will require special tools to open. (75 - 84%)
- ❑ **5. Very Good.** Will take even a master thief a long time to open. (85 - 95%)
- ❑ **6. Excellent.** Could require magic or a howitzer to open easily—unless you have the key. (96 - 100%).
- ❑ **7. Legendary.** Assume that a god or someone with like powers wanted this thing locked up. Definitely has some kind of magical component or defenses built in. (101% +)

Again, the percentages here refer to what percentage of such locks exist in an average cross-section. Many locks fall into the “poor” category, and there are only a few truly “excellent” locks,

and “legendary” locks are found only in legendary situations. Worth noting is that most doors are not locked at all.

You could also use the percentages to indicate how many thieves could jimmy the lock. For example, at least 60% of all thieves could jimmy a “poor” lock, while 4% or less could undo an “excellent” lock. The GM will have to determine how well a particular thief character does when confronted with a certain level of lock (i. e., a very poor thief would have lots of trouble with even a “fair” lock). Once again, a GM can randomize on this lock system to learn the nature of any lock.

## Monetary Guidelines

Prices in *CityBook* are usually given in overall terms (i. e., “low,” “reasonable,” and “expensive”). You should use common sense regarding these terms; a reasonable price for a broadsword would be outrageous when applied to a single arrow. Where prices are actually listed, *CityBook* assumes this standard: 10 copper pieces = 1 silver piece; 10 silver pieces = 1 gold piece; a gold piece represents approximately \$1 in U.S. Currency. This currency system obviously must be altered to fit your own economic system.

## Time Frame

*CityBook* uses a standard 24-hour day as its time frame. If your world operates under a different system, alter the times given to fit it.

## Non-Human Races

*CityBook VI: Up Town* is a typical *CityBook*. Most *CityBooks* deal with human establishments and have human (or near human) proprietors. For color, we’ve included some non-humans and a few half-breeds. If it doesn’t fit into your campaign to have a halfling wizard or a troll bouncer, feel free to adapt it to a more human equivalent.

## World History

Several of the establishments in this *CityBook* mention events that took place long ago, far away or some combination thereof. While most of the details are hazy enough to slip them into any campaign as rumors, some of the events might conflict with established campaign history. In this case the GM should change the historical events to something parallel in his or her own world or slowly let the players “discover” these new facts as needed.

# Explanation of Maps



he multitude of symbols on this and the opposite page shouldn't panic you. You will find most to be self-explanatory in conjunction with the text. The maps are intended to both show what the room would look like, and what the room contains. The views are taken as though you were looking down on the building with the roof removed; if there is more than one floor, each is provided on a separate map.

The key will provide you with the meanings for the various symbols used to indicate a room's contents and furnishings. Most objects are shown by reasonable facsimile of their actual shape. However, certain items have been stylized for easy recognition. For instance, a bed in a fantasy world does not necessarily look like the symbol used to represent a bed on the map — but when you look at the symbol, you *know* it's a bed.

In simplest terms: read the text and look at the map which accompanies it. You should find it reasonably clear and easy to understand. If you still have trouble figuring out part of it, check back here for the key.

Note that *most* of the maps in this book are oriented so that, when read normally, north is at the top of the page (exceptions to this are noted on the maps). An explanation of symbols unique to a particular establishment is provided with each map. Different scales have been used, and each map has its scale noted on it for easy reference.

## Containers



crate



cask or barrel



chest



gunny sacks



sack of gold



cupboard, cabinet or dresser table



display case



pigeonhole cabinet



bin



lockbox (# = lock strength)



water bucket or barrel



bathing tub



baking oven



debris



hay and straw

## Basics

plain wall

barred wall

ruined stone wall

brick fence, unroofed wall

railing, rail fence

dirt path

stone edged path

single plain door

double door

locked door (# = lock strength)

barred door

secret door

swinging door

sliding door

cage door

trap door

stairs

spiral stairs

ramp

ladder

post, pole, support beam

counter

tree

garden

fireplace, hearth, or forge

# Key to All Maps

## Other Common Objects



table



chair

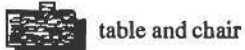
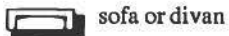
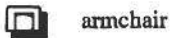


table and chair



sofa or divan



armchair



bench



stool



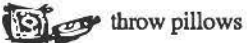
single bed



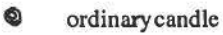
double bed



bunk bed



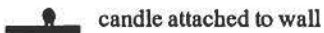
throw pillows



ordinary candle



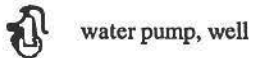
freestanding candle



candle attached to wall



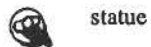
wood pile



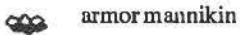
water pump, well



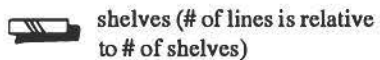
podium



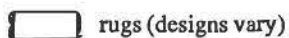
statue



armor mannikin



shelves (# of lines is relative to # of shelves)



rugs (designs vary)



privies



trough



printing press



haircutting tools



wig stand



anvil



rock

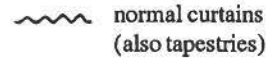


winch

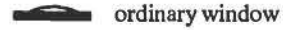


boom

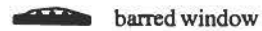
## Wall Fixtures and Accessories



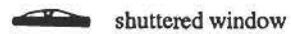
normal curtains  
(also tapestries)



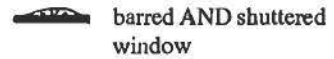
ordinary window



barred window



shuttered window



barred AND shuttered  
window



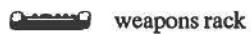
clerestory window



wall peg



hook



weapons rack

# Up Town Themes

**W**hen we first developed the theme for this CityBook, we anticipated a response of fairly standard establishments to serve the well-to-do. Imagine our surprise (and delight!) to discover them to be anything but that. This CityBook might well be subtitled "Gates to the Beyond." For many are just that, arcane portals to realms, planes and states of being beyond the mortal.

It seemed right to us that the dominant themes and crosslinks in this CityBook should focus on the establishments' inherent otherworldliness. A Game Master who chooses to use most of Up Town in his or her City may wish to weave these themes into a campaign. With them, the GM can draw the adventurers into the life of the City, even make them pivotal in the survival of the City ... and possibly the world.

The following are potential story lines to be woven into the fabric of Up Town. These are a general feeling of what the adventurers might come across as rumors, legends and talk on the street — not to mention more than a little intrigue and action.

## Jasmine's Fine Jewelry

What about the gargoyle atop Jasmine's. Is it a simple stone statue, or something more sinister (one of the hideous *Gaggle* from *CB5*). What if the wizard who owns the magical ruby that Wynnona swallowed so many years ago decides to reclaim it ahead of schedule?

## Tales of the Lost Inn

The Lost Inn is a crossroads, a nexus point for travel between "other" places. Once the adventurers find a reliable way in (and out!) it can serve as a jump-off place for many adventures.

**A Harrowing Experience.** Should Zeteti, the wizard of Harrow Downs actually kill her lover Ralsa Harrow, there is a chance that his shade will be at the Inn (although some may feel that Ralsa's death was justified). Telling only his side of the story, he asks the party to avenge his death.

**You're Too Late.** The party needs to speak with a noted sage. The woman knows a secret that they must learn to complete a quest. Only, they arrive to find that she has recently died at the hands of a jealous (and somewhat unbalanced) former pupil who was unable to become a sage himself. He felt that so long as his mentor lived, all the knowledge that she had obtained would remain trapped in her skull (which is why the pupil, had to kill her ... to free the knowledge for others to use).

The now totally insane murderer (who awaits execution in jail) will babble out his justifications for killing the sage, ending with "'Tis St. Germaine's hospitality that waits for me now,' she cackled at me." he said.

The sage will be there, waiting in the library. Of course, before she will part with her secret, there is the matter of vengeance ... for on the way to the execution block, the mad murderer escaped.

**Beyond a Shade of Doubt.** Lord Finster, the special investigator for the Justice Ministry seeks the solution to a series of confounding murders. If only the victims could speak. But then again, they can! The victims can be found among the shades of The Lost Inn. They will be more than happy to tell all they know, if it means that they will be avenged.

## STAFF

RANDY R. COX makes a second CityBook appearance as paste-up technician (learning a useful skill, instead spending all that time on engineering and computer software and stuff).

PANDA ENGLAND was available for work just when the editor needed a second pair of eyes to proof over the book. Trading book reviews (her latest novel draft vs. CityBook galleys) just seemed the appropriate thing to do.

PAUL JAQUAYS dons the mantle of senior editor, art director (and contributing cartographer) yet one time more, making his fourth appearance in a CityBook. As either a game designer, illustrator, or editor, his work has found its way into publications and computer products produced by numerous game companies.

RUTA JAQUAYS decided to put her college drafting classes to work on CityBook maps this time around (and make sure that her husband met deadline).

RANDALL G. KUIPERS has been in Jack-of-All-Trades training for three CityBooks now (four if you count that he remapped *CityBook III: Deadly Nightside*). Although you won't find any illustrations this time, Randy has written two establishments for *CB6*, edited many of them, and rendered a few of the maps.

## ILLUSTRATORS

Cover illustrator, RANDY ASPLUND-FAITH, is equally at ease wielding a pencil, paintbrush, airbrush or medieval halberd. His professional career began with a cover for the hardcover edition of C.J. Cherry's *Cuckoo's Egg*. Randy's work appears in *ANALOG*, *AMAZING STORIES*, *FATE* and various books by Llewellyn publishing. This is his second appearance in a CityBook.

The art of ELIZABETH T. DANFORTH is perhaps one of the greatest links in continuity between CityBooks, since you will find her illustrations in every one.

APRIL LEE holds degrees from Mount Holyoke College, Oxford University, and the Art Center College of Design — and really wishes that she had paid more attention in class. She has worked for various role-playing and computer game companies and comic book publishers as a free-lancer. Nevertheless, her idea of a good time is to draw elves, vampires and bishonen ... and show art at cons, travel, ski ... and attend concerts, and read novels and comics ... and do the occasional illustration for CityBook.

JOHN T. SNYDER currently supports his art career by managing a small business "Putt-Putt Golf & Games." Perhaps that has something to do with his most recent project: 80 illustrations and a cover for *Escape from Innsmouth* for Chaosium, Inc. ("Say, didn't I just see that drooling horror trying to putt past the windmill?") In no particular order John invests his free time in painting, drawing, guns, stupid fast cars and *Runequest*®.

MAURINE STARKEY is one of those open, outgoing people who you can't help but like. "Mo" spends her days creating pixel art for popular computer games, but wields a mean colored pencil. When I saw some of her control sketches for characters in earlier games over dinner with a mutual friend, I knew that she should be bringing the characters of CityBook to life.

SUSAN VAN CAMP spent fourth grade drawing strange pictures when she should have been studying her spelling words. She has since learned to spell and now draws and paints strange pictures for a living. (Hey! Somebody's gotta do it.) However, she never did figure out "new math." This is her second appearance in a CityBook.

GARY M. WILLIAMS is happy to announce that not only did his lovely daughter, Kyra Elizabeth Williams escape being born north of the Mason-Dixon (there was this chance that she might be born AT that ever-so-popular gaming convention held each August in Milwaukee, WI), but that he was recently promoted to the rank of lieutenant in "Hardin's Rangers" and "The Company of Overmountain Men." This is a historical recreations group that specializes in living history demonstrations of the French and Indian War and the American War for Independence. He takes this duty with great honor and responsibility, and wallows in the fact that after five years of being a re-enactor, he finally gets to push privates and sergeants around on a whim.

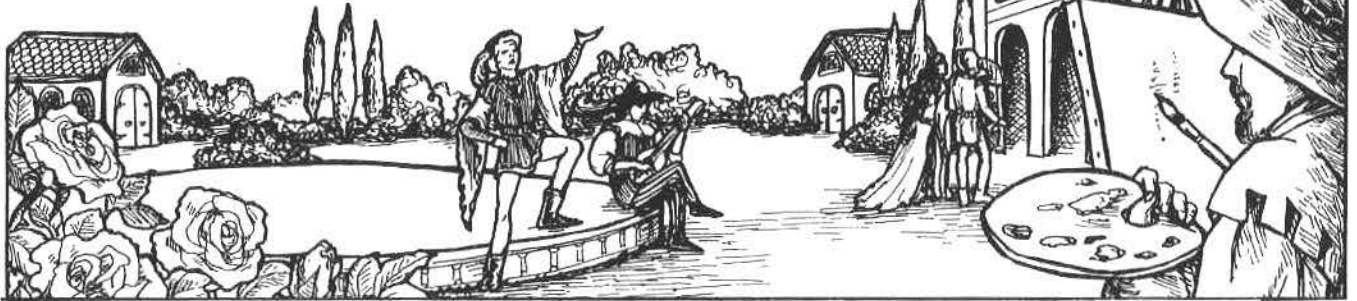


Delving into unknown dangers and horrors for untold wealth can place quite a strain on an adventurer. Isn't it a blessing that the City can provide balm for all needs ... particularly for those with the ability to pay?

For the psyche overexposed to ugliness and horror, *Marianrose Conservatorium* provides the salve of peace and beauty that only fine art, music and poetry can bring. For the weary of body, the magic pools of *Amaranthine's Rest* wash away fatigue and injury. The arching halls of *Greenhargon's Museum* display the successes of another adventurer's travels. For those overly burdened with wealth (and concern for its safekeeping), *Ironshield Financial Services* provides the peace of mind that comes from knowing one's treasure is safe. Were a temple to be built to every deity, every spirit, or every saint worshipped by the City's polyglot citizenry, half the buildings on its streets would be given over to priests and monks. *The Reliquarium* solves this challenge by housing artifacts and graven images sacred to hundreds, if not thousands of religions.

Typically, City guardsmen are trained to keep the peace, not to solve mysteries that surface when it has been broken. When *Lord Llewellyn Finster* investigates, adventurers are often called in to serve the wheels of justice. *Lord Westcott* also loves a mystery, but his investigations most often serve to better the lot of people in need.

# Marianrose Conservatorium



*Elegance. Culture. Even the richest cannot purchase such qualities with money alone. The studios of Marianrose Conservatorium allow Up Town's rich to cultivate a reputation for taste and distinction, by associating with the city's most fashionable artistes. At the same time, the Conservatorium offers opportunity to minstrels, sculptors, painters and performers. No matter what their station, the Conservatorium gives them funds, and a chance to associate with the very rich.*

The Marianrose Conservatorium operates what might be considered as an artistic protection racket. Those who aspire to true status among the upper class must fund this studio lavishly or risk gaining the reputation of a social barbarian. For the truly wealthy, the costs are insignificant. For but 100 gold coins per month they can appear suitably lavish. Those who are free with their money receive the right to lounge in the Conservatorium's salons, commission works of art for their palaces, manors and villas and refer to, "MAA-rean-voise," in the nasal foreign accent of regular patrons. The coarsest of the nouveau-riche may acquire a reputation for taste by patronizing artists here.

Anyone with talent may visit the Conservatorium, regardless of wealth. If adventurers can sing, paint, sculpt or perform, they may rent studios for a nominal sum. (10 gold coins per month.) They may also pass time in Marianrose's salons, meeting the richest people in the City. If they impress these people, they may receive grants, to fund their creative projects. The upper class use Marianrose in the same fashion as a neighborhood tavern, to chat, mingle and make deals.

The galleries of the Conservatorium stand open from noon to sundown throughout the week. During this period, anyone may visit to view the paintings and sculpture. Artists often haunt the Conservatorium during these hours, hoping to find wealthy

patrons. Once each week, the Conservatorium holds an auction, at which artwork often sells for enormous sums, amounting to many thousand gold coins. One-fifth (20%) of the proceeds in each sale goes to the Conservatorium.

Each night, after dark, singers, thespians and dancing troupes perform in the grassy Sward of Roses. Admission to such events costs a moderate five silver coins. Half the proceeds go to the Conservatorium, the remainder to the performers. The Conservatorium's caretaker, Virgil Nantusset decides who shall appear in the Sward.

## History

Marianrose has existed for nearly a century at the same location. The directors who founded the Conservatorium sought then, as now, to enhance their social standing through patronage of the arts.

## The Owners

A board of 11 directors oversees the long term finances and the trust fund that provides the stable base for the Conservatorium's finances. Each director owns a share of the Conservatorium, purchased or inherited from another director. Careful investment of these shares forms the basis for continuing operation of Marianrose. It goes without saying that the directors are among the wealthiest folk in the City.

## The Management

The directors leave the mundane management of the Conservatorium to caretaker Virgil Nantusset. He has a good eye for talent and will rarely be taken in by frauds.

## The Patrons

Regular patronage of the Conservatorium, its galleries, salons and artistic presentations shows culture, good breeding and social wisdom. The names of many well-to-do characters from Up Town and other CityBooks are found on Virgil's salon list,

Author THOMAS KANE once dwelt in a wilderness fasting deep within the Maine Woods, where not even a telephone could reach him ... emerging upon occasion to attend the local UMF-CON and to send manuscripts to the numerous game companies for which he writes. He has recently completed a cross-country move which now numbers him among the book's California contribution contingent. This is Tom's second appearance in a CityBook

including all three Forge brothers (Hiram, Hakan and Terrence - *CB4*), Thorin Ironshield, Lord Westcott, Keir Collis (*CB4*), Veradis (*CB4*), and Sandoren (*CB4*).

## Layout

Two clusters of graceful white structures make up the Conservatorium. The main galleries stand beneath a peaked roof supported by marble spires. A garden of green grass and rose-bushes surrounds the galleries, with artists' studios nestled among the flower beds. The Sward and its theater lie at the center of this community.

**A. Gallery (40' x 70')** Sunlight streams in through the skylights of this great hall, illuminating the artwork within. The gallery's exact contents vary from day to day, as people buy the exhibits and artists produce new ones. On busy days, the hall resembles a city bazaar, with easels standing everywhere and patrons milling around them.

The artwork of the gallery is seldom priceless, but those with an eye for art could probably "steal" something of moderate value (around 100 gold coins). At night, the gallery is sealed with a lock<sup>4</sup>. If thieves make more forceful protection necessary, the wealthy patrons of Marianrose can hire the most effective guards the City can offer.

**B. Salon (24' x 30')** Marianrose reserves this exclusive salon for those of proven taste or talent. In practical terms, one must have given the Conservatorium a substantial sum (at least 200 gold coins) within the past month to enter here. (And yes, there is a list, kept in the Office.) Artists whose work sells for worthy amounts (1,000 gold coins or more) may lounge at the salon at no charge.

Those eligible for this salon find the surroundings elegantly luxurious. Priceless teak paneling covers the walls. Guests may recline on silk couches stuffed with camel hair. In the evening, gilded oil lamps fill this room with a soft glow. Servants ply guests with delicate pastries and fine liqueurs. Nobody talks about a fee.

People discuss the finer points of art: the symbolism, significance and hidden meanings of esoteric pieces. The salon has several secluded booths for private conversation. Salon talk generally follows an unwritten code against criticizing any artist or patron too harshly. This leads to resentments, and most consider it unwise to arouse hostility among the wealthy patrons.

The salon has its own display of current art of favored artists. Its sublime portraits and elegant statues often sell for substantial prices (in the thousands of gold coins). A lock<sup>5</sup> protects this area at night. In addition, Gnebrek, formidable old troll, stands guard outside the door. He dresses in an elegant silk cloak and tunic and is a Very Good fighter.

**C1-C3. Studios** These stone buildings look washed and ornate from without. Inside, one generally discovers a glorious clutter. Each one-room Studio serves as an apartment and work space for one or more of the artists currently living at Marianrose. The furnishings are not luxurious, but many true artists prefer bohemian surroundings. Furthermore, Marianrose does not encourage anyone to live here long. Ideally, most artists will either find

housing of their own or move into the palace of a wealthy patron.

Current inhabitants of the studios include the following:

**Studio C1 (20' x 20')** Empty, available for rent.

**Studio C2 (20' x 22')** Elaina von'Orion, a poet and singer, reputedly an enchantress and Kurtt von'Orion, harpist, Elaina's husband and avid promoter. He tries to build an aura of glamour about his wife, describing her as a sorceress and claiming that she is fleeing her two wicked brothers, one a wizard and the other a warrior of gigantic proportions.

**Studio C3:** Artan Dumenn, artistic dabbler. Remarkably uncluttered, the studio contains a number of half finished paintings, sculptures and poetry manuscripts (all by other artists... which only an aficionado of the arts would recognize). Worth noting: all the works are stolen.

**D. Supply Room (20' x 14')** Locked<sup>3</sup> at all times. Shelves of pigments, brushes, chalks, inks, wood panels, parchments and other supplies line the walls of this shop. Rough-hewn blocks of sparkling white, uncarved marble and deep-toned wood stand at the center of the room. A glass case holds exquisite musical instruments. Virgil sells these items and arranges the purchase of more exotic supplies. The richer the client appears, the more Virgil charges.

**E. Virgil's Studio (20' x 30')** This apartment resembles the other studios, although it is slightly larger. Virgil keeps his floor swept and his possessions orderly, since he plans to live here for the indefinite future. He owns a varied assortment of art supplies. Much of the work is amateurish, though all show potential. None are valuable.

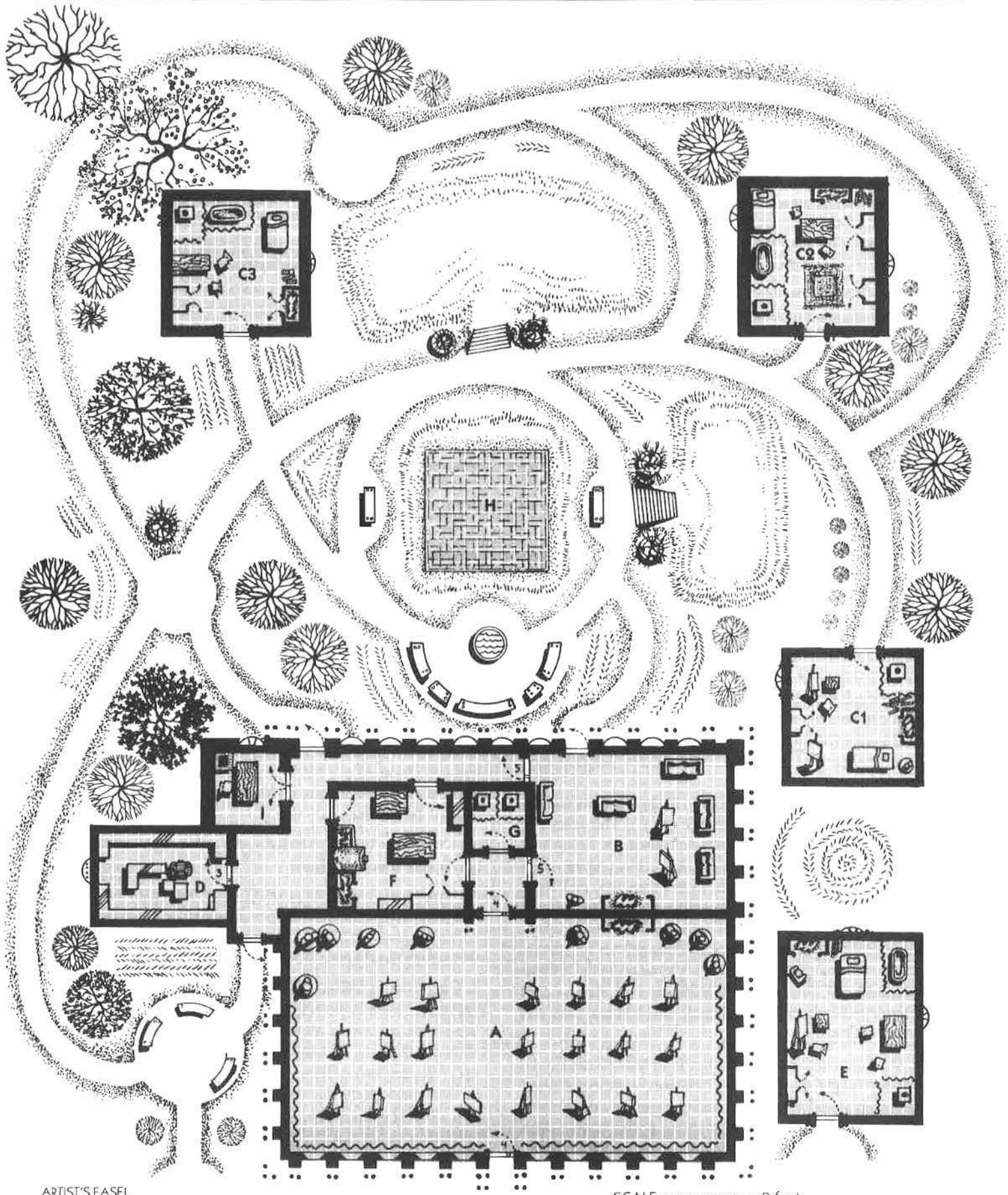
**F. Kitchen (20' x 18')** Powdered sugar billows in the air of this bakery. The tables contain a bewildering variety of baguettes, bagels, puffs, croissants and other refreshments in various stages of preparation. This kitchen also provides meals to the artists living in the Studios. Martha, the overworked cook, sometimes has a snide word for Marianrose and its pretentious clientele. Nevertheless, nobody can satisfy the Conservatorium's gourmet patrons better than she.

**G. Commode (8' x 8')** Marianrose's rich patrons employ these scrubbed ceramic facilities.

**H. Sward of Roses** (stage is 20' x 20', sward shape is highly irregular) Grassy lawns interspersed with rose-filled flower beds adorn the grounds of the Conservatorium. A wide slope behind the gallery overlooks a stone stage.

**I. Caretaker's Office (10' x 10')** During the day, Virgil the caretaker can be found here, planning future performances for the the Sward, reviewing art to be included in forthcoming gallery shows, balancing the books and dabbling at poetry to be used upon his next lady of the moment. A locked<sup>4</sup> strongbox contains no more than the current day's income (2d100 gold) and no less than 20 gold coins to cover expenses. Each afternoon, an inconspicuous courier discreetly delivers the money to *Ironshield's Financial Services* (q.v.) for safekeeping.

Also kept in the strongbox are Virgil's numerous lists: a list



ARTIST'S EASEL

HILL SIDE



SCALE: one square = 2 feet

of regular patrons, one of salon patrons, another of artists, and yet another recording art sales. Any one of these would be valuable to a thief.

**Personalities**

**Virgil Nantusset.** □ *Human male, Ht.: 5' 5", Wt.: 99#, Age: 29.* □ *Fighting Prowess: Poor.*

Virgil Nantusset is the caretaker of Marianrose and a potential mentor for all its clientele. The youngest son of a minor noble family, he came away with no inheritance other than his impeccable good taste, fine manners, extensive family connections and a talent for negotiation. Although he dabbles in esthetics of every sort, he has never spent long enough on any one project to become a true artist himself. Virgil contents himself by offering encouragement and practical help to others. He can always browbeat the wealthy into funding his budding geniuses.

The director of Marianrose affects a short cape, silk handkerchief and a lapel rose. Conservatorium funds allow him to wear the most elegant of silks. Virgil speaks with the slightly nasal accent of the upper class, and loves to discuss obscure facts and bits of intellectual trivia. Virgil's clean-shaven face and lacquered, shoulder-length hair add to his effete appearance. This only enhances his prestige as a potentate of the arts.

Virgil has no desire to marry, but he is not above shamelessly flirting with whatever beautiful women come his way for the sheer poetry of the thing. He takes none of his affairs seriously and assumes an attitude of condescending detachment when his paramours or their husbands do. Eventually, Nantusset's romances may land him in serious danger.

**Artan Dumenn.** □ *Human male, Ht.: 5' 9", Wt.: 120 #, Age: 23.* □ *Fighting Prowess: Good with dagger, Fair with all others.*

In Marianrose's constellation of old aristocracy, aspiring rich, and struggling artists, nobody quite knows where Artan fits in. He spends money freely. His introspective moods and dexterous hands suggest that he has artistic talents of his own. Although his studio contains numerous unfinished pieces, nobody has seen him work at his art. Nobody knows where he or his money came from. Artan is such a handsome, charming young man that nobody really cares.

Dumenn makes his living as Up Town's most accomplished jewel thief. The Conservatorium offers an ideal place both to select victims and recruit accomplices for his crimes. Dumenn does indeed consider himself an artist of sorts, and he takes enormous pride in his larcenous skills. However, aside from admiring the sheer beauty of a stealthy robbery, he has no scruples at all. Yet, he is not so foolish as to ply his skills at the Conservatorium.

**Elaina von'Orion.** □ *Human, female, Ht.: 5' 10", Wt.: 131#, Age: 27.* □ *Fighting Prowess: Poor.* □ *Magic Ability: Fair C6, Good C7, Very Good C5.*

**Kurtt von'Orion.** □ *Human, male. Ht.: 5' 10", Wt.: 169#, Age: 24.* □ *Fighting Prowess: Very Good with Darts, Average*

*with Melee weapons.* □ *Magic Ability: Average C5 and C8.*

Elaina has a gift for words — words to music, words of rhyme, words in magic. Writing a sonnet and enruning a blade come equally easy to her, and often she combines her disciplines. Her poems can physically affect the audience beyond the emotional swaying of the words. Skirmishes have stopped as the power of a scripted sword was called upon — not in fear, but by the spell's beautiful sounds.

Most of what the public knows is true. Elaina is an enchantress, Kurtt is her husband, and they are on the run. The tale of her fleeing two wicked brothers ensures, if nothing else, the compassion of the people and a safe haven. The story may or may not be true, but it certainly is romantic. The validity of their claims and the details behind it will be left to the Game Master.

**Martha.** □ *Human, female. Ht.: 5' 3", Wt.: 109 lbs., Age: 21.* □ *Fighting Prowess: Poor.*

Cook, pastry chef and kitchen manager for the Conservatorium. She trained in the kitchens of countless Forgeway Inns (CB4) and has little good to say of them. All the artists and performers are her friends and she is always willing to share news and street talk with them. But not so for patrons, or "leeches" as she calls them (with the exception of Arden Chatwick, Lord Westcott). Martha could work in any noble home or fine restaurant for half again what Marianrose pays her. Yet she stays on in hopes that Virgil Nantusset will direct his wandering attentions towards her ... and stay faithful.



— Virgil Nantusset —



— Gnebrek —

**Gnebrek.** □ Troll, male, Ht.: 7' 9", Wt.: 423#, Age: 110. □  
*Fighting Prowess: Good with club and hands.*

Gnebrek, the Conservatorium's doorman-cum-security guard may well be the oldest troll in the world. His 80-some years with the Conservatorium have not been particularly risky. Though age has gnarled his massive hands and dulled his fangs, few challenge him. Most regulars at Marianrose know him for his epic poetry, recited in thunderous roars during performances on the Sward. Because he cannot read, all his poems are composed and delivered from memory alone. Gnebrek has a modest room in the *Sideshow* (CB5) district of the City.

## Scenario Suggestions

**Scenario 1: Artsy Artie.** The adventurers need a little cash and Artan Dumenn has a way for them to earn it. An eccentric nobleman wants a troupe of actors for a performance he has designed. Artan thinks that with a little coaching, the adventurers would suit him quite well. And ... they would be lavishly paid.

Artan gets them the job, but desires something for his effort. He wants a floor plan showing the way to Florentio's shark aquarium, with guards and alarm systems noted. Those who ask Artan's motives need not expect an answer. A doubting party could back out, but only at the expense of the graciousness of the local nobility.

Artan, of course, intends to rob the establishment. Florentio owns the Sea Tear, a pearl the size of a robin's egg. He keeps it in the original oyster shell, in a tank containing three live sharks. Numerous other traps and alarms and guardians block the route to the aquarium.

If the party cooperates with Artan, he expertly purloins the

pearl. If Florentio blames anyone, it will be the adventurers. They, of course, could report Artan, but before the theft they have no proof and afterward they would face trial as accomplices. Truly clever adventurers might use other contacts to find out what Artan wants ... and steal the pearl themselves.

**Scenario 2: "I've Lost My Voice!"** In the midst of reciting poetry one afternoon, Elaina von'Orion's words stop coming. After the local healer can find nothing wrong, a mage is called in (could be a party member if their magical skills are appropriate). Something or someone has stolen the essence of Elaina's voice. While this will not incapacitate her, it will annoy her. If not already aware of the adventurers' capabilities, Kurtt will send out the call for able aid. The von'Orions will have the support of several patrons in the community, and will be able to front a large, or well prepared expedition. Elaina herself offers to send several scrolls of spells, but as she can no longer vocalize them they must be ones she had prepared earlier — as music. The party must find out who has the voice and where. "Who" will reflect the GM's choice of the von'Orion's background, and give the characters some idea of what kind of power they are up against. They must then recover her voice, and if possible, secure for her a future safe from further harassment. Payment will reflect the level of success in each of these endeavors.

**Scenario 3: He's Making a List....** A plague begins to strike the rich... a plague of premature, violent death. Nearly a half dozen die before Virgil realizes that the names of the dead are to be found on his current list of salon patrons. Virgil hires the adventurers to solve the mystery. Through the course of the investigation, they discover that each patron had purchased a sculpture by an artist who worked at Marianrose for nearly a year, then disappeared. At least one patron who bought such a sculpture has not died. The sculptures are actually living gargoyles, found deep beneath the City. They are hungrily coming to life. Potential scenes include finding the missing artist, saving rich patrons and fighting horrid stone gargoyles (also see *The Gaggle*, by Elizabeth T. Danforth in *CityBook V: Sideshow*).

*Marianrose Conservatorium offers a boon for both artists and mountebanks, esthetes and spies. Art knows no social classes, and a common-born artist may meet the City's loftiest aristocrats here. At the same time, Marianrose offers the City's plutocrats access to bohemians, adventurers and other people who might perform deeds the rich consider less than savory. Yet all takes place beneath a veneer of refinement, in a place dedicated to the most beautiful of human activities. True artists and their admirers are the keepers of Marianrose, with schemers as a background theme which adds interest to the whole.*

# Amaranthine's Rest



*Sometimes it does not matter whether one plans or proceeds by intuition, but only that one listens to those who know best. Instructions, like paths, are meant to be followed.*

## Common Knowledge

Near the center of Up Town lies a small vacation, where the rich and the fortunate go to ease themselves of the travails of daily life. Bathing pools, sun rooms, saunas, and tanning decks assist their relaxation. The natural spring that feeds this spa keeps the pools 85 degrees Fahrenheit, and customers claim to feel better after a just a short swim in the temperate waters. Surrounded by a high outer wall, this urban resort caters to both private and public preferences, with many of the pools and decks enclosed. The remaining areas are either shaded or open to the elements.

The spa-like setting lies within an imposing walled park, generous even by Up Town standards. A total of 45 separate

RANDALL G. KUIPERS plays the author here. He is intimately familiar with CityBooks, having worked on **CB3** through **CB6** in various capacities: paste-up, cartographer, artist, writer, editor. He wishes to credit that which inspired his imagination: a background book from Central Casting™; rules to suggest or handle ANY situation from the Rolemaster™ encyclopedias; and all the people he's played with, and the characters he's died for (again).

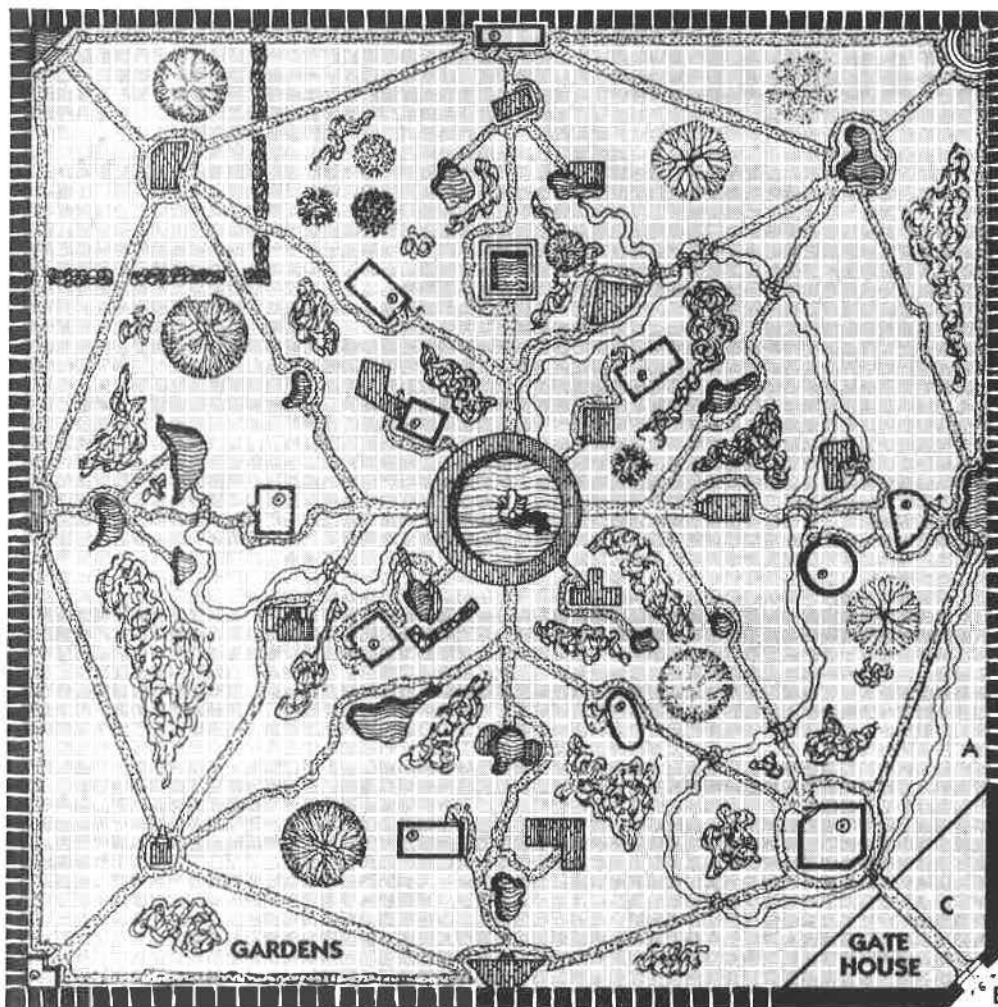
leisure spots are maintained here, and the wall encloses them within its 250,000 square feet (500' x 500' on each side) of park-like grounds. The pools are located on knolls and terraces, in elevated buildings and subterranean grottos, but never is one pool placed above or below another. Each pool occupies a very definite space.

The pools, the building, the wall, and the accessories are all kept immaculately clean. Spills and debris are taken care of quickly, quietly and discreetly by unseen attendants. The Caretaker is most courteous, and gives explicitly clear directions to those wishing to use the facility. Although the cost is high, equal to several fine meals, it is less than a healing spell and much more enjoyable.

Amaranthine's Rest is open from mid-morning (9 a.m.) to late evening (about 10 p.m.).

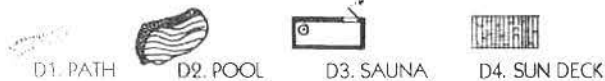
## History

The bodies that weave and wend through the heavens possess a hidden force, one that moves and flows over their faces and one that rivals the fact of gravity for natural power. It is unseen, unrestrained, and when discovered, rarely understood. Such was



▲ GARDENS

SCALE: one square = 10 feet



the case in the City's youth, near a spring that was then at the edge of town. Reports of odd, even unusual occurrences made their way to a local mage. Upon investigation, he found that when he stood near the area of report, he felt unexpectedly exhilarated, as if waking from a deep, restful sleep. He shared his findings with others, and they decided to unite and explore this phenomenon. So they gathered, nine men and women of power, to discern the area's origin and purpose. As they began the ceremony, each could feel power coursing through their bodies, through their gestures and their words. Too much power. Almost as one they halted, and in quick conference decided that whatever they faced, it was too powerful to probe. Perhaps future wizards could pierce the mystery. Still brimming with excess power, they again took their places, and in a fantastic release of arcane cooperation, sealed the wild energy beneath the earth.

The City grew, and the strange piece of land faded from the memory of the shorter-lived inhabitants. Yet one of the original nine, an elven mage, still remembered the energy and power that rode his system that first day. Aril'na' Aroe was older now, wiser, and had done well for himself in this blossoming City. He purchased the land, and with a mind bent to study, relaxation, and

beauty, built a retreat at the City's edge. Like a gentle tide, the City flowed around and surrounded the walled garden.

Many came to the peaceful mid-City island, and Aril'na' Aroe, careful to admit only a few at a time, waited. And watched. And after several months of study, he noticed customers returning to the same pools. He questioned them, and the answers pointed to the healing properties of the natural spring he used. This puzzled him, for the water had been normal when he bought the land. He wandered about the complex pondering when, on a hunch, he traced a popular path of his customers. He felt refreshed. So he did another path, and became, as he followed worn steps, quite invigorated. Excited, he began keeping a chart of his travels, and discovered that patterns of energy were constructed when different points on the premises were connected by walking between them. The bound power of the place was still trapped, but the living energy of movement, when used to describe a pattern, caused its release.

The simplest patterns refreshed the fatigued, healed the ill, while more complex patterns could achieve results far beyond the normal limits of any one mage. Aril, fearful that his studies might be recognized

and abused, rebuilt and restructured the resort, constructing pools and other facilities on the major and minor "nodes" (connecting points) of the patterns (as he had already unconsciously done with a few of the pools and sun decks).

Now that he possessed the key to controlled power, Aril began research, walking patterns after the patrons left. He recorded his work in volume after volume, diligently labeling each pattern, its effect, and any similarity to other patterns. As the complexity of the designs grew, so did the power they released and the time they took to walk. One night, near on to dawn, a weary Aril incorrectly completed a 10-hour pattern ... and has since been both freed and condemned to spend a life outside of Time and inside Amaranthine's Rest (details in "Personalities").

### Operation of the Resort

Aril charges a high gate fee with good reason — it tends to eliminate those without either education or life experience. His own upbringing caused him to believe that wealth and education are equated with wisdom. The Caretaker doesn't want just any

idiot blindly wandering into a pattern and receiving power that would be unwisely used. He's trying to eliminate as many "accidents" as possible, like the one that caught him.

If Aril deems a person competent, but recognizes that the expense may be a strain on their resources, he will still charge the high fee, but will then return a portion of the fee to their clothes as they bathe. If a poor person can pull together enough money to get in, Aril reasons they have the proper fortitude to pull themselves out of their benighted situation.

To further reduce the opportunities for misfortune, Aril also limits the number of customers in Amaranthine's to no more than 20 in a given hour. As the bathers pass through the gate house, Aril asks each their pleasure, and then gives clear, succinct directions to the destination. He ends each conversation with "...and don't forget to stay on the paths. It's so much easier to clean that way. Thank you for visiting Amaranthine's Rest."

## The Energy Patterns

Through patterns, Aril has access to Legendary magical power. He can throw almost any level spell, but it takes time, depending on the effect. A Poor effect (say, a minor cure) only takes a quarter of an hour, Average takes half an hour, Fair is one hour, etc. This energy slowly builds, but stays trapped in the design until the pattern is completed or the pattern is undone (retracing steps in reverse or dispelled by a higher level effect).

Positive patterns (those with a beneficial effect) begin and end at the gate house. Negative patterns (those which cause a malign or damaging effect) begin or end anywhere else, and adversely affect the character. Climbing the wall, teleporting in, or tunneling under the wall all set up negative patterns. Negative patterns have no consistent structure, and are nothing more than magical scribbling. The longer an adventurer wanders around, the greater the effect will be. The results of a positive pattern, begun at the Gate house, are left to the Game Master, but the effects will never be negative.

Once a pattern is begun, it should not be stopped. Each person establishes his or her own pattern, and suffers adverse effects if they are prevented from completing it. The only way to stop them is to catch them before they start, get them to complete a different pattern of their own accord, retrace their steps, or hope the breaking of the design won't affect them too severely.

## Clientele

"A. Rest," as the populace has come to call it, has a number of regular visitors. Many of the affluent and those with affluent desires frequent the resort. Adventurers might even encounter some of the folk below on their visits. Remember, not everyone comes to this place to rest...

- CB1 - Nio and Ki Skywhite, Gillian Olfen;
- CB2 - Ular Scribesman, Ras Thevis;
- CB3 - Students of the Bloodmoon School, except Re'esh;
- CB4 - Captain Aramin, Duke Alfeas (Daub), Colonel Mas-sias, Augustine, Veradis and Keir Collis and Oriana Web -

but not all at the same time, Prince Josef;  
CB5 - Smilin' Al Crum, Eric and Denise Silver.

CB6 - Thoron Ironshield, Virgil Nantusset, Ingram the priest, Tor'nar of Oenath.

Also, any of the other regular patrons of the CityBooks could be here vacationing for a day, treating themselves, or just satisfying a curiosity.

## Layout

**A. The Wall** (500' x 20' on a side) White marble with veins of differing oxides and colors, it narrows from eight feet at the base to three feet at the top. The wall is clean and smooth. Aril pays well to keep his home's only inaccessible part in good condition. The wall has no windows, and only one gate (B).

**B. Gate** (10' x 14' x 8') This sturdy double gate is locked<sup>6</sup> at night.

**C. Gate house/Home** (Two connected buildings, total 80 1/2' x 80 1/2', right triangle) These single story buildings are separated by a covered corridor that funnels the patrons between marble walls that slope from the roof to within four feet of each other at the entrance door, and then recede back into the sides of the house as one walks further down the path towards the gardens. The exterior walls are constructed of marble, while the interior walls are of pale, polished oak. The floors throughout are oak with exquisite mahogany inlay. In general, the small house is furnished better than most nobles' expansive manors. Assume that even the most mundane item is of superior quality, many bordering on the lavish and exotic. Almost everything is made of wood and white materials.

**C1. Privy** (8' x 6') Finely wrought marble and gold fixtures show little wear for all their centuries of use.

**C2. Study** (48' x 30', irregular) Aril keeps the notes and charts on the patterns here. It also contains a substantial collection of books and some scrolls on several topics: mostly engineering (for that day and age), geology, art, and architecture. The study appears clean and organized, but a close look will reveal no logical organization to the items on the many shelves. The windows can be shuttered, but not locked.

**C3. Bedroom** (18' x 14', irregular) Almost entirely white, it hasn't been used in several years (our time). Aril's best and most exotic clothes are kept in his cedar closet.

**C4. Cloak room** (8' x 6') For guests' overcoats. Again, not used in years.

**C5. Living Area** (48' x 30', irregular) This multi-purpose room has a loft-like feeling. The kitchen space is on the south wall, the dining room is in the center, and studio space is reserved in front of the NE windows, which can be shuttered. A large, ornate rug of foreign origin dominates the otherwise brown and white room.

**C6. Storage/Miscellaneous** (18' x 14', irregular) A collection grows here, consisting of things Aril has gathered on his journeys. While much is rock and marble from other times, the occasional past or future anachronistic oddity is uncovered. Aril

keeps the gate fees in a small safe<sup>2</sup> against the SE wall. Pantry items are kept along the south wall.

**C7. Catwalk** (26' x 5') Reached by a steep stair at either end, the walk is covered. The doors on either end do not lock.

**C8. Entry to Amaranthine's Rest/Caretaker's Seat.** This is where Aril charges and collects the gate fees, and where he decides who may receive some of their money back. The coins are deposited in a small, portable, lock box<sup>1</sup>.

**D. Garden Facilities.** Some are enclosed, some open, some shaded—these are in no particular order. It is not *what* they are, but *where* they are that is important.

**D1. Paths.** Neat stone paths join some of the locations.

**D2. Pools.** Varying in size, all are clear and warm.

**D3. Saunas.** Enclosed chambers with extra heat and humidity provided by hot rocks.

**D4. Sun Decks.** Made of the finest weather-resistant wood, with comfortable chairs.

**E. Great Fountain.** (Most of the spring's water comes through here.) The carved marble fountain in the center pool was done by Aril, and is witness to his talents. Considered one of the treasures of the City, it's valued not only in its beauty, but for its unknown power. Even Aril is not aware the sculpture has absorbed energy, since it is itself a pattern of exquisite complexity. It has taken many years to acquire its power, but the marble is a Fair magical focus for all C's. It could be removed and function indefinitely as a power source of Average ability. Also, if placed in another natural magical focus (or left here), the intrinsic power of the piece would go up one level for every 50 years, maximum of Excellent. Note that the fountain piece cannot cast the spells, but functions as a battery and "guide," making casting easier and providing power for the spells.

## Personalities

**Aril'na'Aroe (a-rill'-nah-a-row')**, ☐ Elf male, Ht.: 6'4", Wt.: 170#, Age: appears to be late 30s, human years. ☐ Fighting Prowess: Very Good with martial arts (if the GM's system allows for it, use defensive types only), Fair with a staff. ☐ Special Attacks: Surprise (detailed below) and disarm, which is Excellent. ☐ Magical Ability: Very Good C6 and C7, Good in C3, Fair in the rest. ☐ Special Ability: Access to Legendary magic ability (all C's) through walked patterns (detailed above).

Once the caretaker of Amaranthine's Rest was a noted architect, sculptor, builder and mage. Talent with the earth and Terra's Bones (as he calls the rocks) came early in life, and by the age of apprenticeship, his way was already clear to him. After several years of training, and many more years exploring, Aril settled in the youthful village of the City's past. He prospered, both in construction and in fine art. Many of the older structures in the City have the touch of na'Aroe about them, especially if marble work was involved (the finer chambers of

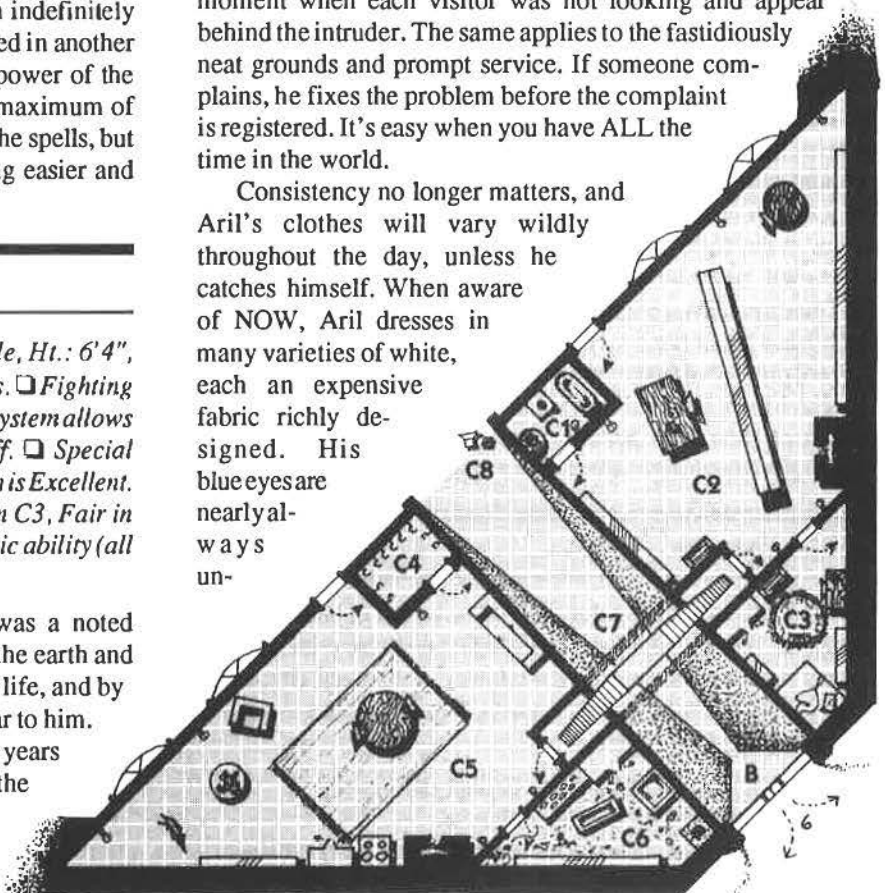
Thrupp House, residence of the *Old Man of the City*, CB5, bear his style).

Aril'na'Aroe is no one's friend. No one knows him well enough to call him such. Those that once did are either dead or incapacitated, and he has not allowed a single person to get close to him since he discovered the secret of the patterns. He still dresses in luxurious clothes, still has the same desire to learn. But the steady poise is gone, scattered over thousands of years. His mind hops from one topic to another, a result of countless trips to one place and many times.

Time, in a linear sense, does not exist for Aril'na'Aroe. The flawed pattern he walked severed Aril from the standard flow of time, and now he may exist whenever he wants. This disjunction goes so far as allowing Aril to exist in multiple places at the same time, as long as he's at least 250' away from another incarnation of himself. The magic seems to prevent Aril from leaving the garden, so this limits him to only about eight places at one time. It is the only rule that applies to his journeys. As he jumps around the time line, he can sense how many times he has been to a particular time, and whether there is room left for another visit. None of the popular theories about time can explain his situation, and the best description is that he has been detached from time.

Aril functions as the gate keeper, the attendant, maintenance, and security. In the last, Aril has a distinct advantage. Once he is aware of the trespasser, he zips back to before the moment of entry and waits to dispose of the pest. Even a multiple attack would not thwart him, for he would wait outside time for a moment when each visitor was not looking and appear behind the intruder. The same applies to the fastidiously neat grounds and prompt service. If someone complains, he fixes the problem before the complaint is registered. It's easy when you have ALL the time in the world.

Consistency no longer matters, and Aril's clothes will vary wildly throughout the day, unless he catches himself. When aware of NOW, Aril dresses in many varieties of white, each an expensive fabric richly designed. His blue eyes are nearly always un-



SCALE: one square = 2 feet

▲ GATE HOUSE/HOME



— Aril' na' Aroe —

focused. His body is trim, and his flesh pale. Long, thick, white hair drops to his waist, often blending with his clothing.

Aril believes his detachment from time also confines him to the area enclosed by Amaranthine's walls. Even in past times, before the walls were built, he stayed within its future boundaries. This was not necessary. Aril can go anywhere in the world he wants, at any time. But he will not believe it, nor has he tried it. His mind has changed to accept his current detached position, and not always for the better. He is fanatic about keeping the patterns from evil (real or perceived), obsessed with cleanliness, and convinced he will die, trapped behind time, if he breaks the boundaries of Amaranthine's Rest.

Previous to the sculpture in the center spring, Aril's greatest work had been a rose of the purest blue marble, delicate and perfect in every detail. Made of solid stone, he envisioned it as an amaranthine rose, the flower of eternal beauty, and it was to be an eternal gift to the young woman who filled his thoughts and captured his heart. He left it with a note on her doorstep. He found what was left of it the next day, still on the doorstep. The stem had been shattered, the leaves broken off, and the petals ground into powder. Deeply hurt, Aril never married, and could not bring himself to speak to her or of her after that. If he had, he would

have found she was not to blame.

His sudden sullenness and avoidance drove her farther and farther away, and she left for another village. Aril continued to work, not bitter, but empty. The Placing of the Seal by the nine revitalized the elf, spiritually more than anything else, and for many years after that he was again alive in the community.

## Scenario Suggestions

**Scenario 1: Somewhere in Time.** Aril has disappeared from the 'Rest. Only his notes remain (he's lost or trapped in another time). An adventurer with a "sixth sense" of some kind would be able to sense this and know that something needs to be done. Here's a good chance for some cross genre jaunting.

**Scenario 2: The Snail that Roared.** The spring and the pools are drying up, and Aril suspects some kind of interference. He hires the adventurers and sends them underground, into a chamber where nature is off-kilter and "normal" is influenced by the eddies of magical force that have been concentrated here for so long. In the caves, magical spells have unpredictable, strange effects, often greater than their casting strength would suggest. Their nemesis is a small, normally insignificant creature (a mouse, rabbit, frog, garden snail, etc.) now transformed into a monstrous foe whose bulk blocks the spring.

**Scenario 3: Teamwork.** During a visit, the adventurers accidentally set up some odd pattern by working in the gardens as a "team." Any strange effect could result — a summoning, a new spell, beneficial, embarrassing or disastrous changes to the adventurers themselves, subtle changes in the environment or history (affecting the characters directly, of course), or something else entirely different.

**Scenario 4: I Wish I May, I Wish I Might.** Several patrons have unleashed powerful magics from the patterns ... much akin to "Wishes." Incidents of sudden wealth, changes in appearance and horrid misfortune caused by careless statements are occurring all too frequently after visits to Amaranthine's Rest — and word has gotten out! Folk from all classes of society, seek, no DEMAND entrance to the gardens, far exceeding Aril's ability to keep them under surveillance, keep them on the paths, or even keep them out. Small disasters are already occurring as trespassers create negative patterns right and left.

Aril hires the adventurers to patrol the gardens while he stalks out new patterns, hoping to find the "Wish" pattern and change the garden layout to end its use.

In the meantime, the adventurers are dealing with waves of strangely affected intruders and creating unusual and unpredictable magical patterns of their own.

*The logical use of Amaranthine's Rest is as a place of healing and recovery. Or it could simply be a place to wash away the dirt of adventure. On a more exotic note, the paths of Amaranthine's Rest could form the gateway to those other worlds that the Game Master would like his or her players to visit ... perhaps even a gateway into the misty halls of the Lost Inn itself.*

# Greenhargon's Museum



*Quite often, an appreciation for the finer things the world has to offer accompanies the acquisition of great wealth. And what better place to appreciate them than a museum filled with unusual treasures from around the world. But remember: just because no one is around doesn't mean you aren't being watched.*

No collector of the exotic is more renowned within the City than Emil Greenhargon, former treasure-hunter and now owner and steward of the vaunted Greenhargon Museum. After a particularly successful expedition, Emil returned with a miniature castle of supernal design. Upon speaking the proper words, the structure assumed its true dimensions, filling the largest Greenhargon Estate garden. Massive marble columns, bronze doors, and magical glass windows combine to give the building an ethereal, almost unreal quality.

Initially unsure of what to do with such a wonder, Emil hit upon an idea of inspired genius (or madness). He decided to house all his valuable treasures within the edifice — and (here comes the brilliant part) charge visitors a fee to view them!

At first, most people thought he was crazy, but then word-of-mouth advertising enticed ever-more people to gaze upon the awesome treasures and relics from pagan lands. His accumulation of art, dress, and ceremonial gear from “foreign” cultures is without peer.

The museum exhibits include both the Greenhargon family's extensive private holdings and the spoils of Emil's many adventures. Although the price of admission is expensive (“Can't have just anyone looking at these treasures, now.”), preventing all but the wealthiest of patrons from gaining entrance, the museum still does a reasonably steady business. The rich simply love to gaze upon all the unusual art-forms from disparate cultures.

Greenhargon Museum opens every day at 10 a.m. and closes at dusk. Completely safe when open for business, it is rumored

that deadly perils lurk within the museum for any thief bold enough to gain entry after hours...

In addition to exhibits, Greenhargon Museum also boasts an elegant cafe which features culinary delights from far-away lands. Although many would call the cafe's chef a barbarian, Algo creates superlative wonders with his own native dishes. He captures the exotic flavors of his homeland without offending the delicate palates of his high-born customers — an amazing accomplishment. The price of meals is high, but then again, the food is exquisite.

## Rumors

Many rumors circulate about what really goes on within the museum. Some say the strange building is a meeting place for underworld activities. Others claim that unnatural “things” guard Greenhargon's treasures and that no thief has ever successfully stolen anything from Greenhargon Museum. A few even claim that Emil is a demon intent on trapping the souls of all who enter — patently nonsensical. One fact remains clear; Emil Greenhargon has treasures worth several kings' ransoms stashed away and on display in his museum.

## History

Greenhargon Museum presents an architectural oddity to passersby. Whereas nearby buildings have mostly straight lines, Greenhargon Museum remains a wonder of curvilinear design. The structure is composed of “ribs” of marble-like stone with the strength of steel and large panes of unnatural glass. Although only one-half inch thick, this glassy material has the toughness of a foot of granite. This substance also has a magical property. Visitors can easily see out of the building through these slabs of crystal, but from outside, they appear opaque and leaden. Its unusual appearance often causes passersby to comment upon its awesome “presence.”

Although merely a feeling, this observation is more than

My first contact with TIM TAYLOR several years back was a thank you note, forwarded to me from an adventure game publisher, thanking me for the illustrations done for his adventure. As an illustrator, I don't hear that often enough, and especially not from authors. After meeting Tim at a game convention, I decided that good manners and good writing must obviously go hand-in-hand.

accurate, for the structure is in fact possessed of an intelligence. This intelligence became ensnared due to the guile of an unprincipled sorcerer. He had wanted a fortress to take with him wherever he went, and implanted a mind within a great hall. The personality of the intelligence changed the basic building into its current form. It manifests itself as a strangely beautiful structure of unique configuration. Emil found this artifact, in miniature form, within the ruins of a fortress far away in the wilds.

It can alter its size, as evidenced by its state when Emil first discovered it. Although not fully conscious, it is subconsciously sentient, and it reacts instinctively and protectively when invaded or attacked. The inherent power of the museum is tremendous, and both the guardians and the “windows” are things the structure developed on its own. Should the need arise, the intelligence could produce more effective defenses than it already has. Emil could not possibly have found a better place to store his treasures than this — and he doesn't even realize it!

When Emil first entered this supernatural structure, he noticed many items already present within its walls. These articles were found in nearly every room. Emil believed that these things were exactly what they appeared to be — namely art or ordinary furnishings. In a few cases, he was correct, but most of these original pieces are guardians. They seem inanimate, but will rise up in defense of the museum, particularly if the museum itself is threatened. The building's guardians resemble wall sconces, statuary, paintings, rugs and other artworks. Emil wasn't attacked when he first entered this edifice because he had just spoken the command word. Emil may also use these words to command the sleeping entity, although he has no idea that he can do so or even that his museum is anything other than a magical keep.

## Layout

**A. Entrance (10' x 8')** A dark steel double door opens onto the foyer. This portal provides the only means of entering or leaving the museum. Only Emil may order these doors to open or close (since he originally spoke the command words). When Emil closes his museum, these doors lock<sup>6</sup> themselves. The doors are also guardians. They will attempt to attack any intruders or prevent escape, if possible. This is where Emil begins his occasional guided-tours for especially wealthy patrons. He calls his establishment “... a little piece of adventure I brought back with me.”

**B. Foyer (20' x 25')** The foyer has a marble floor and stairway leading to the building's interior. All walls depict scenes of myriad denizens of the outer realms (other planes or dimensions). Since these carvings are so outlandish in form, most who examine them imagine they are merely abstract patterns. Observers who do comprehend their elongated, twisting shapes are likely to feel vaguely disturbed by them. Some might think, “What kind of a sick mind could create such things?” If Emil is questioned about these sculptures, he'll say, “Huh? Never saw that before... Well what do you know...? Learn something new every day!”

Actually, these facades form an archetypal memory for the museum and are immensely important to it. They are vital to its knowledge of what it really is (even though frozen in museum form it still is sentient). If anyone were to attempt to damage

them, guardians would be dispatched to forcibly stop the offender. Emil knows none of this.

**C. First Display Area (100' x 60', irregular)** Eight glass display cases curve around this black marble hemispherical room. Each contains relics, art, totems, and jewelry from a different foreign culture. Each case is unmarked, cluttered, and poorly arranged from an aesthetic point of view. Only if Emil is giving a tour, will these cases be explained. However, each case contains enough loot to make any thief's day (or night, rather). The expensive jewelry alone will catch the greedy eye of any would-be crook. Surprisingly, these cases are only fitted with Fair locks. Emil relies on his human guards to prevent any pilfering, even as the museum's guardians protect them at night.

**D. Diorama of Life on Earth (50' x 40', irregular)** A grandiose “slice-of-life” in miniatures, this crystal-enclosed diorama studies life on the City's world in all its unique varieties (and in all its diverse climates). This large crystal bubble rests upon a raised platform. Stairs on the south side lead up to a three foot wide walkway that encircles the diorama. It is really a “life-map” or “gene/region-diagram” which is the first concrete thought the museum had when it became aware. The miniature creatures (including monsters!) are perfect in every detail and their surroundings are authentic. Emil just thinks that it looks like someone went to a lot of trouble to paint all those figures. This is one of the treasures originally present when Emil first entered the museum.

**E. Towers (40' x 40', circular)** Passing through light glassy corridors, Porphyry stairs wind 100' up to a room overlooking the City's Up Town area. Magical glass irises open out in every direction from this upper room and along the stairway. Each allows light of a different color to enter, causing psychedelic hallucinations if someone concentrates on them too long (which also might just be views into other dimension, times or states of being). Perhaps this is because some windows radiate colors that humans are not normally able to perceive. These great lenses cannot be opened and must be broken to gain entry surreptitiously (equals one foot of granite, remember). Emil normally doesn't go here anymore because of a previous disorienting hallucination. If asked, he might say something like, “Once I saw this er... uh... thing? Then there was this, um... Never mind. You wouldn't understand anyway.”

**F. Main Display Areas (25' x 50')** These eight rooms lining the exterior of the museum depict each of Emil's major adventures — in terms of the treasures he brought back from each of them. Each room contains art, jewelry, arms, banners, and so on gathered from these various adventure sites. All these treasures are so eccentrically laid out that the effect is almost one of disorder. It's as if Emil had just tossed each object into its appropriate room. Additionally, scholars are not likely to find Emil's categorization system useful, divided into personal expeditions as it is. Still, given the chance, Emil will drone on and on about his adventures and how he came by each artifact in every room. Most people don't have the patience for this. Assume that at least one item per room is magical, but that Emil is not aware of these magicks. In addition, every chamber has at least two

objects of artistic value which were originally present within the museum.

In each of these rooms stand one to four statues carved from many different types of stone. Most are man-sized or smaller and are beautiful renditions of different creatures found all over the world. These are original treasures and so represent the museum's frozen memories of its initial perceptions of this reality. Each statue is also a guardian, developed to protect the museum or destroy interlopers. Several sculptures depict human-like figures; all of these are armored and armed with fearsome weaponry (usually sharp-edged). Each room also contains one to three other original pieces of art other than sculpture that are also guardians. These guardians appear as paintings, carpets, tapestries, etc.

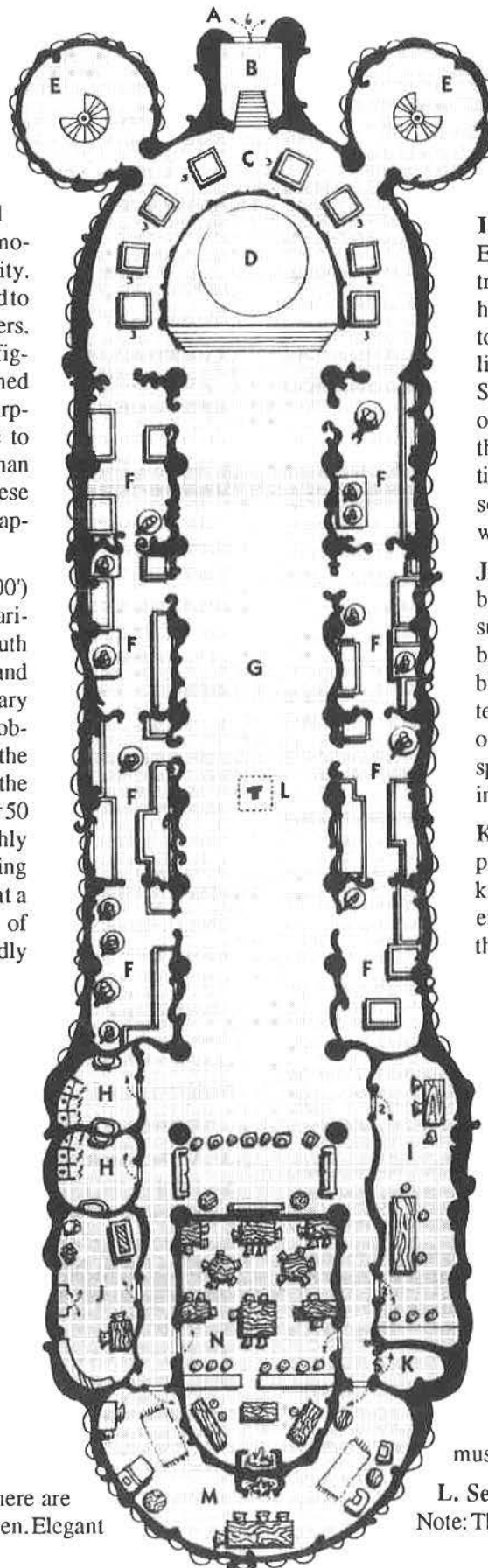
#### G. Central Display/Walkway (50' x 300')

The central walkway is floored with variegated marble of myriad hues. At the south end of this great corridor are chairs and benches in a rectangular area where weary visitors may rest. Two rows of carved obsidian pillars line the full length of the walkway and soar up 100 feet to support the barrel vault (which arches up yet another 50 feet). Each pillar is carved into a highly stylized animal or other creature. Running the full length of the central walkway at a height of about 30 feet, a weird array of thousands (perhaps tens of thousands) oddly shaped crystals hangs by wires from the ceiling. These crystals gleam with every color of the rainbow (and then some). Each is valuable (worth 10 gold pieces or more each), but in an uncut state. These are other thoughts which crystalized when the museum first materialized on this world. Think of them as a "cognitive map" of the intelligence's wider consciousness. Any attempt to abscond with these gemstones would be viewed as harm to the museum, so it would send guardians after the thief.

The towering pillars are guardians in this area. Emil will remark about the wonders in this area, "I don't know anything about them. They were set-up when I first got in. Pretty though."

**H. Lavatories (25' x 25', irregular)** There are separate facilities for both men and women. Elegant

SCALE: one square = 5 feet



marble basins along the walls and soft towels allow guests to refresh themselves in splendor. The walls are panelled with the same one-way "glass" as the rest of the museum; disconcerting, but harmless. Refuse is taken out each night by janitors. Emil does not give tours of the lavatories.

#### I. Exhibit Preparation Room (25' x 90')

Emil hires two artisans to take care of his treasures. They clean and repair objects here, preparing them for display. Myriad tools, polishes, glues, and other materials lie scattered about on the three tables. Several items are currently being worked on. Normally, patrons are not admitted to this room and its door is locked<sup>2</sup>. Sometimes, Emil wishes to impress special guests, so he might bring people in to look at any works in progress.

#### J. Common Storage (25' x 50')

Mops, brooms, polishes, rags, and other cleaning supplies are stored on shelves, tables, work benches, and counters in this room. A large bin in the northeast corner holds other potentially useful debris. This is the purview of the janitors who strive to keep the place spotless. Again, patrons are not allowed into this room and its doors are locked<sup>1</sup>.

#### K. Valuable Storage (10' x 25')

Emil's personal treasure is kept here. Only Emil knows of its existence and how to gain entrance. Pressing on a certain spot along the base of the wall sconce will trigger the mechanism to open.

Within this chamber are two large iron-bound, locked<sup>5</sup> chests. The first treasure chest contains Emil's highly expensive coin collection. Assume that it has a value equal to tens of thousands of gold pieces (or whatever is appropriate). The other chest is velvet-lined and contains three of Emil's most-prized magic items — a broadsword granting an Excellent bonus to one's Fighting Prowess, a wand with many Very Good spells (but in only one "C" classification), and the scroll containing the command word Emil spoke to the museum (think of it as the deed to the place). Unauthorized entry into this room will alert the

museum's guardians.

#### L. Secret Chambers (150' x 450', irregular)

Note: This map is not drawn separately — assume

that the room layout given for the museum duplicates that of the underground rooms.

Unbeknown to Emil, a mirror image of all the museum's chambers exists beneath the above ground structure. When the intelligence was imbedded in the structure, it became alive. And with life came a natural tendency towards symmetry. It thinks of the museum as its outside, and the underground chambers as its insides. Entrance to this underground area is achieved via a secret floor panel in the central walkway. This secret panel slides to the side when the command is given. A soft thrumming sound is intermittently heard from within. In these chambers, the museum's slow life processes occur. Many guardians of unusual shape and substance reside inert therein, waiting to attack trespassers. Only Emil would be safe here (to a point), since this area represents most of the entity's internal workings. If Emil started damaging things, however, he himself would also be in danger from the museum's protective guardians. Of course, walking might be a problem, since the barrel-vaulted ceiling of the museum above becomes the floor here (about 150 feet down!).

Other obstacles (and treasures) include: glowing crystalline stalagmites; dancing fountains of various liquids (water, oil, poison, potion, a guardian or anything else); and precious gemstones worth a king's ransom just laying about under foot (or floating in mid-air). As many of these are crystalized thought, disturbing them will alert guardians.

**M. Emil's Chamber/Observatory** (50' x 100', irregular) This is the hemispherical room at the far south end of the museum. A hearth is built in the chamber's north wall. Its southern outer wall is constructed entirely of faceted magical crystal of a rose color. Emil often retires to this room in order to relax. It is furnished with carpet, couch, chairs, and a heavy walnut table. The carpets are guardians.

Emil finds the ambience here very restful and he enjoys the view of the City from this vantage. If one looks into the glass (not through it at the City) for a long time, he may see reflected in its surface a scene from another place. Emil has never done this and knows nothing of this property of the magical glass.

**N. Cafe** (75' x 50', irregular) Algo, the museum's talented barbarian chef, prepares his many delicious dishes in this room. Patrons also eat here, since taking food out of the cafe is forbidden. The south end of the cafe consists of the food preparation area partitioned off from the dining area by a three-foot-wide counter. A hearth is set into the southern wall of the room. The glass doors to this room are always closed, but the aromas of Algo's tempting foods permeate the building nonetheless.

## Personalities

**Emil Greenhargon.** □ *Human male, Ht.: 6' 1", Wt.: 230#, Age: 37.* □ *Fighting Prowess: Very Good with broadsword and dagger combination.* □ *Magic Ability: Unconsciously steals the "Luck" of those around him.*

Emil smiles often. His sunny disposition is matched by a natural resourcefulness which has saved his life on more than one occasion. These traits make people rely on Emil to handle any

emergency. He runs his museum with an easy hand and is well-liked by the staff. He considers himself a good man and is devoted to the appropriate religious institutions. Emil dresses in the conservative gray robes often associated with City officials.

Emil Greenhargon is a land holder from a long line of landed gentry (but is not a noble). He differs from his forbears in that he chose to lead the life of an adventurer. His eight expeditions have left him a very wealthy man — aside from the family wealth. However, he has few remaining friends. Every adventure ended tragically, and none of his fellow adventurers ever made it back to the City. Emil is simply a very lucky person and he's gotten out of many tough situations. He knows when to retire, though. He does not plan to ever go adventuring again.

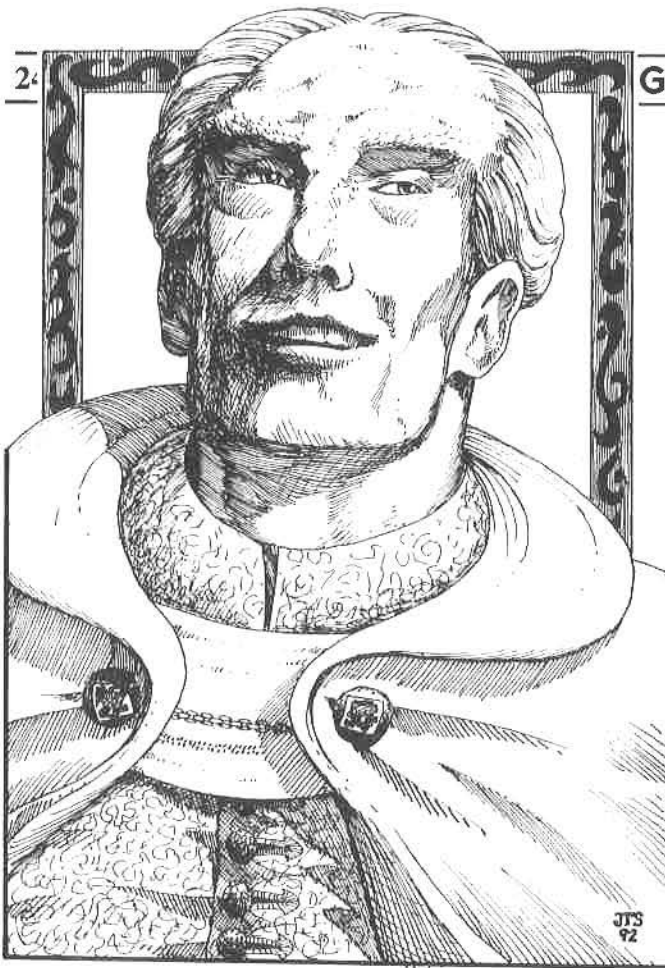
Emil may be extremely lucky when adventuring, but he's not really all that bright. When he acquired the shrunken museum, he also found a scroll containing a command word. Invoking this word, he erected the museum in its present location. He knows he commands the main doors to open and close, but does not know he can command the structure to do other things as well. Emil knows little about the museum and nothing about its history. He doesn't need to know and therefore is not compelled to learn. However, he does know a bit about his own treasures and will relate many stories about his family's heirlooms. Such tales comprise the majority of his guided-tour lectures.

**Museum.** □ *Race and sex unknown, Ht.: N/A, Wt.: N/A, Age: unknown.* □ *Fighting Prowess: None (Special).* □ *Magic Ability: Very Good C1 and C6, Good C3 (unconscious ability).*

This museum is actually a now dormant intelligence trapped in limited semi-awareness. The mind behind the building may be anyone or anything the GM desires (from a cursed adventurer to an other-worldly intelligence). But that mind has been raised to an awareness level bordering the other-dimensional and the intellect raised beyond that of normal geniuses. The vast surface area and nearly unlimited storage space allowed these developments. Think of a computer memory bank the size of your house and you'll have some idea of the potential here. Both its interior and exterior have remarkably organic lines and relief work for a building, or so people think. The magic word written on Emil's scroll, when spoken aloud, commands the museum. It essentially becomes an unconscious slave, able to perform only the most simple of tasks. However, it can do much more than Emil currently requires of it (open, close, stop intruders or attackers). There does exist an additional command to awaken this being, however it is unknown to Emil. If this entity ever awakens from its torpor, it would have Legendary Fighting Prowess (able to command legions of Guardians) and Excellent Magic Ability with regards to its immediate space and structure.

**Algo.** □ *Human male, Ht.: 5' 11", Wt.: 200#, Age: 45.* □ *Fighting Prowess: Fair with kitchen knife, Poor otherwise.*

Algo is Emil's foreign chef. Adept at the preparation of all manner of unusual ethnic dishes, Algo spends most of his time in the kitchen part of his cafe. He normally wears a heavily-stained white smock and chef's hat. Algo is widely considered one of the best chefs in the City. He is usually too pre-occupied with preparing meals to have much of a personality. Perhaps the best



— Emil Greenhargon —

description is long-suffering.

Emil encourages Algo to dress in his native garb (subconsciously treating the chef as just another cultural exhibit).

**Museum Guardians.** Many forms of magical protection are provided by the museum's guardians. Anything can be a guardian, from statues and pillars to carpeting. Most guardians are mentioned in the layout above, but the GM should feel free to add more if appropriate. All guardians are normally inanimate objects that suddenly become animate when required to deal with an interloper. Assume that all guardians have Very Good Fighting Prowess in whatever attack form they possess (e.g., statues of swordsmen use swords, carpets smother, etc.).

**Guards.** (x8) Emil pays for the best and most trust-worthy guards possible. All of them have been employed by him for a long time. The guards will instantly obey Emil's orders. Each is armed with a different weapon and every guard can throw daggers. Consider them to have a Fighting Prowess of Very Good with their weapons of choice (including thrown dagger) and Good with all others.

**Curators.** (x2) These artisans are employed as curators for Emil's priceless treasures. They are generally to be found cleaning, repairing, or displaying objects from Emil's collection. Both dress in the stained ochre robes of their guild. They both have a Poor Fighting Prowess with any weapon.

**Janitors.** (x4) These four trusted workmen have kept Greenhargon Museum clean for many years. They are allowed to

enter any chamber to tidy it up (except Emil's treasure room). Each is an older gentleman of modest means. Their Fighting Prowess is Fair with a cleaning implement and Poor otherwise.

### Scenario Suggestions

**Scenario 1: The Family Gathers ... At Last.** People have been drawn to the museum more than usual lately, and the reason is their magic items ... the intelligent items anyway. Apparently objects with magical intelligence can "feel" the unnatural sleep of the museum and are rallying for an awakening. They, of course, would never say that, even if they could talk. All types of people and their intelligent objects are converging on the museum, and not all of them (animate or not) see eye-to-eye. Many of the items (weapons especially) were constructed with particular "dislikes" built in; dislikes which must be balanced between the draw to the museum and the desire to fulfill "personal" goals.

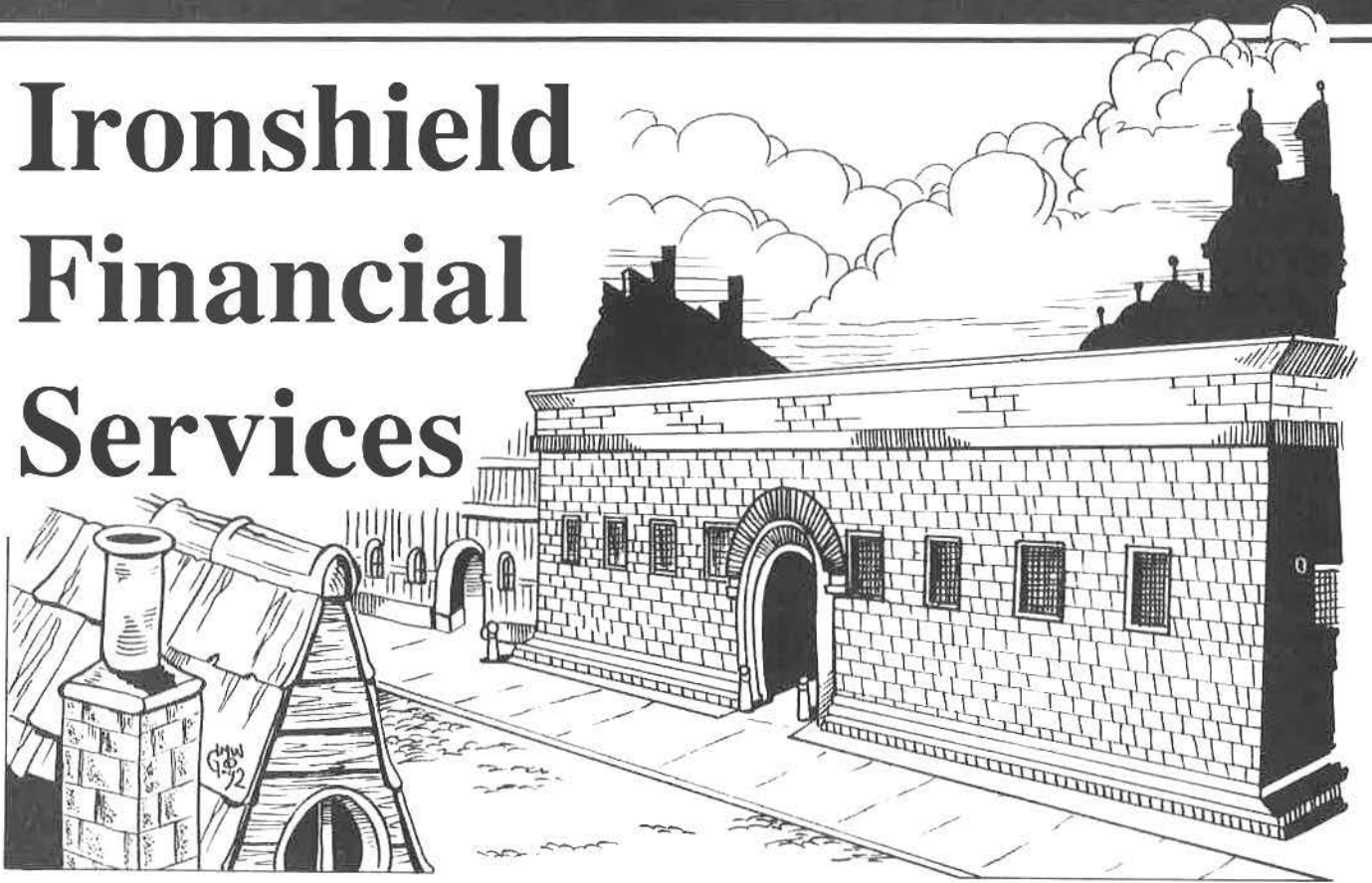
A noted wizard has felt the pull and hires the adventurers to investigate. If the truth becomes known to her, she will become alarmed and try to discover how the awaking of the museum can be stopped.

**Scenario 2: A Look at the Underside of Life.** One day, Emil finds the hidden, sliding panel to the museum's secret other half. He requires the services of adventurers to help him explore these secret chambers. Again, guardians will be a major headache for the group, even though Emil is relatively safe. Remember these guardians are weirdly shaped and more powerful than their above-ground brothers. Amazing wealth is at hand, if only they can live to enjoy it.

**Scenario 3: Waking Up on the Wrong Side of Sentience.** Due to an odd series of occurrences, the museum "wakes up" and threatens Emil in any of a number of ways. The museum could simply begin to treat Emil as a common interloper or even send guardians into the surrounding area in order to preserve a safe, defensible perimeter. Regardless, Emil realizes that something is wrong with his magical edifice and sends for doughty adventurers to help him set things right. If all guardians are destroyed, the museum will be forced back into a coma again. Emil would be happy to regain his trapped treasures within. Great rewards will be heaped upon those who help him — if they live through the experience.

*Whether for a dose of culture, intrigue, or adventure, Greenhargon Museum offers patrons a taste of the exotic lands beyond their ken. Unfortunate adventurers may find themselves permanently stranded on worlds beyond their wildest imaginings if the museum decides to suddenly depart.*

# Ironshield Financial Services



*Gorrot shifted his laden pack again and looked pleadingly to Eci on the lead horse. "We... we gotta stop now!" he wheezed. "D' dnada look dead, her horse look dead, and me buffalo sooooo tired! P-please?" Their leader glanced around as she thought. 36,834 gold pieces was a lot to carry, not counting the miscellaneous platinum, mithril, and 30 odd gems they'd collected. They needed to rest and to lose the coinage before they were "relieved" of their burden. Her eyes settled on a well-kept brick building and upon a handsome oak sign: IRONSHIELD FINANCIAL SERVICES. Turning to her compatriots, she smiled. "I've found just the place we need."*

Near the edge of Up Town, within walking distance of both the teeming marketplace and the exotic Sideshow district, is Ironshield Financial Services, locally known as Ironshield's or simply IFS. Over the years, it's become a staple in the City, a reliable and trustworthy establishment. Much of its success comes from the fact that most people consider it impenetrable, a rumor which puts off would-be burglars and encourages wealthy clients. Because of this reputation, the expression "keeping it with Iron" is used to refer to anything that's exceptionally secure.

IFS is a flat, brick building measuring 26' by 50', with the north and east walls flush against its neighbors. The main entrance, near the center of the south wall, is for public use; next

to it is a brass sign that reads:



While the regular clientele is rather on the wealthy side (even the Forgeway Company (CB4) has an account!), IFS keeps its doors open for common merchants and craftsmen — from *Widow Rohls' Bakeshop* (CB1) to *Komtoi's Cartage and Caravansary* (CB5). Both beginning and established adventurers can also utilize the services found here. It's Thoron's willingness to do business with common folk — and even exotically uncommon folk such as the denizens of *Sideshow* (CB5) — that has ever put someone off patronizing his establishment. The back door, on the west side, is used by the staff. Both entrances are locked<sup>5</sup> when the business is closed.

## Services

The services available at IFS are numerous. Those with money and possessions that require safekeeping may open a deposit account, rent a safety box, and purchase money notes.

BOB GREENWADE knows his way around the City. He drops the names of CityBook personalities as if he knows them personally. And perhaps he does. After all, he's been here before (*Jensen's Exchange* in CB2). He makes his second appearance in a CityBook here — furthering the growth of the City that we all share.

Conversely, those in need of money may apply for a loan, or for equity capital to start a business.

**Deposit Accounts.** Thoron allows deposits of any size, though he requires at least 10 gold pieces on account. Accounts containing over 100 gold pieces for a month earn 1/2% interest (that's 6% annually, compounded monthly).

**Safety Boxes.** The vault has over 14,000 boxes in which valuables may be kept, for a monthly fee of five gold pieces. Magic neither functions nor dissipates there, so magic items may safely be stored. Items too large for a box are kept loose in the vault, on the (correct) assumption that few thieves would enter here. The charge is adjusted by the item's volume.

**Money Notes.** Ironshield has parchment notes which are considered as good as gold in many cities besides this one. These are so successful that some competitors have started distributing their own. IFS's notes measure 5" x 2", and are printed with navy blue ink on parchment stained a pale blue. To prevent counterfeiting, the notes have Thoron's picture on the left (a charming woodcut), the value on the right and in between the two, each note is individually embossed with the Iron Shield "chop" and bears Thoron's own signature. Notes come in denominations of 10, 25, 50, 100, 500, 1000, and 5000 gold pieces (with some talk of higher amounts in the future). The back is printed with a local landmark, the value in each corner, and the firm's slogan, "Protect Your Money With an Iron Shield," across the bottom. They may be purchased directly from IFS for one-half percent of the face value (free if the buyer has a Deposit Account), plus sufficient funds to cover the value of the note. They may be redeemed anywhere that accepts them. Unused notes can be returned to Ironshield's at a cost of one-half percent face value for a return of funds. This also is free for account holders. Funds that are held for the sole purpose of Money Notes are not considered accounts. Custom notes are also available for large transactions. These are redeemable only by a specific party, and made out by Thoron himself.

**Loans.** For the employed but less than fortunate, loans are available at a standard interest rate of 10% per year. (Thoron may lower this to as little as 7% for those he believes particularly low-risk.) He will not loan to anyone with no steady job or ongoing business (though if someone's in trouble, he may provide the money as a personal gift).

**Equity Capital.** One may approach Ironshield for funds to start a business. Thoron calls this "equity capital" because he's providing capital in return for equity — that is, he's a co-owner in the business. He keeps out of things he knows little about, however, and he rarely buys over 25% (usually 10-15%). He takes no part in its operation, though he takes a monthly percentage of the net profit (income minus operating expenses, discounting the owner's salary). No interest is charged for these loans, but until totally paid back in a single, lump sum, he takes his percentage of the profit. Partial payments are not accepted, though goods are accepted as barter at retail value — Thoron enjoys showing off the work of craftsmen whose equity he's helped establish.

Adventuring groups may be financed this way. Thoron may

stake up to 1,000 gold pieces per regular member of the group for 15% equity. For an established group needing to finance a special expedition, Thoron might go as high as ten times that, depending on the group's reputation — he still gets, at most, only 25% of the group's equity.

**Other Services.** Ironshield is generally willing to go the proverbial "extra mile" for a client. In the most significant example, the extra mile is almost literal; an apprentice from Ironshield's goes to *Enefene* (CB5) to make any needed transactions (including collecting Blu's weekly deposit of funds) with Blu, its proprietor who never leaves the shop.

## Layout

The interior has finished wooden floors and walls, except for plush tan carpets in the work space and offices. The vaulted ceiling is eight feet high, with thick beams running north-south.

**A. Lobby (15' x 30')** There's enough space here for a moderate crowd. Four large windows let sunlight in from the south. The long counter, at which patrons can prepare their paperwork, is illuminated at each end and in the middle. The teller's windows are also lighted. The chairs in the middle of the room are well-padded and comfortable. Guards from a private security agency stand at the spots marked "X." Both doors to the north have "Staff Only" signs, and are usually locked<sup>2</sup>.

**B. Teller Space (10' x 24'6")** A thin partition with a long shelf separates this room from the Lobby. At each teller's window is a stool on which a teller sits. Kellye Seabreeze works at the easternmost window; the last window is used by an apprentice when the place is busy. Two back-to-back pairs of money trays sit here. Each tray has slots separating gold, silver, and copper pieces (up to 100 each) into lots of five, plus Ironshield money notes of denominations up to 25 gold pieces. (Larger notes are handled by Thoron.) The trays are locked<sup>2</sup> when unattended, and put in the vault at lunch time and at closing time. In the northwest corner are two desks, at which the tellers daily count down their work; the accountants check their figures next day. At least one teller is always at a window, to give immediate service. By the west door is a rack where the tellers hang their coats and hats.

**B1. The Vault Door.** This massive valve is constructed of solid steel, two feet thick. It's the only way in or out of the vaults. It has four combination locks<sup>6</sup> on it, which must be opened in a particular order — if you work one in the wrong order, the others scramble, thanks to a locksmithing genius in the Merchants' Quarter. Thoron knows the combinations of the first and last locks; Clyde and his apprentices know the second; and the tellers know the third. The combinations Thoron knows are kept with a local magistrate, while the other two combinations are kept with a friend who is an established businessman. Thoron knows both to be impeccably honest.

**C1 & C2. Privies (5' x 3'6")** These each have one latrine, and a wash-basin with a pump and a bar of soap nearby. The doors latch<sup>1</sup> from the inside; ventilation is through a sturdy grate in the ceiling.

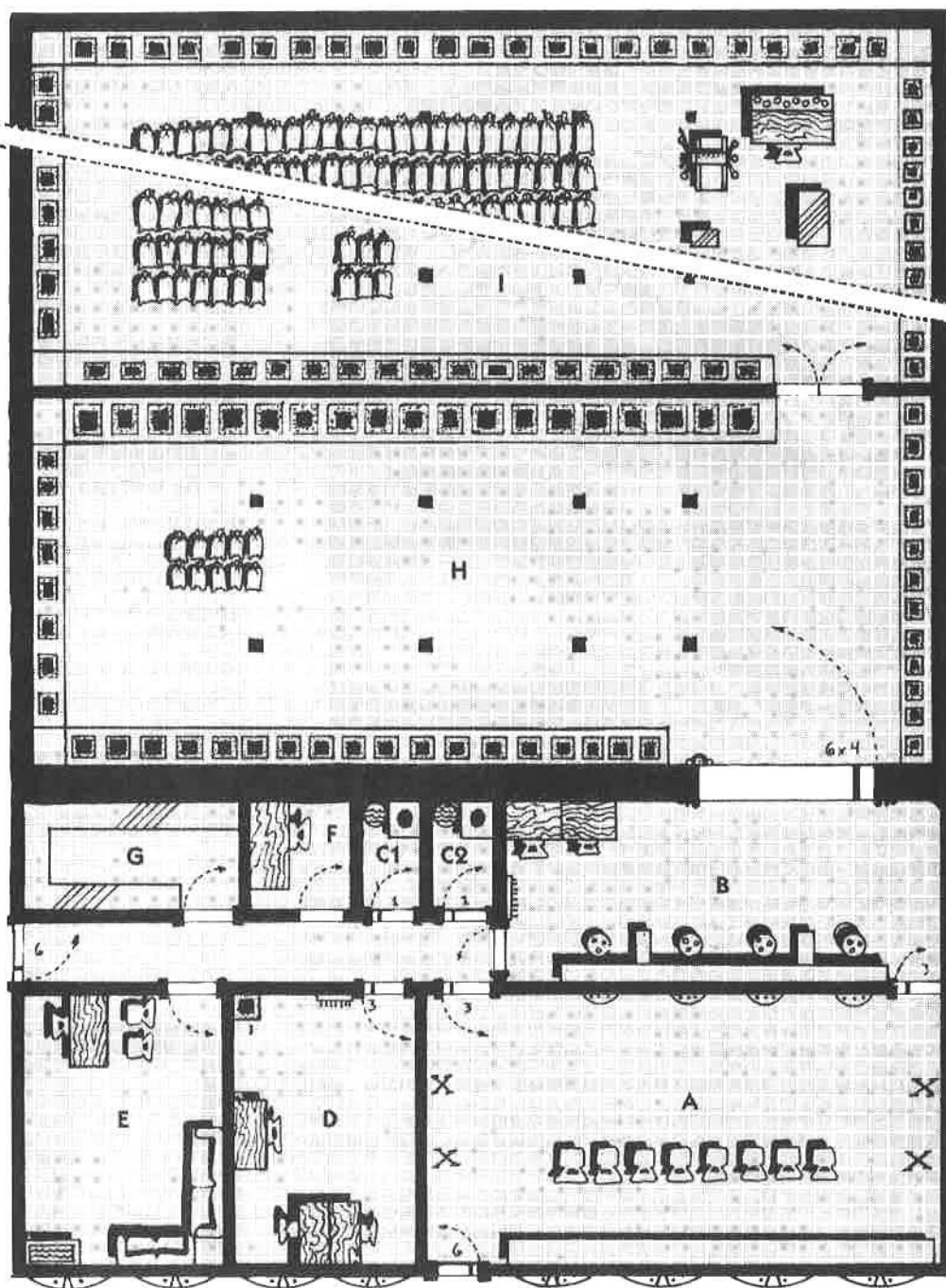
**D. Records Room (15' x 10')** This is where Clyde Boxnir and his apprentices work. Besides checking the tellers' books, they add interest to all loans and deposit accounts, as well as other chores. Two slanted tables face each other against the south wall, and third is against the west wall; each has a space (locked<sup>2</sup> when the occupant is away) under its surface for storing quills, ink, and scratch parchment. At each is a low-backed stool. A small safe, kept in the northwest corner during business hours and locked<sup>3</sup> during lunch, holds current records; it's put into the vault at night. The hatrack, naturally, holds coats and hats.

**E. Thoron's Office (15' x 11')** Thoron Ironshield conducts all his business in this room. He sits in a leather-upholstered, high-backed padded chair at a large ebony five-drawer desk. In the drawers are quills, inkwells, and other tools for writing; blank parchment, his copy of the past three years' "sketch" records; and, in the lower left drawer, four glass tumblers and a bottle of high-class whiskey. (He never partakes of hard liquor himself, but may offer a drink to a client.) All five individually lock<sup>2</sup>, and none will open unless the center one is unlocked. Guests may sit in the two chairs in front of the desk; more than two may use the divan and love seat. In one corner is a large aquarium — part of an equity capital repayment from a pet store — with a dozen exotic fish.

**F. Viewing Room (5' x 5')** Patrons may privately view their safety boxes in this room. A company employee (teller, apprentice or guard) will remain on duty outside the room to ensure that the customer is not disturbed (and does not leave the room without escort).

**G. Storage Room (5' x 12')** This long, narrow room is used to store unused stationary, non-vital records such as daily receipts (vital ones, such as customer account records, are kept in the vault), janitorial goods, and other miscellany.

**H. Original Vault (50' x 21', including safety box space)** This was the vault that Thoron built. Here, one finds most of the safety boxes and a small portion of the gold and silver bullion stored by



SCALE: one square = 1 foot

 SACK OF GOLD

the bank. The double doors in the northeast corner are unlocked. They open onto the inner vault. Magic will not function here, neither will magical items lose enchantment.

Along all four walls (except the door spaces) are racks of safety boxes, each 6" wide x 4" high x 2' long, placed against the wall. With 108' of wall space eight feet high, this totals 5,500 individually numbered boxes; about 1500 are currently rented. Each has two locks<sup>3</sup>; the client keeps one key. Thoron and Kellye Seabreeze each hold a master key that unlocks the other lock.

## Personalities

**Thoron Ironshield.** □ Dwarf male, Ht.: 4' 1", Wt.: 145#, Age: 135. □ Fighting Prowess: Poor (but almost Average).

Prior to Thoron's birth, a seer prophesied over his pregnant mother that he'd grow to be a very influential man in the City, and would do much to increase its prosperity. Any doubts about the prophecy seemed confirmed when the infant was born hideously ugly. Thoron grew worse as the years went by. His parents abandoned him when he was 35 (a teenager in dwarven years) and swore off ever having more children. Jobless and friendless, he turned to and was accepted by the beggars of the City (the Ysraiget, if the GM is using *CB3*). He would beg for food or money and scrounge for castoffs to sell at pawnshops. Still, his heart never bittered; he only wished someone besides beggars would lend a hand so he could improve his lot.

He was still young and idealistic, and would often follow adventuring parties through and even out of the City. Their carefree way of tossing around recently won money and their penchant for drunkenness made them prime targets. One loaded group (in both cases) headed for the old mines outside the City, to see if there were anything left hiding deep in the shafts. Thoron followed at a safe distance — safe until the party's revelry brought a large portion of the old mine down behind them and on top of Thoron.

Thoron awoke to find most of the debris had settled, and his eyes adjusted to the dimmed outside light. He began climbing out but abruptly stopped when he touched something cold and dull.



— Thoron Ironshield —

**I. Inner Vault (50' x 78')** Upon entering the vault, something becomes quite clear: the building isn't this deep. This space shouldn't be here. And in one sense, it's not. Wherever this part of the vault resides, it's not on the mortal plane. When Thoron built the establishment, he built only the Original Vault. When he brought the mysterious Twerpie into the company, the vault, at least its interior, grew to its present dimensions. Rather than raise concern, he walled off the Inner Vault and installed the doors. Initially, nothing was kept in the "extension" but eventually, need overcame distrust. The magical suppression effect found in both vaults no doubt comes from whatever dimension now contains this part of the building.

Toward the back, personally guarded by Twerpie, are the 2,000 bags of gold stacked eight high in 10 rows of 25 each, at exactly 5,000 gold pieces per bag (10,000,000 gold pieces total). This forms the standard against which the Money Notes are distributed. Clients' stored objects which are too large for a safety box are laid on the floor by the gold. The ceiling is made of a phosphorescent stone, providing constant light (another feature not present when Thoron built the original vault).

The northeast corner of the vault contains the hand operated single-sheet press, work benches and storage bins for the manufacture of money notes. Thoron and Clyde spend the occasional evening and weekend in here creating notes to match the vault's resources and replace those too worn to keep in circulation. For them, it's a time of social relaxation and camaraderie which neither would trade away.



— Clyde Boxnir —

Although raised a city dwarf, he was a dwarf none the less, and knew this was no rock. It was a deformed piece of metal, softer than usual and apparently twisted by the cave-in. Crawling out of the debris (a dwarf who can't survive a little cave-in can hardly be called a dwarf), pocketed the unusual chunk and made his way back to the City.

The pawnshop owners laughed when he presented his find and asked how much they'd be willing to pay for it. Exeter Shamdock wouldn't even let the ugly dwarf in his front door.

Thoron's next stop was the shop of a new, young alchemist, the paint barely dry on his storefront sign. The proprietor's eyes widened when he saw the three pounds of twisted metal Thoron plopped on the counter. "I... I can't pay you for this," he stammered, "I don't have that kind of money. I may never have that much money." Thoron was taken by surprise, for the expected response was disgust. Not only had this man ignored his looks, he hadn't tried to cheat him. Thoron offered a deal: pay what he could, barter what he could, and owe him a favor. The youthful mage agreed, and told him the metal he had found was known as an "inhibitor"; it nullified magic, and even an ounce cost more than most mages make in a lifetime.

Thoron took what money the young man could offer, sold the traded goods for more — and realized he no place safe to keep his newfound wealth. Moneylenders, like other merchants in the City would either refuse him based on looks alone ... or cheat him.

Then the solution struck him like a bolt from heaven. He purchased a building near the edge of Up Town, roughly equidistant from the Merchant's Quarter, Sideshow, and the Harbor District. He converted the building into a place where people could safely store their money or valuables. The alchemist assisted in the vault's construction, using only a fraction of Thoron's metal, and made the vault magic proof.

Although originally a warehouse of sorts, the building slowly became a bank as more specialized services were offered to meet customers' needs.

Thoron is now a very rich dwarf, who has helped numerous individuals, sponsored aid missions to the poor, and done great things for the City itself; just as the prophecy said.

**Twerpie.**  *Race and gender* — your guess is as good as any, *Ht.: 7', Wt.: 40#. Age: Unknown.*  *Fighting Prowess: Excellent.*  *Magic Ability: Very Good C1, Good C3, C4, C5, C7.*

Twerpie is an enigma with no recollection of origin (let alone anyone else having that knowledge). Thoron just found this odd form at the back door one morning about a month before the building's completion, burned, badly beaten, and unconscious. Taking pity on the poor little thing (whatever it was, it was no bigger than a largish cat), Thoron nursed his new charge to health. As it grew stronger, three amazing things happened: the creature grew in size (but not weight); the vault mysteriously expanded its interior dimensions; and Twerpie chose to remain in the vault as a security guard.

Twerpie's weight listing is deceptively small for a being built like a Sumo wrestler (the closest to anything human that comes to mind). Twerpie has four arms, a pig nose directly between bright red eyes, and a mouth with two curved fangs jutting out from the jaw. Muscular arms end with seven-fingered, two-



—Twerpie—

thumbed hands and razor-sharp claws. Powerful legs, with feet like huge hooves, enable Twerpie to jump clear across the vault. With the use of a thick, prehensile tail and the space to do so, Twerpie can jump twice that far.

Twerpie has no physical need for food, water, toilet facilities, or even air. Thoron and the others can determine no gender, but Twerpie prefers male pronouns (and nobody wants to argue). Because of this, many think Twerpie is a demon. However, Twerpie has none of the natural resistance normally associated with demons. The fearsome visage and high-pitched, gravelly voice aside, Twerpie is quite pleasant, and cheerfully converses with visitors — but will kill anyone who hurts Thoron.

**Clyde Boxnir.**  *Human male, Ht.: 5' 10", Wt.: 170#. Age: 55.*  *Fighting Prowess: Poor.*

Clyde, a fairly handsome widower, was once an accountant in his own right and Thoron was his client. But Thoron became so successful that he gave his practice to his three sons and went to work here, for better pay, minding the records. He's bright and easygoing, with once-black hair that's now mostly gray. His bushy sideburns accentuate his pointed chin, and his heavy eye-

ridge make his pale green eyes look deeper than they really are.

He enjoyed his first marriage and wants to try again. Currently, he's interested in a candle maker named Gillian Olfen (*CBI*); however, he hasn't committed anything, and doesn't expect her to, so he's still considering other women. (The GM, of course, may substitute some other beautiful, independent crafts-woman.) He enjoys an evening of fun, and has stories from everyday life that can keep even a seasoned adventurer on the edge of his seat. He's a patron of the *Gloriana Theatre* (q.v) and a private contributor to the Marianrose Conservatorium, and can often be seen at either place.

Nevertheless, an occasional evening or weekend is spent with Thoron in the vault. With a packed picnic lunch and a pail of ale, they joke, tell tall tales, discuss their social lives (or lack thereof) and make new or replacement money notes.

**Kellye Seabreeze.** □ *Quarter-elf female (i.e. "mostly human")*, *Ht.: 5' 6"*, *Wt.: 110#*, *Age: 24*. □ *Fighting Prowess: Average*. □ *Magic Ability: Average, C1, C2, C3*.

Kellye is the firm's Lead Teller. Thoron values her presence here not only because of her skill with money, but because of her skill at magic, which is just enough to handle the average troublemaker. A pretty brunette with a pert figure, she has a ready smile, bright blue eyes, and waist-length black hair with twin blazes of white. She's bright, witty, charming — and engaged to a large, hot-headed, and very jealous fellow who works for the security force IFS hires.

**Other Employees.** There are two other full-time tellers, and usually one to three banking apprentices attached to the establishment at any time. The GM can personalize Clyde's apprentices, the tellers who work with Kellye, her large and jealous boyfriend and any others as needed.

## Scenario Suggestions

**Scenario 1: The Great Robbery.** A good, old-fashioned bank robbery can always be an interesting adventure, whether the adventurers are the perpetrators or hired by Ironshield to find the robber. In this establishment, though, there are complications, not the least of which is Twerpie. Remember, if the adventurers are trying to catch someone who's hit IFS, they'll have to face someone who's already defeated Twerpie — no mean feat. Moreover, that same person will now have the pick of any large magic items stored (or once stored) in the vault.

**Scenario 2: "A Face! My Kingdom for a New Face."** Thoron is tired of avoiding the people he serves, and decides to throw his resources into a massive hunt for someone or something that will favorably alter his features. This would be more of a campaign beginning than an adventure, as Thoron has the money to keep a party going to many places, and for a long time.

**Scenario 3: Beyond These Walls We Know.** Thoron daily inspection of the vaults reveals that bags of gold are strewn about the inner vault like bean bags, someone, or something has made a hole in the north wall of the vault, ... and Twerpie is missing. A tunnel, carved through featureless mist, leads out of the hole.



— Kellye Seabreeze —

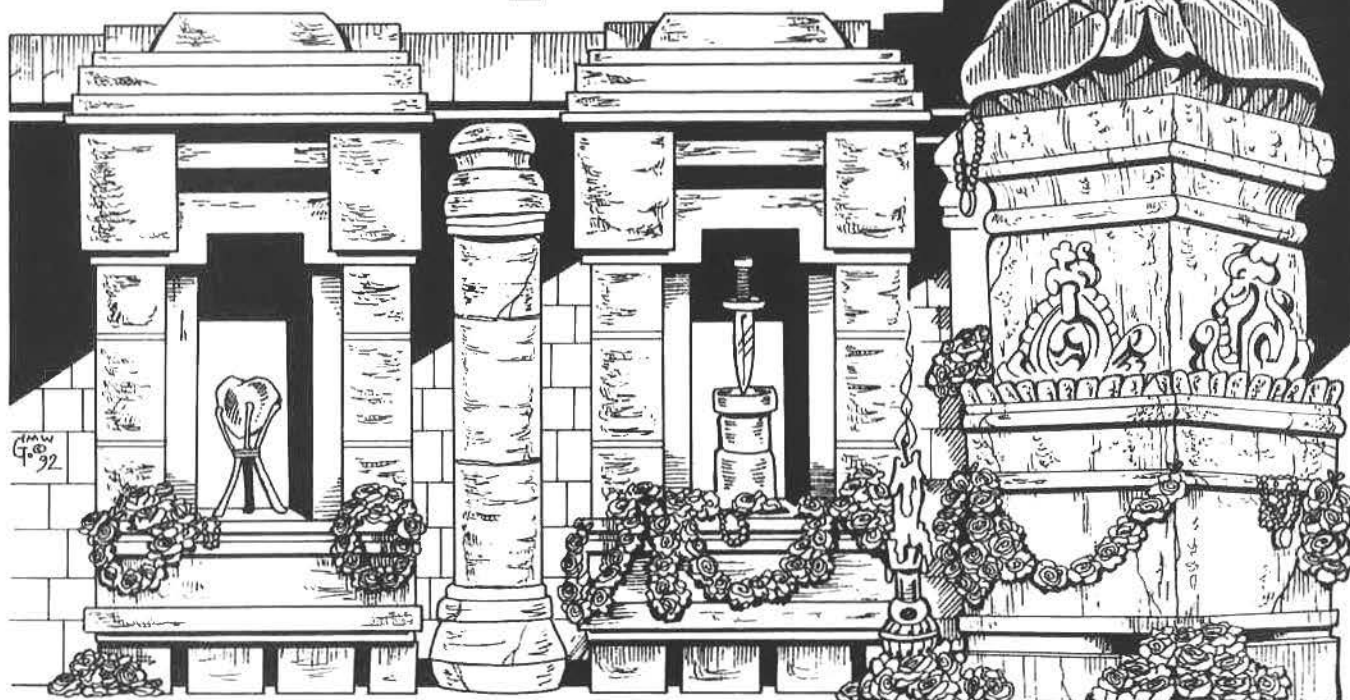
Thoron is determined to find his loyal guard and if need be rescue the creature.

The trail could lead through a number of CityBook establishments with "extra-dimensional" connections (such as *Domdaniel's Gate* in *CB3*, *Halfing House* from *CB4*, the toll bridge at *The Rapids at Crumbling Skull Rock* in *CB4*; *Tsalini's Stopover Station* from *CB4*, *The Great Dragon* from *CB4* (gulp), or the *Lost Inn* or even *Feats of Clay* here in *CB5*). Or the trail could lead to the GM's favorite "other dimension" in his or own game universe.

Whatever the destination or path, it leads to a confrontation with Twerpie's kidnappers. These could be: the wizard/demon/godling who made Twerpie and has reenslaved his/her creation for some nefarious deed; the being who first attempted to kill Twerpie and who has come back to finish the business — or perhaps hold him for ransom. Or perhaps mumsy and daddy have come back for their little runaway?

*A good moneylender is hard to find, but Thoron Ironshield is one of them. He can provide a leg-up for new adventurers, or a place for established ones to keep their earnings safe from would-be thieves. Knowing that something like Twerpie is guarding their wares, adventurers have nothing to worry about.*

# The Reliquarium



*Stuff. People use it. People own it. People collect it until it owns them. And often, too often, people worship it. No one god lives here. Welcome to a house of worship for ... Stuff.*

## History

The Reliquarium, or as it is also commonly known, the Temple of Ten Thousand Shrines, has been around for most of the City's lifetime. It is unusual for a temple not only because it serves no particular god, but because it does not focus on supernatural beings at all, but on material things. Within it are row upon row of niches and nooks, each one a shrine housing a different supernatural item: bits of holy men's beards, shards of ancient heroes' swords, idols and items sacred to one god or another; it's really half a temple and half a carefully guarded hoard of divinity. And its hoard is ever growing.

It was first a Temple of 72 Shrines. Long ago, when the City was a small town in great danger of barbarian invaders; in the darkest hour of that dark age, the City fathers deemed it prudent to call upon every shred of divine aid that could be garnered to fend off an attack. The whole citizenry donated family gods, heirloom lucky charms, idols, and relics. Seven priests were appointed to look over the collection in a building which was

donated for that purpose (a tavern which was going out of business). They formulated a ritual which included prayers and sacrifices appropriate to each of the 72 relics, and prayed it day and night. Soon after, the town defeated a barbarian clan which should have razed it, and subsequent hordes avoided the area. The town instituted a benefice for the Temple which provided for the upkeep of the original seven priests, seven novices, and a few staff in perpetuity, that the prayers might continue.

Since then, the Reliquarium has acquired more relics. And money. And power. For a long time after its formation it was the most popular temple in the City; donations of new relics poured in. Heroes from the City who went on quests often returned to the Reliquarium such part of their booty as had supernatural import. Several times the City Fathers declared an increase in its benefice. And the Temple itself began to engineer its own increase. In a peculiar combination of greed, pride, and piety, the Acceptor of the temple (the priest in charge of taking donations) began actively seeking out newer and more distinguished and interesting relics, and the Pontifex (the head priest) shrewdly invested the money brought in so as to be able to pay for more. More and holier artifacts brought in more donations. Over time the Reliquarium became a temple frequented by the rich, and its part of town became the wealthy quarter of Up Town. So it stands today.

## Sample Relics

**Y'Thuhil's Stone.** A recently acquired relic, Y'Thuhil's Stone, is the heart-amulet of a living, intelligent spirit. Delighted as it was to be rescued from the remains of a dead sorcerer's

ED HEIL makes his professional writing debut here, though it was a near thing. At deadline time he was not to be found. As far as the editors could tell, he had disappeared off the face of the Earth. He told us he was in the process of moving. We suspect that he had found one of the numerous gateways to "other" places found in this CityBook.

house, it was horrified to find itself placed in a dusty niche beyond the reach of men, in a reliquarium full of odd spells and blessings which inhibited its powers. The spirit, Y'Thuhil, managed to send itself out and take over the body of a youth who happened to pray to it, but when he tried to use that body to steal the stone, he set off a magic ward, got the man's hands badly burnt, and left the body just as he was dragged away to court, protesting that he remembered nothing but praying to a relic and waking up with burnt hands in the arms of the City watch. (The Scribe Anthony loves this story, but hasn't written it down. Bad publicity.)

A few days later, Y'Thuhil tried again to take over a body, and succeeded, possessing a janitor from the servants' building. He has stayed in that body, hoping he can figure out a way to steal the soulstone, take over a more interesting body, and live freely in it. (He cannot possess a body while it is more than two miles from the soulstone, so in the janitor's body he can't leave Up Town.) It doesn't even have to be somebody else's body; he has the alchemical knowledge to grow a homunculus body to live in. But stealing the stone will not be easy; his magic is severely restricted while in the holy ground of the Reliquarium, and he will have to find outside help to accomplish the feat.

**Never-Withering Branch of Geda.** This is a silver-barked tree branch bearing a full complement of green, shiny, soft leaves. Not all the items in the Reliquarium were brought there with the full consent of their former owners or worshippers. In particular, there is one, a Never-Withering Branch from the Sacred Tree of Geda (a fertility goddess) which although terribly popular in the City, was even more popular on the tiny island from which it was stolen some 50 years past.

**Cloak of St. Germaine.** This stained travel cloak is said to allow the wearer to pass between the land of the living, and the land of the dead. If worn while walking upon the lawn surrounding the Lost Inn, it will allow the wearer to leave the Inn and return to the streets of the City.

**Shanu-re's Accursed Dagger.** If the *Old Man of the City* (CB5) were to know that the favorite apple-peeler he lost ages ago was being venerated by this temple, he'd probably burst a blood vessel (only to have it heal immediately). The people of the City equate the curses of "He Who Honors Us" with blessings upon their homes, giving this "accursed dagger" a special meaning to those who believe the legends of the Old Man of the City.

## Layout

The building complex, which has been built and rebuilt over hundreds of years, is constructed in a bewildering array of architectural styles. It consists of a three-story hexagonal chamber, a two-story hall adjoined to it at the back, and a large one-story quadrilateral adjoining on the right side. A one-story guardhouse stands nearby, as well as a two-story servants' building; these are not detailed on the map, only indicated.

**A. Main Sanctuary** (120' x 138', hexagonal) This chamber is three stories tall, all open except for the galleries which run along the sides. Each side has up to 12 shrines along it (eight, on the

sides on the first story which have corridors adjoining); a shrine is an arched niche fenced off from the corridor by a low wrought-iron railing, such as one might find in a modern zoo or museum. On display in each niche, is a relic or idol, with a plaque naming it. More popular relics will also be surrounded by tokens of thanks — gold or silver trinkets which symbolize the help the relic has given. Brother Anthony sells these trinkets at his desk.

All the shrines are protected by magical wards which Ingram, the Pontifex, has bought from powerful wizards. Anyone trying to steal anything from here will have his intent detected and will set off some kind of magical trap (a flame blast or some such) before he can accomplish anything.

Six pillars hold up the vaulted ceiling; glassed-in windows in the ceiling provide light. Brother Anthony's desk sits near one of the pillars, and surrounding it are shelves and cabinets filled with scrolls and notes. Brother Anthony sits behind the desk during the day, and he will always be ready to strike up a conversation with newcomers.

The upper two galleries of this room are reached by the stairway opposite Brother Anthony's desk; the highest one contains the original 72 relics and idols with which the Reliquarium was founded; there is usually at least one Cantor and sometimes the Theurgist on the upper level, praying.

**B. Secondary Sanctuary** (210' x 30') This room has two guard posts (K), between which is a long row of arched niche shrines, like the ones in the main sanctuary (A), but smaller. Smaller shrines also line the walls. An identical room on the second level can be reached via the stairway in the tertiary sanctuary (C).

This part of the building is much older than the main sanctuary (A); its decor is more somber and grim and the marble floor shows signs of long wear.

**C. Tertiary Sanctuary** (75' x 105', irregular) This room is the oldest part of the building; it occupies the area which was the original Reliquarium. Its walls are old and wooden on the inside, but reinforced by stone on the outside. Rows of shrines line the walls, as well as two rows in the middle of the room. The relics kept here are usually obscure or new, or both.

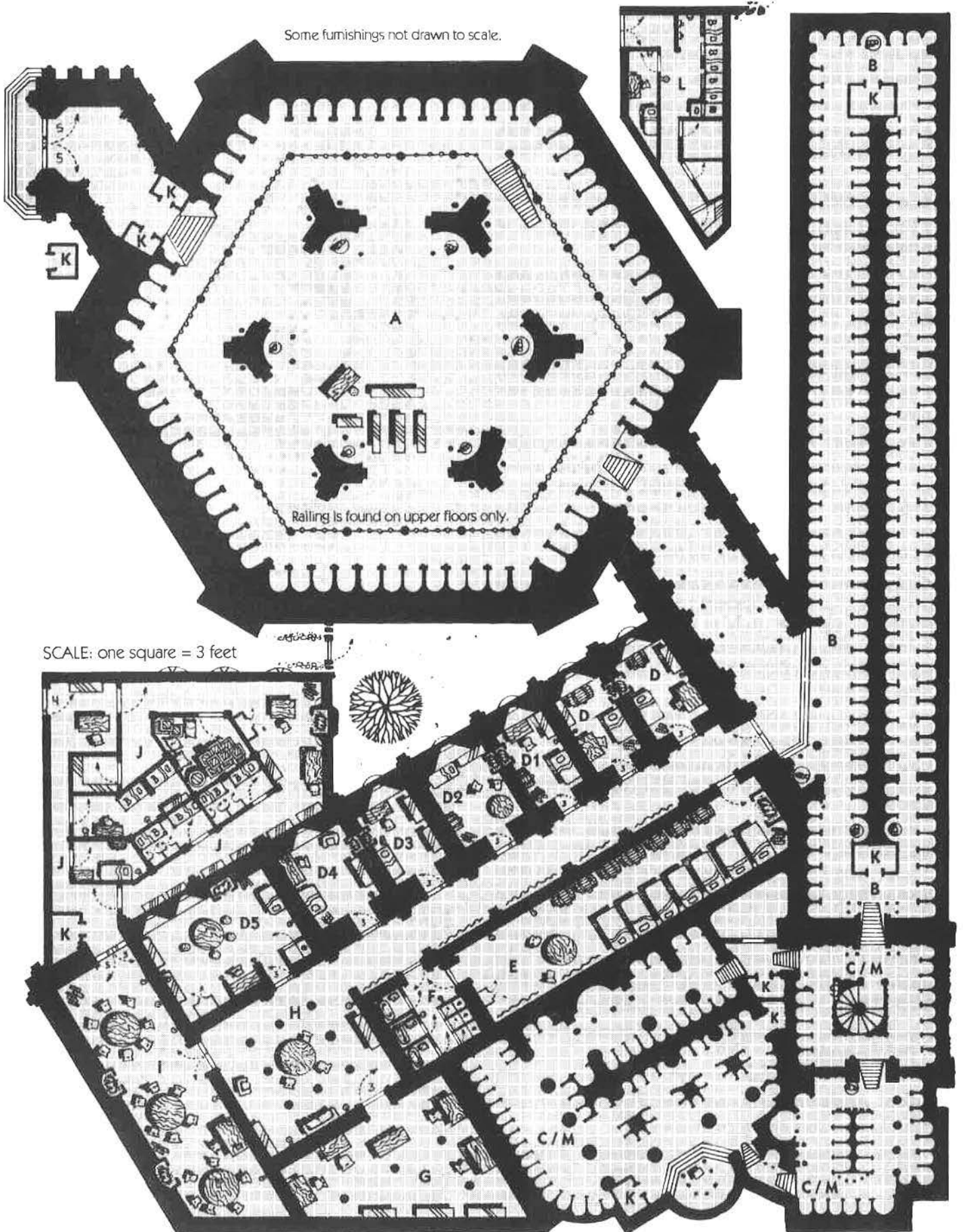
Unknown to anyone except the priests and novices, there is a secret door by the stairs which leads to another spiral staircase, going down. Downstairs is what was once an old cellar (M), the same shape and size as room C.

**D. The Priests' Rooms** (18' x 12', 18' x 15', 18' x 30') These seven bedrooms belong to the three Cantors (D1), the Theurgist (D2), the Scribe (D3), the Acceptor (D4), and the Pontifex (D5), in that order. Each is decorated to the owner's taste, usually quite richly (these priests are paid well) and contains his prized possessions. They are usually locked<sup>3</sup>, but the Pontifex has a master key.

**E. The Novices' Dormitory** (81' x 18') This is a common sleeping room for the seven novices. Each has a bed, a chest underneath the bed, and a chest of drawers. The novices, when not busy working, can be found here or in rooms (H) or (I).

**F. Privy** (18' x 18') This near-spotless room contains toilet facilities appropriate to the technological level and sewage facilities of the City. It is supplied with water daily by the servants who live in servants' building (J). There are no baths here, only

Some furnishings not drawn to scale.



SCALE: one square = 3 feet

Railing is found on upper floors only.

washing basins; usually the priests and novices take baths in their various rooms using a portable tub, or else frequent the City's public baths (the Acceptor and Pontifex are known to visit *Amaranthine's Rest* upon occasion).

**G. Offices** (39' x 42', irregular) The Scribe, Acceptor, Theurgist, and Pontifex have desks here; this room is used for private work and private meetings. The door is locked<sup>3</sup>, but all priests have a key.

**H. Common Room** (36' x 36') Usually supplied with a few tables and chairs, this is where the priests and novices relax; it is sometimes used for entertaining guests.

**I. Refectory** (72' x 18') This is where the priests and novices takes their meals. It is also the only point of access from the servants' building. Since this is one of few points of access to the outside, there is a guard posted near the door.

**J. Servants' Building** (46' x 46', irregular) Here, 15 servants live; and laundry and cooking and various menial chores are performed.

**K. Guard Post** (3' x 3') At each point marked (K) in the complex a guard will be found, often in a small guard-booth that allows them to stay unobtrusive though watchful. The guards are on eight-hour shifts; besides the seven of them scattered about the place there are three more, plus the Guardian of the Reliquarium (their captain) in the guardhouse (L) ready to help out.

**L. Guardhouse** (54' x 28') Another adjunct building not detailed here, this contains three additional guards and, sometimes, the Guardian, on alert and ready to defend the Reliquarium if summoned. There is a bell here, too, which will alert the City Guard's Up Town contingent to descend upon the Reliquarium in times of trouble.

**M. The Artifact Repository** (75' x 105', irregular) Not every sacred object draws a favorable reaction from the faithful. Some are totally ignored, or just fade from popularity. Those relics and idols that fail to attract a following are often "retired from active service."

This secret vaulted cellar lies directly beneath the ancient tertiary sanctuary. There is no separate map for it. It is a storage vault containing old relics; relics which would no longer fit in the collection above, but obviously can not be disposed of for fear of angering their various spirits. Since these are still holy objects, they can't be just tossed aside. They are all packed reverently in chests, piled on atop another and numbered. Some may be quite valuable—particularly to the religion that actually fostered their creation. Almost anything could be hidden here.

## Personalities

**Brother Anthony.** □ Human male, Ht.: 5'9", Wt.: 135#, Age: 32. □ Fighting Prowess: Average.

Brother Anthony is a fair-haired, lanky man of medium height, usually seen wearing reading spectacles, and a feather behind his ear (ready to be cut into a quill pen). At barely 32 years of age, he is easily the youngest monk. He holds the position of



— Brother Anthony —

Scribe, and is admirably suited for his job.

The Scribe's job is to know and collect stories: the myths and legends associated with those men and gods whose relics lie in the shrines, and the stories of miracles performed through those relics (which still occur today). He maintains and occasionally recopies the voluminous records which exist as scrolls in the shelves and cabinets near his desk in the main hall of the Reliquarium.

Anthony loves stories. He's a natural storyteller, and a good listener. The literary quality of the records has increased a hundred fold since Brother Anthony's been adding to them; he's also rewritten many of the older stories, improving their readability considerably at the expense of strict historical accuracy.

This characteristic, however, makes him a terrible gossip. He is always hungry for news, and being the Scribe, seated in the middle of the Reliquarium, gives him a chance to collect it. First of all, those who receive miracles from the relics traditionally come to the Scribe to tell the story so it can be added to the list of the relic's powers. Second, those who come to pray often tell Brother Anthony what they're praying for, especially if they've been there before—he makes friends easily, and he shows such interest in people's stories that it's a pleasure to tell them to him. Also, he usually knows of a parallel occurrence to whatever may be the current problem: "It is certainly wise of you to pray at the shrine of Cabalclast the Sage concerning your gout. As a matter of fact, Cabalclast's Staff once cured an entire family of their crippling gout, in a very unusual story I'd be glad to share, if you're interested..." He does have the consideration not to add a complementary story until he has heard, enjoyed and digested the

teller's story: he's not just a one-upper.

So, at any moment, Anthony will know a tremendous amount about the hopes and fears of those wealthy families whose members frequent the temple; and unfortunately when he hears a good story it's all he can do to keep from telling a complementary tale if he knows one — confidential or not. He has had to become quick at changing names and details to keep from making enemies. Still, a canny adventurer who knows about Brother Anthony would be able to ferret out a story about nearly anyone by telling a story similar to the one he wants to hear. Anthony might remember to change the names, but the details will likely give things away.

Well suited as he is for his position, Anthony is not completely happy here. He was noviced to the order as a youth because his wealthy family wanted to get rid of their last, overly-talkative child — to a profession of some honor. So he was told he was going to be a priest, no questions asked. He would have preferred to become a wandering scholar; or a bard; or traveler and gatherer of exciting exploits and stories. In short, an adventurer.

Once, he almost left the order to join an adventuring band who were to quest after a relic, but the plans fell through. He still wishes he had left then. He does enjoy some of the work here, especially his work with Gordi the Acceptor, researching new relics. But if one sees him in a quiet moment (a rare thing), he still seems wistful. And his dreams sometimes trouble him.

**Brother Gordi.** □ Human male, Ht.: 5'6", Wt.: 155#, Age 43.  
□ Fighting Prowess: Poor.



— Brother Gordi —

The monk in charge of acquiring and inspecting new idols and relics has the title of Acceptor, since originally he merely took in donations. The current Acceptor is Brother Gordi (pronounced "gourd-eye"). Gordi has kept up the rate of acquisition of the last few Acceptors — about one new relic a year. He spends much of his time arranging for agents to search out interesting items (the more exotic the better), verify their histories, and buy them. If Gordi has his eye on a relic which is not for sale, he is not above arranging for it to come up for sale, but he prefers not to involve the underworld. Gordi frequently hires adventurers. He often has one expedition or another searching for lost relics, two-fisted archaeologist-style.

Gordi is middle-aged and balding, with dark hair, a very shrewd and down-to-earth seeming man, resembling a merchant in his practical, calculating style of speech and thought. In fact, he was born to a merchant family and traveled quite a bit before being accepted as a novice here. If he didn't wear the distinctive blue robe of the order, he would look perfectly at home in the great merchant houses of the trade quarter. And the pervading vice of merchants, greed, perhaps clings to him as well, though in keeping with his calling he feels no need to acquire mere material goods. He is greedy for god-things, according to the Reliquarium's grand tradition, and in his zeal to acquire them he has enriched the temple as well as any who have gone before him.

**Brother Ingram.** □ Human male, Ht.: 5'9", Wt.: 170#, Age: 63. □ Fighting Prowess: Poor. □ Magic Ability: Average, C3; Poor, C5, C7. A smattering of spells, that is, such as an old man with considerable learning and some familiarity with the occult might acquire.

The head priest of the Reliquarium is known as the Pontifex. He is not an imposing man, not particularly tall, almost completely bald, with a tiny white fringe round the back of his head; his face shows the features of a noble born, but is still quite plain for all that. His most apparent attribute is his utter self-confidence. No visitor to the Reliquarium, be he warrior, merchant, lord, or rival priest, has ever intimidated Brother Ingram. He represents the Temple to the City, officially, and his position is always simple: the Reliquarium will take no side in politics within the City; it will support the City against outsiders as it always has, and it will never waver in its insistence on its stipend, to be paid in silver, as always.

It is his interest especially to see that novices learn to carry out the tasks of their masters as they always have. He is the Reliquarium's force for tradition.

Also, he has kept track of which idols and relics have shown the most apparent power in the past; he regularly makes special prayers and sacrifices to those for the protection of the temple, and, at the GM's option, he may even be in communication with certain otherworldly spirits which could come to his aid in time of need.

### The Other Staff

There are four other priests besides the Pontifex, Acceptor and Scribe; these are the Theurgist and three Cantors. Their task is to actually say the prayers and make the offerings at the shrines;



— Brother Ingram —

the prayers to the 72 Patrons go on in perpetuity and special prayers are added to the list at the request (and donation) of interested persons. It is a full-time job to make these prayers and offerings, but not a particularly interesting one, and the Theurgist (who's in charge of the other three) and the Cantors are usually chosen for patience rather than wit.

Each priest has a novice who will take his place upon his death, incapacitation, or retirement.

The temple has a special Guardian, a position of honor assigned to one of the City watch. A cadre of six hand-picked guards accompany the Guardian, who along with the regular City watch patrols in the area, keep the Reliquarium safe. The Guardian will be an experienced veteran (Fighting Prowess: Good), while a typical guard is slightly more proficient than the average City Guardsman (Fighting Prowess: Fair).

A staff of 15 servants live in the servants' building and serve the meals, wash clothes, clean the place, and do all that is necessary to keep things livable. They are aided by any novices who have displeased their masters that day, or that week.

## Scenario Suggestions

**Scenario 1: Bring Me the Head of Deus Irae.** Gordi hires the characters to find some new (and possibly more exciting) relic or idol in a forgotten temple somewhere. This is not so much a scenario but a hook for other scenarios which will acquaint the characters with the Reliquarium and its personalities and goals.

**Scenario 2: A Branch from the Tree of Death.** Gedan worshippers on a quest have finally located the whereabouts of the Never-Withering Branch of Geda. The adventurers (depending on their scruples and their standing with the Temple) could help, either to defend it against them or to acquire it for them. If you don't want the adventurers to feel morally bound to support the Gedans

against the temple, add something twisted to the Gedan cause such as a vow to kill all the non-Islanders who have worshipped Geda's Branch, starting with the ones who've left dedicatory tokens at the shrine and finally including all the Cantors and the Theurgist, before stealing the Branch back.

**Scenario 3: Powers and Principalities.** Religions are not generally noted for their tolerance of one another — even in pantheistic societies. Yet with the Reliquarium, we have a temple filled with artifacts from hundreds, perhaps thousands of different religions, faiths, cults and sub-cults. Obviously the monks are careful not to place knowingly antagonist deities near one another, but who knows exactly how Aroshnavaraparta (*CB2*) truly dislikes having one of his holy scales be in the same hall with a conch shell blessed by Ssyathay, Queen of the Mer (*CB5*)?

The situation is much like that of the proverbial powder keg with a lit fuse. It's not so much a question of "if," but "when." Someday there will be friction between the deities and demigods and no ward will hold them back.

No one knows exactly how it starts, perhaps one worshipper in the temple gives another a shove while she kneels before a rival deity. Shoves become fisticuffs; fisticuffs become weapons; and suddenly it's not a tussle — it's Holy War! All tolerance is tossed to the wind as the City's temples take arms against each other.

Adventurers with strong religious ties (priests, acolytes, paladins, even just regular temple attenders) will be drawn into the fray, perhaps on opposing sides.

And that's where Brother Anthony comes in. He's certain that the Reliquarium started the problem and that the Reliquarium may be the way to end it. He wants the adventurers to help him solve it.

He remembers a story about an artifact, a key (one of the keys to the doors within the Lost Inn) that leads directly to the home of a god, or perhaps many gods. He's willing to try it ... if he can find the key, and the door which it unlocks. Who knows, perhaps they can convince the gods themselves to stop the fighting.

The party must find the key within the Reliquarium (try hiding it in area M). This is an excuse to loot the temple of valuable magical items (they really should be returned eventually). Next, the Lost Inn must be found, and the right door within it. From there, the GM is almost left to his or her own devices as the adventurers search for the gods themselves. The answer is ultimately simple: rearrange the temple for less friction, or not so simple; return stolen artifacts to their rightful owners.

Meanwhile, the City continues to destroy itself. Not only are the religions still at war, but political groups that had hoped to gain power are busily instigating even more unrest and conflict and looters run wild through the City's neighborhoods from *Deadly Nightside* to *Up Town*.

*What better place to dispose of random sacred objects than a temple that actually wants them, regardless of the religion they represent? Of course, as with the Branch of Geda, many cults may desire their holy objects back. And despite all those magical wards and guards, there's always someone interested in obtaining exotic, and possibly magical artifacts.*

# Lord Llewellyn Finster

□ *Human male, Ht.: 5'9", Wt.: 150#, Age: 44.* □ *Fighting Prowess: Very Good with rapier and dagger, otherwise Good with other swords.* □ *Special Ability: Has Excellent thief skills.*

## Common Knowledge/Legend

Lord Llewellyn Finster, special investigator for the City's Justice Ministry, cuts an imposing figure as he accompanies the City Watch to the scene of crimes in Up Town. His heavy woolen great cloak flapping loose behind him like the wings of some dark dragon, he stalks with purposeful strides around the scenes of crimes, taking it all in. No detail escapes his intense green eyes. No clue is too trivial to consider.

Though obviously athletic and nimble, even for one half his age, he still surprises comrades and foes alike when he takes to the roofs of the City in pursuit of a suspect, or descends into the sewers to unerringly find his way through their stinking maze.

"Undignified!" they exclaim when he thrusts his square-jawed head out of some dusty crypt, or dank cellar, calling for more light and shaking cobwebs from his brush of salty red hair.

The criminal who learns that the "Red Ferret" is on his trail had best either flee the City, or turn himself in.

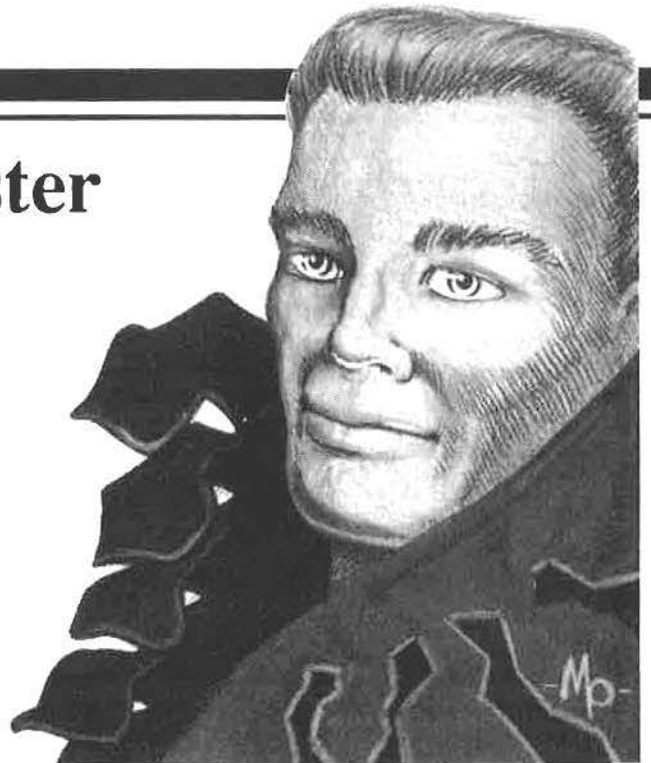
## The Truth

Perhaps a generation, perhaps more, has passed since the name of Bridhe (BREE), "Queen of the Thieves," has readily crossed the lips of City residents. Yet her grandson, her legacy, indeed her trained protégé yet stalks the mist-enshrouded streets, trips along the gabled roof peaks and slogs silently through the fetid sewers that lie beneath the cobbles.

It may be that Earl Corbal Finster was unwise to wed a commoner, but Bridhe, his bride's eloquent and cultured mother, gave no clue of her true nature ... until the birth of Fiona, Finster's third child. Confident that the earl had his heir, Bridhe kidnapped her grandson Llewellyn, the earl's second son, and stole a good share of the earl's silver for good measure. Since Bridhe's daughter had shown no skill as a thief, Bridhe taught all she knew to her grandchild.

At five years old, Llewellyn had become a folk hero. He could go where larger thieves could not and avoid traps like a master. For years, Bridhe and her grandson lived a life of luxury.

Yet the daughter that had brought Bridhe to this level of success by providing a talented grandson also ended it ... when the earl and his wife, Bridhe's daughter and Llewellyn Finster's mother, and their eldest son were found dead, murdered by a thief's hand. Realizing that it meant the end of her career, and most likely that of her grandson, Bridhe came forward. She offered her knowledge, her skills and her contacts to the Justice



Ministry — anything to bring her daughter's slayer to justice.

Within the week, a young dwarf thief twisted slowly from the gibbet. Bridhe had gained the name; and Llewellyn deduced that it was not a human, but a dwarf who had murdered his family. The young thief, now Earl Llewellyn Finster tracked the dwarf to an apartment in the *Sideshow* district and subdued him.

Most folk think that the Queen of Thieves ended her days in a City prison. Yet larcenous old Bridhe lived out her last days as Brigitt Swift, Second Under Minister of Justice, bringing to an end a "golden age" of organized thievery in the City.

Llewellyn Finster abdicated his title to his younger sister, Fiona (who has hated him for it to this day for saddling her with the burden). The legendary "Red Ferret" no longer sought to burglarize the homes of the wealthy, nor lighten the purses of passers by. He had found his true calling.

After voluntarily spending a year in prison, he joined the City Watch, and was quickly transferred to the Justice Ministry as their first special investigator. Though his past is known to the City rulers, the Red Ferret has more than earned their confidence.

## Scenario Suggestions

**Scenario 1: "My Face is Known too Well in this Town."** Lord Finster is known throughout the City's underworld, as are many of his subordinates. To counter this, he frequently hires "freelancers" to assist his investigations. Any crime committed in Up Town could be cause for the Red Ferret to hire the adventurers.

**Scenario 2: Your Sins Will Find You Out.** Should the adventurers commit a minor crime (something well short of murder), Lord Finster and his guardsmen will haunt their paths until a dramatic confrontation (imagine other dark avengers who always seem to step out of the shadows when least expected). Rather than end their careers, Finster negotiates a trade. The adventurers will perform a particularly nasty mission in exchange for pardon (this can be something that the GM has been wanting to run for some time ... it just needs a law-and-order slant put on it).

# Lord Westcott

□ *Part-elven but mostly human male, Ht.: 6'1", Wt.: #207, Age: 61, but appears a youthful 33 — due to his elvish blood.* □ *Fighting Prowess: Fair with swords, Average in all other weapons.* □ *Magic Ability: Very Good in all categories.*



## Common Knowledge/Legend

Arden Chatwick, Lord Westcott, is generally seen as a credit to the City's high society. He's intelligent, handsome, genial with his peers and generous to the commonfolk. While his pockets seem deep, he's no wastrel. Sociable and approachable, Lord Westcott is often seen at racetracks and society events, but his particular passion is the *Gloriana Theatre* (q.v.). He would be the ideal nobleman — except that other people's business holds an "inappropriate" attraction for him, something his fellow nobles don't quite condone.

He also has an unfortunate tendency to prefer books and learning to hunting parties and evening soirées — a tale-telling traveller to an entourage of fluttering beauties. Yet he is anything but a misogynist or recluse, being charming, diffident, and even a bit shy around the matrons with their daughters-in-tow who seek a noble husband — even an eccentric one. Possessed of a diletant-ish curiosity, he tinkers in his workshop late at night, but nothing important ever comes of it.

## The Truth

In another world, Arden Chatwick, Lord Westcott might be a caped crusader or a Victorian sleuth. In the City, he is neither — but he is nevertheless a most remarkable man.

A deep hunger for knowledge motivates Arden, matched by a lively curiosity about people — all people, all races, and of all walks of life. He feels oddly *different* from the rest of the world. His wealth, rank, and streak of elvishness are what he attributes it to — but if anything, it's because he's so much more intelligent, observant, and thoughtful than most. This distance lends him a certain air of mystery. Few come to know him closely.

This desire to understand people attracts him to the theatre: with motivations and actions cast in high relief, and underlying universal truths exposed by a competent playwright, the stage mirrors life. It gives him a sense of connectedness which nothing else quite matches.

He combines an almost adolescent idealism with a clear-eyed realism, and he makes it his "life's work" to improve the lives of those he sees as deserving something better, and exposing those who foment injustices. When an opportunity presents itself, especially if it offers mental challenge and a hope for insight; Westcott will take an interest.

Rarely sleeping more than three to four hours a day, he uses

his time productively at home and around the City. The theatre has educated him in matters of disguise, and his acting talent assures that he can pass where a rich nobleman might not otherwise go. Arden relies on his skill at magic only as a last resort, and does not consider himself a "wizard" — only a scholar. Science and mechanics attract him, and with his da Vinci-like creativity and prodigious productivity, he invents and constructs items to rival the finest dwarven workshops. Odd trinkets are his specialty, and Arden takes delight in crafting clever things to make life easier ... or at least more interesting.

His greatest horror is that his elder brother and all his family will die, and he'll be forced to assume the dull stewardship of the family's lands and tenants. Fortunately, his elder brother and sister-in-law are raising up a numerous brood for which he holds a considerable affection.

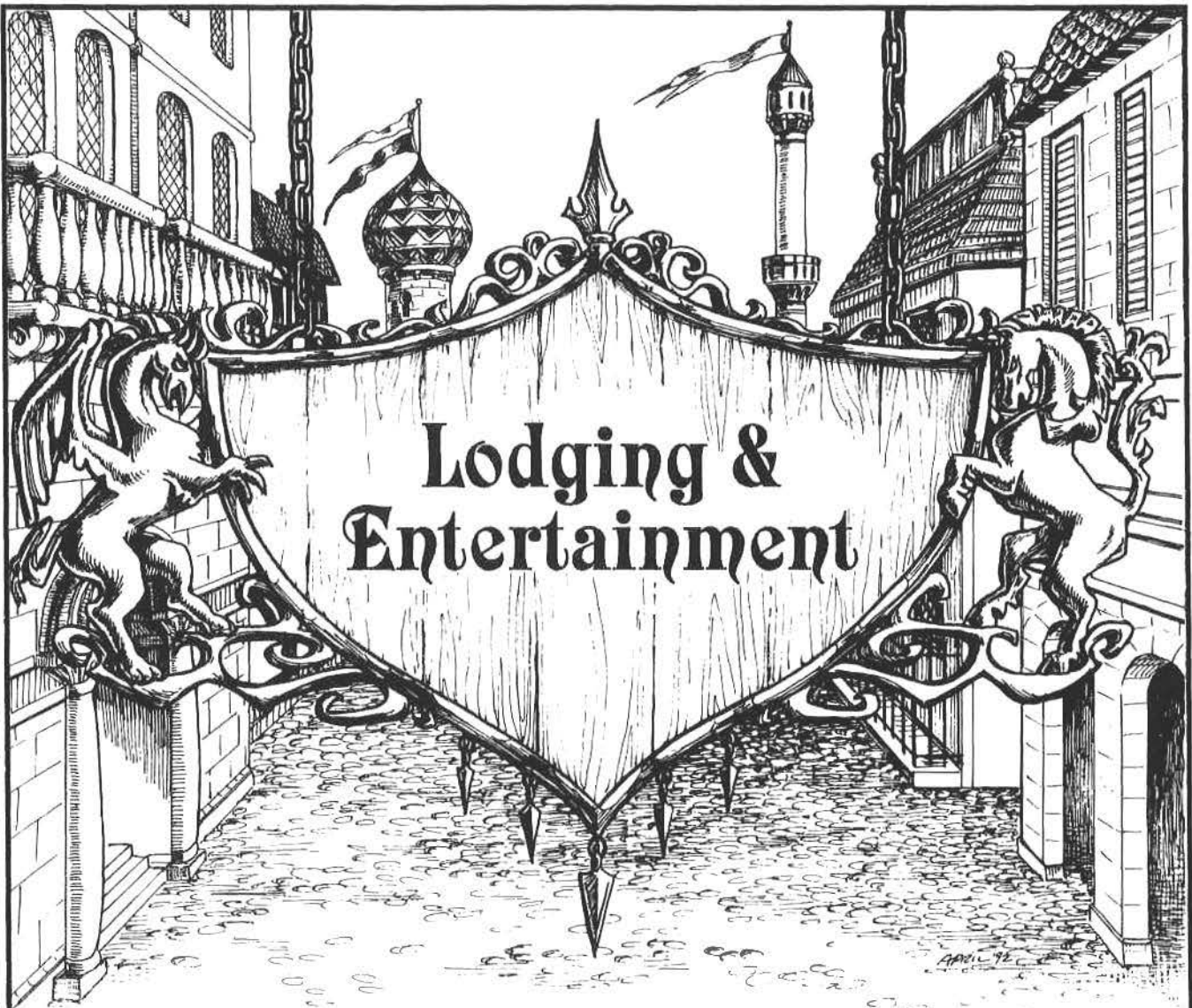
## Scenario Suggestions

Lord Westcott is best suited as a catalyst for adventures, a well-informed patron who is enough of a busybody to know what needs attention in the City. He does much in disguise himself, but often uses his position to encourage others to share his vision. What follows is not a "traditional" scenario, but a thread to weave into the the pattern of the adventurers' lives.

**Scenario 1: The Game's Afoot.** Westcott might be introduced when the party comes upon a young noble woman acting oddly due to a spell-induced infatuation with a member of the *Big Fish Gang* (CB3). Already on the track of the malefactors, Westcott steps in and "convinces" the thugs of what a bad idea they've had. With the heroes' assistance, the girl returns home safely.

Later, Westcott posts bail for a jailed adventurer who was framed by some enemy. He requests payback in the way of some small errand which a good-hearted adventurer would be inclined to do for nothing, but there's a small bonus anyway. It might be gold, or it might be "this little trinket that could help some day" — one of his "interesting" inventions.

Over an extended campaign, Westcott could make several "guest appearances," never getting close to the party, but always around and always a welcome sight. Finally, a mutual acquaintance (perhaps rescued noble woman) contacts the party. Westcott is missing... *The Big Fish Gang* have finally had enough of him; and all his cleverness has failed to prevent him being whisked away. For some reason, the *Gang* hasn't killed him (perhaps they've captured one of his personas and don't realize exactly who they have) — but they will ... if the adventurers don't rescue this unusual and interesting lord of the City.



When adventurers return to the City laden with the booty of the ages, their first thoughts are generally toward places that might give them safe places to keep their belongings, rest up and heal, have a little fun, and of course, provide sources of casual information that can lead to new adventures. For an adventurer with money, those needs can lead to places that are indeed unusual and exotic.

For centuries, *The Lost Inn* has provided a way station for those en route to eternal rest, and a not-so-restful stay for those who still breathe and bleed. The players at the *Gloriana Theatre* provide a bit of diversion from stressful excursions and may even pass on a few secrets to boot. If having too much money is a problem, the distinctly different races at *Harrow Downs* can provide a path to a lighter pocketbook and exciting mysteries. And for those who simply need a permanent residence, and don't mind paying prince's ransom for lodging, the "airy" halls of *Cidryn's Aerial Palladium* may be the answer.

# The Lost Inn

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JTS



*The City's streets often take unexpected twists and turns. Even in Up Town, the unwary can lose their way. For those who become truly lost ... somewhere, or perhaps somewhen, on a misty, half-remembered way, the Hostel of St. Germaine waits to greet them. Over a flagon of fine brew, a newcomer may strike up conversations with a most depressed and desperate collection of souls. It's the best place in the City to pass a little time ... or perhaps ... wait a lifetime.*

## History

The "Lost Inn" began as a monastic hostelry, founded soon after the City came into being. A group of pilgrims put ashore at the City on their way to a yearly festival. Winter storms had come early that year, forcing their ship to seek safe harbor. Alas, once in port, search though they might, they could find nowhere to stay. Others forced ashore by the weather had taken what few lodging were to be had. For lack of an inn and the stormy waters, the pilgrims journeyed on by land.

Once home again, two monks sought their abbot's permission to establish a house of rest in the City for travelers. The abbot, eager to spread the order's influence (and earn much-needed revenue), granted their request. Soon, the Hostel of St. Germaine the Weary opened its doors. Over the next two centuries, business steadily increased and St. Germaine's prospered. Five times the building was enlarged, often with the addition of an entirely new wing. Eventually, over 30 holy brothers were assigned to what had become the order's most profitable enterprise.

The recently elevated Abbot D'narop was a man known for undertaking grand and expensive projects. As the youngest son of a rich nobleman, he grew up with expensive tastes. Upon his election to the head of the order, D'narop determined to build a new mother-house — funded chiefly by St. Germaine's Hostel. The hostel would be required to send three times as much money as before. Father Ambrose, keeper of the hostel, confronted the Abbot during one of his infrequent visits. The words they are lost to the mists of history, but what is certain, is that at some point the abbot struck Father Ambrose with one of the golden candlesticks from the altar. As his life bled away, the old monk looked up at his superior and sighed, "If ye want it so badly, let *this* responsibility be yours as well." As several monks rushed in to find what had disrupted their sleep, Ambrose died.

J.D. KIRKLAND-REVELS brings the same odd twists that gave us *The Old Man of the City* in *CityBook V: Sideshow* to bear on the otherworldly realm of *The Lost Inn*. Space considerations kept it from appearing in *CBS*, as originally intended. But, as with his last contribution, you will note that he brings his interest in both medieval architecture and lost souls to bear on the sprawling complex of this former monastery.

Suddenly, the chapel exploded with a great light and in their midst stood St. Germaine, patron of the order, looking weary beyond life. "Father Ambrose," he intoned sonorously, "was a servant who discharged his duty with faithfulness and humility. I have heard his prayer. So shall it be. D'narop, *attend me!*" The Abbot, visibly trembling, inched closer. "The duties of this house shall be yours to the end of your days. Your reward for this act shall become clear to all. Go now and await the dawn."

With the morning's light, all guests were asked to seek lodging elsewhere. As evening settled, new guests began to arrive — very different guests. The hostel had become a way-station for those wrongfully killed, and the former Abbot had become an innkeeper of souls. When the sun rose again, the Lost Inn, and all its buildings, plazas and courtyards, was gone.

## Conditions within the Inn

The Inn has peculiar characteristics which it does not share with other establishments in the City. Its location "floats" among the various quarters, though it seems to appear most often in Up Town, near its original location. The entrance is always off a main street and one is never certain that they are within the Inn until after passing into the main courtyard. Second, the Inn only appears under certain conditions: when the blue-green phosphorescent mer-mist drifts in with the late tides, at the waning of the full moon, during the yearly equinoxes — for a total of no more than 18 to 24 times per year (about every 14 to 21 days).

All newcomers are bound to the Inn, and forced to stay until certain conditions are met.

The dead remain until:

- a) they are avenged or cleared of wrongdoing, or;
- b) they have been in the Inn seven years and a day.

The living are bound here until:

- a) they are released to attempt to clear the name of, or avenge one of the dead — failure to try within three months not only forces the victims back (they wake up one morning in the Inn), but makes the them residents subject to the rules for the dead;
- b) they fool Bu'poo the Opulent by making him believe they're "souls" and agree to work as his spy);
- c) they bribe Myste the barmaid to show them one of the hidden ways out (her prices are high), or;
- d) they ply the Old Man of the City with drink and tales of the City's destruction (and perhaps agree to one of his schemes) until he reveals a way out.

Shades behave like living beings within the Inn. Although they seem to be affected by physical combat (even "dying" from wounds), the next day, they are whole and hale again. Yet the

same cannot be said for the living. Death is death for them.

After a time, shades leave the public areas of the Inn and wait away the years in one of the guest rooms. As many as 20 shades may fill some of the larger rooms. Some go mad, and may transform into unpleasant forms of undead. When their time is up, shades know it, and simply walk out into the mists.

The shades instinctively know when a “live-one” arrives and descend upon the newcomer with begging, pleading, threats, etc., to gain support in winning the condemned shade’s release. In conjunction with this behavior, Bu’poo is not easily fooled, especially if he witnesses a “new arrival.” Many “doors” lead out to the “real” world. Not even Myste knows them all. And the Old Man is not always at the Inn, and is usually unwilling to help anyone anyway.

## Exits to Reality

The commonly known exits to the living world can only be used by those who find loopholes in the magical rules governing the Inn. Bu’poo purchased his loophole, The Old Man is simply not allowed to leave a specific area, and Myste, although a shade, was not wrongfully killed. Each of these can take one other live person out at a time — their unique auras protect the ward. Except for Bu’poo, they can do nothing for the dead souls.

Other exits exist that do not require help, but they may not lead *directly* to the real world, if they lead there at all. People who have passed those portals are rarely seen again.

Such “doors” are hidden throughout the hostels and are invariably locked. The locks are distinctive, each one unique and often made of some unexpected material — like chalcedony, ironwood, red glass, even gem stones. Each has a matching key, marked with the holy symbol of St. Germaine.

These keys may be found in unexpected places within the Inn, or more likely ... out in the world as part of treasure troves or in the inventories of curiosity shops like *Exeter’s Antiques Emporium* (q.v.), or *Hilkin’s Specialties & Esoterica* (CB5). Possessing one of the keys increases the chance that the adventurers will come upon the Lost Inn when again the mer-mists rise.

The locked doors could open onto unexpected locations in the GM’s world, onto the past, the future, or to other dimensions.

## Layout

The Inn sprawls across considerable space, though it was not built out to the street. A narrow apron of green lawn once surrounded the Inn. It now acts as the boundary between the worlds. Technically, the occupants can leave the Inn, they just can’t leave the premises. The lawn has a grayish look to it, and thick, languorous fog constantly rolls around.

There are three main entrances. The north entrance leads to the outer courtyard (L1), which is flanked on the east by the stables (K). The south entrance opens into a small square court with double doors directly opposite, leading into a wide hall and, eventually, to the common room. The west entrance goes into the newest wing of Inn, it consists entirely of guest rooms. To reach the common room, one must ascend the stairs to the upper floor, pass around the corner and down the hall, and then descend.

There are eight main areas. The common room (a large

tavern-like area) where most shades gather, the guest rooms (in three wings), the kitchen and cellars, the storerooms, the stables, the chapel, the old monastery, and the outer lawn. The guest rooms and cells are often occupied; the kitchen always is. The rest of the Inn is filled with shades who simply bide their time.

**A. The Common Room** (104’ x 64’, “L” shaped) This is where the action is. All the occupants are drawn here eventually. The room alternates between a trifle too warm and a touch too chilly despite the three large fire-places. In the southwest corner, a staircase leads to the upper level rooms (the only way to reach the West wing). In the southeast corner is the entrance to the tap room (A1) where Stiph pulls drafts for thirsty souls. The door off the tap room leads to the kitchens beyond. By the tap room entrance is a small table for two — permanently reserved for the Old Man.

**B1. New West Wing** (24’ x 56’) Built into the old outer wall, one enters at ground level into a waiting room with a double staircase. Directly opposite the entrance is a set of double doors leading to the first floor rooms, the so-called “Pilgrim’s Cells.” These austere rooms each contain two small single beds, a chest, pitcher and basin, brazier (for heat), and chamber pot. The second floor rooms are larger, have a little more class: larger beds, a second brazier, more blankets and pillows.

**B2. Old West Wing** (40’ x 96’, irregular) Built only a few decades before the “new” West wing, this area of the Inn was remodeled when the new section was added. The rooms are large and well appointed: including fine tapestries, fireplaces, candles, a desk with chair, and a pair of sitting chairs, as well as the other standard features of a more comfortable Inn. A few suites have been created by altering the door placements. The monks spared no expense (and charged accordingly) in outfitting these rooms.

**C. North Wing** (48’ x 168’, irregular) The original guest rooms of the Inn were once here. This portion was reworked at the same time as the west wing. These were the prime rooms of the Inn, and are still richly decorated.

**D. The Chapel Area** (72’ x 40’) As might be expected, the chapel has been richly decorated with precious metals, cut gems and exquisite stained glass. The style is similar to a miniature cathedral: high vaulted ceiling, fluted columns, a raised dais (the high altar) at one end, and antiphonal seating (D2) constructed of delicately carved wood. Two aisles of front-facing benches lie between the high altar and the antiphonal pews. A gallery on the upper floor (D1) surrounds the rear of the chapel on three sides and was for guests who wished to visit the services. The entrance is on the second floor.

**E. Chapter House** (56’ x 40’, irregular) This is a large, oddly shaped open room with stone seating around the sides and stained glass in the windows above. It was used for meetings by the monks to decide the hostel’s affairs. Adjacent to the chapter house is the vestibule (E1), used for housing religious coats, cloaks, robes, candles, minor relics of St. Germaine and other religious things. The Prior’s study (E2) contains a desk with chair, two other chairs (very comfortable), and a bookcase (the only one outside the hostel’s library). On one wall is drawn a map of the City. The use of the all-purpose room (E3) changed as time and need dictated. It currently holds junk and cast-offs.

**F. The Monastic Cells** (88’ x 80’, irregular) There are 14 cells, including one for the prior of the hostel (F1). A large room housed





— *Myste* —

a sigh of relief, or shudder in fear and walk into the mists never to be seen again. Despite the relative security of the Inn's interior, unpleasant things lurk in the mists outside. Non-corporeal forms of unpleasant undead can be found out here. They ignore shades and stalk any living who spend too much time poking about.

## Personalities

**Father D'narop.** □ *Human male (cursed), Ht.: 5' 11", Wt.: 172#; Age: ancient and unknown, but is supposed to about 300 to 500 years younger than the Old Man of the City (appears to be about 38). □ Fighting Prowess: Poor.*

Once the Abbot of the order of St. Germaine the Weary, he killed the prior of the hostel in a fit of rage. Innkeeper for The Lost Inn was his eternal reward. His curse is to exist without the forgiveness he is forced to seek, constantly confessing his crime to gain absolution. While he eventually departs after a few half-hearted attempts with the "regulars," he shows far more persistence (and, eventually, wailing penitential fervor) with any newcomer he meets. For the most part, he is nothing but a pain and a bore. Yet, on certain particularly melancholy occasions (like the anniversary of Father Ambrose's death) his mood can swing towards violence, and he becomes dangerous unless subdued.

**Myste.** □ *Human female, Ht.: 5' 4", Wt.: 112#; Age: appears 23 while within the Inn. □ Fighting Prowess: Good with dagger, Average with short sword and beer stein, while within the Inn; Very Good at brawling elsewhere. □ Magic Ability: None while within the Inn, "Special" when in the world of the living.*

Myste is the chief barmaid for the Inn. Her situation is different than the other shades. Instead of a soul wrongly killed, she is a soul wrongly *brought back* about a year ago. When not within the Lost Inn, Myste is actually 3,000 years old and

wrapped head to toe in moulding cloth bandages — a *living mummy*. While inside the Inn, however, her spirit form is dominant, and she appears as she did when buried with her king, to be the his wine taster in the afterlife. The custom was common to her culture, and even her "outside" form is remarkably intact. When Myste steps outside, she retains her intellect as well as any abilities and limitations normally associated with one of these living dead. She has a darker, more exotic look to her than the average local girl, but she long ago exchanged her native clothes for the more common tavern baggies.

She works at the Inn tending tables by day and goes out into the "real" world whenever she comes across lucrative information — someone buys their way out with directions to hidden money or gives her another clue about the evil mage who summoned her back from the dead. Although the mage still has control over her when he calls, she hopes to one day take him by surprise and release herself from this limbo of life and death.

The Inn's rules only half apply to Myste, as she was not wrongfully "killed." She may come and go as she pleases, but must spend at least half of each day at the Inn, and she must go when the mage calls. Myste is willing to escort the unfortunate "live one" who stumbles into the Inn back out again for a very high price, unless, of course, the adventurer can convince her of his or her ability to find and eliminate the mage. She is an excellent judge of character, and will not be fooled by posers.

**Stiph.** □ *Human male (shade), Ht.: 6' 7", Wt.: 248#; Age: appears 31, with two and one-half years at the Inn. □ Fighting Prowess: Excellent in brawling and formal fisticuffs (although the stories approach Legendary). Good with dagger.*

Two and a half years ago, Stiph was killed by a customer in a tavern brawl said to be the greatest in the City's history: it lasted four days, spread across six streets, and eight taverns and resulted in 23 deaths, 14 maimings, 157 broken bones (including heads), nine fires and well over 60,000 pieces of silver in damage. Stiph is said to have once been the best brewer for 100 miles, and is remembered — over several steins — with great fondness, regret and tall tales at *The Bottomless Keg* (C15). He now tends bar for the Inn, and occasionally even concocts a few brews for its customers — though none has ever said whether or not it is as good as what he used to make.

**Jak, a.k.a. "The Old Man."** □ *Human male, Ht.: 5' 4", Wt.: 135#; Age: unknown, incredibly ancient, appears a well-preserved 51. □ Fighting Prowess: Poor. □ Magic Ability: Legendary in C2 (automatic self-healing and regeneration only, due to his curse.)*

Few know the Old Man's true appearance. Though he always appears as someone of mature years, one day he may be a rich merchant, another a hobbling beggar, and another a frumpy matron on her way to market. His personality changes to match the guise, but in general he is always irritable and quick to curse.

The Old Man cannot be killed — though over the ages many have tried, succeeding only in maiming and crippling him. Eventually, he heals, even regenerating body parts and major internal organs. Cursed by the god of the sea, Jak is fated to live as long as the City lives, and can go no more than 200 paces from his home. If he is in the Inn when it disappears, he is left on the ground where it stood — it is not allowed to take him. He is a bitter man, and constantly schemes to bring about the end of the

City and consequently, his own miserable life. Since no one ever built near him, his only respite is the occasional visit from the Lost Inn. He desperately wants to be free of his curse, and actively supports plans to destroy the City. (For a more detailed history of Jak, see *CityBook V: Sideshow, The Old Man of the City*.)

**Bu'poo the Opulent.** □ *Human male, Ht.: 6', Wt.: 328#; Age: Appears 44, real age unknown.* □ *Fighting Prowess: Poor overall.* □ *Magic Ability: Average overall.*

Bu'poo insists that his name is pronounced with a long "o" sound. The shades refer to him as "Bu'poooh the Corpulent," which fits the fat, greasy, greedy and unscrupulous merchant.

Bu'poo comes to the Inn to "hire" shades into his service in exchange for a shortened stay — a promise he is unable to keep.

Bu'poo has a "life-stretching" spell and is said to be over 400 years old. He has the "freedom" of the Inn, bought from an eccentric (now-dead) mage. With the spell comes the innate ability to take another with him, dead or alive, when he departs.

He promises that every day spent outside the Inn in his service counts toward the seven years and one day required and that a week outside the Inn is equal to about half a year inside. He doesn't tell the shades that where they spend their time doesn't make a difference, since time is relative to the person. They are going to spend seven years and a day or their own personal time waiting, whether they are inside or out.

When not in the Inn, shades (other than Myste) are unable to affect the living world. They appear ghost-like, and can only interact on a sensory level, which includes communication.

## Staff

The original monks were trapped in the Inn. They dutifully served the shades who came their way. Those finally able to leave found that nearly 120 years had passed. The few who work here now are "guests," shades or "live ones" who work to pass the time.

## Other Guests

**Joktar the Innocent (shade/psycho).** At least, that's his side of the tale. A multiple murderer who killed in his sleep, he tries to get strangers to clear his name (impossible task). He was hanged for the one murder he did NOT commit. Those who refuse him often find themselves here on a much more permanent basis.

**Pir'tat, Mordonn, Shand & Kit'rl (shades).** Pir'tat (shade/barmaid) rejected all suitors. Unfortunately, the last one murdered her, making her a "permanent" fixture of the Inn. One rejected suitor, Mordonn (shade/minstrel), had still been in love with Pir'tat, and vowed to kill the one who surely was her murderer: the last suitor, Shand (shade/noble).

Mordonn crept into Shand's room one night and stabbed the sleeping form several times. Convinced justice had been served, he left. Unfortunately, Shand was out of town, and his now dead friend Kit'rl (shade/merchant) had been house sitting. Shand himself died three years later, killed by a thief.

Mordonn eventually came across an unfamiliar inn. There he saw his lost love, Pir'tat, and the man who he believed had killed her. He confronted Shand, claiming to have killed the vile murderer and declared his love for the obviously alive Pir'tat.

In the ensuing fight Mordonn learned one of the benefits of Shand's noble birth — good fencing teachers. Kit'rl discovered what happened to him that fated night. And Mordonn now lives at the Inn with the man he killed, the man he tried to kill, the man who killed him and that man's best friend, and with the woman who rejected them all (and still does).

## Scenario Suggestions

**Scenario 1: A Voice from the Past.** The adventurers are hanging out at their favorite watering hole when they hear the voice of a long dead party member. The unfortunate shade is in Bu'poo's service, and desperately wants to go on to the Great Battlefield in the Sky. If the party supplies the shade with enough information, the shade thinks Bu'poo can do something to shorten the sentence. Bu'poo cannot, but doesn't discourage such beliefs among the shades. What Bu'poo wants to know is dangerous to obtain, and is in someplace the poor shade cannot go.

**Scenario 2: She's Still Dead.** Eager to share their new found wealth with their fallen comrades, the surviving party members head for the nearest temple or healers guild and attempt to bring the dead adventurers back from the other side. But it doesn't work. At all. In fact, the chief resurrectionist claims that the souls are being held back (guess where), and that a soul must be free for the process to work. Time to go free a soul.

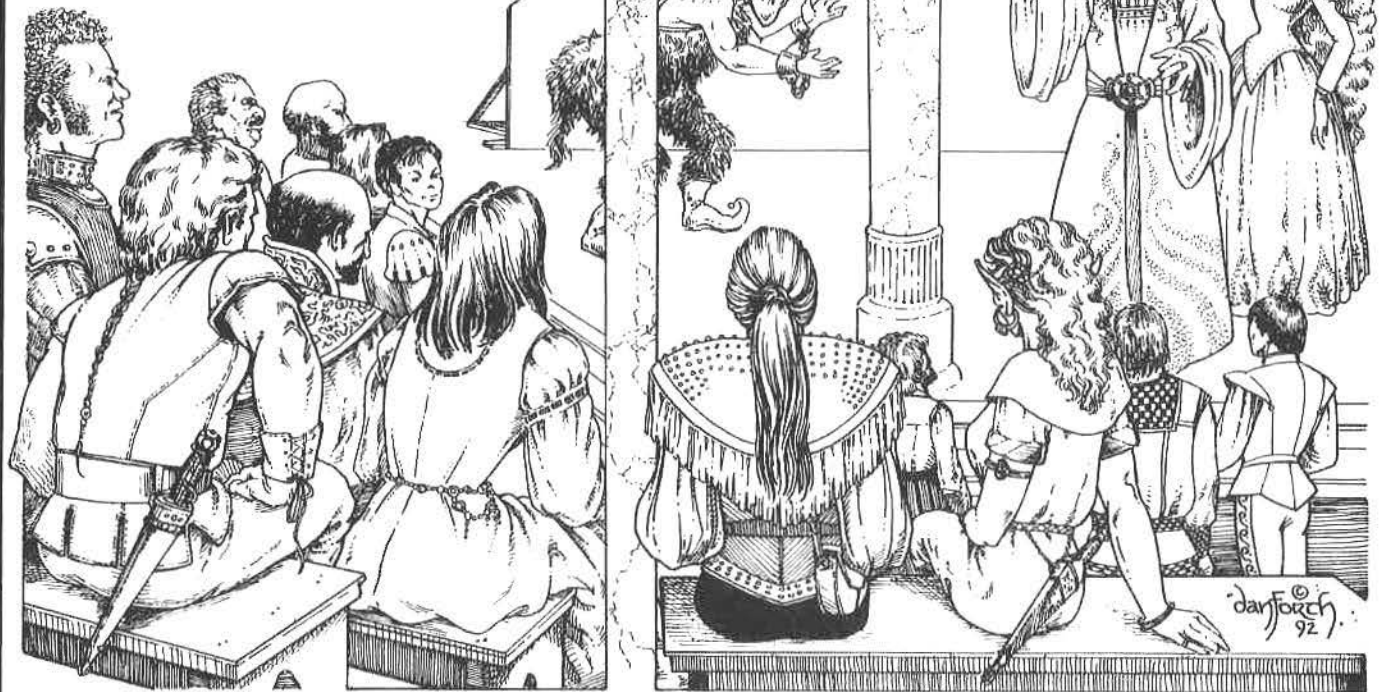
**Scenario 3: I'll Take the Trip Behind Door Number Two.** Not wanting to part with hard-earned money, nor willing to get involved with the shades (or Bu'poo) to escape the Inn by normal means, the adventurers go looking for other exits. The chance is good they will find several. The chance is better they will regret it. And don't forget the rate at which time passes in the Inn relative to the living world (a ratio of  $1:2d6 + 12$ ) — something characters should find out about the hard way.

**Scenario 4: And What's Behind Door Number #3?** Most of the Inn has been unused for centuries of *its* time, and anything could be living (or more correctly, "unliving") in the musty corridors and old chambers. Are the adventurers ready to fight what lurks in the shadows of Inn? Do they have a choice?

**Scenario 5: The Key's the Key.** The adventurers find a key made of a most unusual material (perhaps semi-precious stone). Research will prove the strange symbol on it to belong to the order of St. Germaine the Weary. An obscure legend suggests that the locked doors within the Hostel of St. Germaine open onto unusual rooms. The legend might even tell of a great treasure said to lie beyond a door sealed with a lock matching the found the key. A GM might use this portal as the gate to a new world, or to a dungeon yet undiscovered.

*Theoretically, every murder victim in the City can be found in the Inn for a time. If used as a "dungeon," the Inn might be filled with the cast-off treasures, and with people and creatures who have passed in through open doors. It might even contain the shades of foes slain by the adventurers themselves, ready for vengeance. Of course, one need not use the Lost Inn simply as a gateway between worlds. It might just be an expansive monastic hostel. Just maybe.*

# The Gloriana Theatre



*The adventurers have had enough of the local tavern. They've spent their cash on trinkets and baubles in the corner store, and they're still looking for a good time.*

*Where can they get a few drinks, a few distractions, some entertaining company, show off their baubles, and rub shoulders with the very wealthy? (and all for a modest price?) A trip to the Gloriana Theatre may fill the bill.*

*.... Particularly with that luscious lead performer in their scandalous new play!*

The Gloriana Theatre may not be in the fanciest section of town, but nowadays it's hard to miss — follow the the crowds that gather to see Otto Breakwater's latest masterwork. The gentlemen, the ladies, the groundlings and the pickpockets; they all enjoy a farce or a romance, or a political rally cum history lesson — whatever Otto has created new for this season! And if the

show for the evening is one of the old standbys, one can still be assured of reliable and memorable entertainment.

The theatre represents a revival of an old idea: a building around a permanent stage where people (even nobles!) come to to see a play, rather than catching the players in the local tavern's common room — or having the troupe perform at their villas and manors. Centuries ago, when this idea came around the first time, plays often had religious overtones (although sweet young things on stage could still win the hearts of every gentleman in the City).

Nowadays, "anything goes," as the line says in a popular broadsheet ballad! Much of the stonework (especially the pillars to either side of the stage) dates from that ancient time, and the owners Atlantia and Hammon Brink saw fit to keep much of the old building intact when they restored and refurbished it.

The Brinks were well-travelled as young actors, and quite popular in distant capitals. Approaching middle age, travel lost its luster, and they chose to settle down in the City — but did not want to change their profession; and why should they? Now their stock of time-tested plays keeps the City well-entertained season after season, and their connections in the network of professional actors keep the faces fresh, although many locals also take part.

ELIZABETH T. DANFORTH, who wears both the author and illustrator hats for this project makes her sixth appearance (in both capacities!) in a CityBook. She wants to extend just a whole lot of thanks and appreciation to Sabrina Switzer and Richard Mulligan for their impromptu lessons in the history of the theatre. She claims that any abuses of reality are attributable to her ineptitude, and not to any failure of their knowledge.

## How the Theatre Works

Without the writers' knowledge, Atlantia and Hammon Brinks kept copies of many of their old scripts in a trunk in their living quarters (located a few blocks away from the theatre). Moreover, there are a great many "standard" scripts which, with minor variations to reflect current events and to spotlight favorites among the local nobility, may be performed year after year to great approval. Holidays bring a predictable selection of performances that every citizen expects to see. Breakwater and the Brinks also read locally-written scripts—only a few of which are ever performed.

The "standard" plays usually revolve around four stereotypical characters, whose parts are almost always played by seasoned professionals: the *Older Woman*, the *Older Man*, the *Hero*, and the *Ingenue*. The first two parts are often handled by Atlantia and Hammon respectively. The other two are played by performers visiting for a season or three, who leave for other stages when their popularity among the City dwellers fades. Hopeful locals may get put to work backstage, while those with the right look and talents become an integral part of the company, performing as bit players.

The actors' employment is year-round. The winter months are spent rehearsing all the plays which will be performed in the coming season. Anywhere from 4-10 new shows will be put on, plus a selection of the old standbys that everyone in town looks forward to seeing — again. [Isn't *The Nutcracker* performed every year in your town??] At the same time as the actors rehearse, all the props, costumes, backdrops, flats, and other necessities are created or found, where they don't exist from previous performances. Broadsheets announce the year's schedule of plays, and the *Bellmen's Guild* (see *CBI*) keeps the announcements up to date. Mayday usually begins the performance season at the Gloriana, and the last show for the year is usually held at the year's-end festival. The nobility may always contract for a special performance in their dwellings. The company also will perform minor plays in the large taverns nearby for whatever the crowd will throw, but primarily as publicity for the main shows.

No one lives on the theatre premises. Most days the theatre is closed and empty until afternoon, although a guard or two may be on hire for security (since the main stage is open to the sky). Performances are usually put on in the afternoons and evenings, when mirrored torches provide needed light. The City's weather is as unpredictable as anywhere, and some performances do get rained out.

## Seating & Prices

Type of Seating	Location	Price
Standing Room	(I)	5 s.p.
Benches	(J)	4 g.p.
Box Seats	(K)	30 g.p.
Noble Boxes	(L2)	95 g.p.
Westcott's Box	(L1)	250 g.p.*

\* May be reserved only by special permission from Lord Westcott (see *Wanderers* section of this CityBook).

## Layout

The Gloriana Theatre is a modern building of timbered masonry expanding a much older blue marble construction. About two and a half stories high, it is an imposing building with elaborate stonework decorations and numerous sculptural gargoyles. The central atrium (sections A and I) are unroofed.

**A. Main Stage (20' x 40' plus apron)** Here fantasy is made reality for the citizens of the City. These boards have resounded to declamations of love and vows of revenge, morbid musings and patriotic tirades. At A1 (connecting to B1 backstage and E1 in the green room) is a trapdoor which permits actors to make a suitably flamboyant appearance in a puff of smoke or flame, or an equally colorful exit should the script require it.

Although floored over with oaken planks, this thrust-stage is the older part of the building (along with B, D, and E). The trapdoor was an integral part of the mystery plays performed for the feast days of various gods in distant ages past. This section is not roofed. The "floor" of the stage is about 3' above the ground level of I.

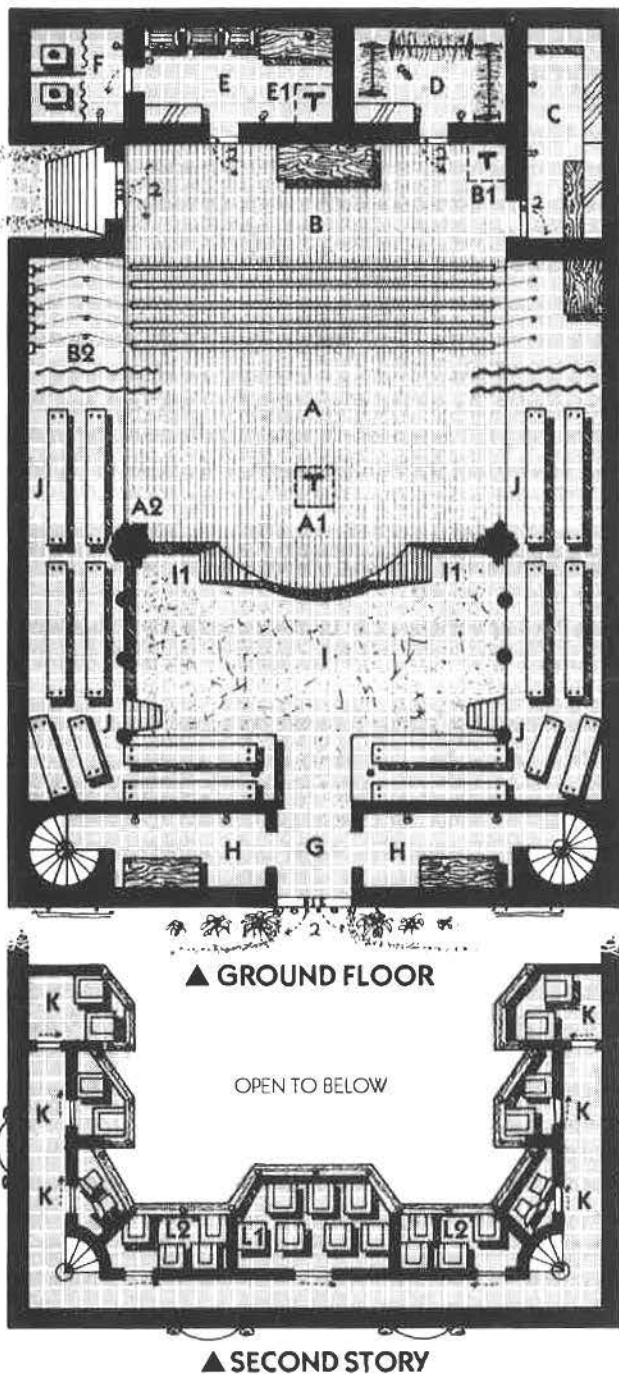
Pillars rise from either forward corner of the main stage, elaborately carved and topped by leering gargoyles. Atop the pillar to stage right (as the actor facing the audience sees it; at A2.) perches Magnus, an unusually pleasant if over-endowed gargoyle of the *Gaggle*. (His story, and a glimpse at an earlier period of the theatre's history, can be found in *CB5*).

The stage doors can be locked<sup>2</sup>. When security is hired on, the doors may also be bolted, although not during a performance.

**B. Back Stage (22' x 40')** Several background flats might be used in any given performance, but because this section is roofed over (a proscenium blocks view of the back), a set of five batons permit backdrops to be flown in and out (i.e., raised and lowered, as manipulated from the flylines at stage right, B2). Moveable set-constructs, and prop tables laid out with items needed for the next scene will be kept backstage. During a performance, it can be a very busy place indeed. Actors await their cues or make hasty costume changes, shore-side sailors work the flylines — and all in near silence. Special effects are also created back here, whether the clop-clop of approaching horses or one of the Brinkses creating a colorful smoke swirl presaging entrance of the deus ex machina.

**C. Prop Room (8' x 22')** Little of real value appears on stage, even though it may glitter like gold and sparkle like diamonds. However, without these things a play cannot continue. Props may be common or one-of-a-kind: from swords and goblets, to the flowers the fairy queen dances upon, and bladders of fresh pig's blood for the murder scene. The door can be locked<sup>2</sup>.

**D. Wardrobe (16' x 10')** This room holds not only the actors' gowns and knickers and shoes and shirts and sashes and tunics, but also wigs and fake moustaches, armor and helmets, masks and wings, and all the other wearable items that are integral to the



illusion that the actors create. The door can be locked<sup>2</sup>.

**E. Green Room** (20' x 10') Not actually painted green, this room is where actors are apt to wait when they have more than a few moments between onstage scenes, and no other tasks at hand. The chests and table hold their street clothes and other belongings, watched over by one of the company. The trapdoor entry at E1 connects to B1 and A1.

**F. Privies** (8' x 10') A play might run several hours, and these earn a jestingly euphemistic name: "the necessaries." Body-modesty is uncommon in theatrical circles, what with the frequent need to make on-the-fly costume changes one step offstage, so gender distinctions are not made.

**G. Main Entrance** (8' x 10') Company assistants stand at the entrance and direct individuals to their places according to their social rank and what value ticket they have purchased. The cheapest "seats" — standing room, actually — are in I and cost 5 silver pieces (even though these patrons are still called "the pennyknives"). Next cheapest are the benches in J where each person pays 4 gold. The wealthier patrons buy box seats upstairs. In section K, each box costs 30 gold, and each section labeled L2 can be acquired for 95. Section L1 is reserved for the theatre's most noble patron, Lord Westcott. This box may only be purchased if Lord Westcott has sent word that neither he nor any guest of his desires to use the box that evening. When available (which is rarely), the price of the box is 250 gold.

The doors can be locked<sup>2</sup>. When the theatre is closed and security is in the building, the doors may also be bolted.

**H. Upper Floor Entries** (each 16' x 8') Theatre assistants make sure no "groundlings" get into the "gentlefolk's" area — although there are no doors barring the envious from viewing tables laid out with a modest assortment of simple wines and sweets, fresh fruits and cheese. A spiral staircase at either end gives access to the upper floor boxes.

**I. Ground** (40' x about 16') A broad expanse of hard-packed dirt stands open to the sky, where groundlings and pennyknives stand to watch a performance. It is a favorite haunt of pickpockets as well, though the pickings are often slight. If recent rains have muddied the ground, straw is spread thickly to offer some degree of comfort to the pennyknives. Although this location seems to offer a close-up view of the stage, the groundlings mostly get to watch the actors' knees since the main stage is raised — or they get a crick in the neck from looking up to the actors' faces.

If the play requires more musical instrumentation than the actors themselves can supply, musicians will be installed at I1 with a low barricade to keep the groundlings and pennyknives from crowding them.

**J. Burghers' Seats** (irregular) Eight-to-ten-foot wide platforms are raised about 2' above ground level and crammed with long benches. Those with a little extra money can sit through a performance, although the view is less than perfect. Those beside the main entrance have the most comfortable view, but across the groundlings' heads; those closer perch sideways on the benches and must peer around the roof supports; and people closest to the stage get a great view but the action is largely at an off-angle.

**K. Wing Boxes** (irregular) Each box just seats two people, but the view is excellent. Sliding doors permit entry and exit. The nearby hall windows are curtained during performances, but never barred or shuttered: Hammon witnessed a theatre fire during his travels and hopes never to be party to such a tragedy again. The windows are large, and fretwork outside the win-

dows would allow any but the physically impaired to escape with relative ease. This doesn't exactly mean the theatre is not a bit of a firetrap, but so far there have been no incidents.

**L. Central Boxes** (irregular) The boxes at L2 have room for four if they're friendly. The view of the stage is excellent, and the lesser nobility often choose these boxes. As noted above, L1 is reserved for Lord Westcott and/or his guests, and the box may only be purchased the night of a performance if and when His Lordship sends word he won't be wanting it. Lesser nobles often snap it up preemptively, when their familiarity with the Court alerts them to the possibility of His Lordship's absence. They freely bribe the Brinkses for access, and they in turn shamelessly manipulate their way through Court politics by accepting or rejecting their favorites.

## Personalities

**Atlantia Brinks.** □ *Human female, Ht.: 5'4", Wt.: 120#, Age 43.* □ *Fighting Prowess: Good with thrown weapons, Fair in hand-to-hand, Average otherwise.* □ *Magic Ability: Average C2, C4, C7, C8.*

Atlantia is a handsome woman, aging very well indeed. Her chestnut hair has few grey strands, she remains as trim and athletic as her profession demands, and her skill with cosmetics (on and off the stage) assures that she can still turn heads of all but the most callow youths.

Atlantia has a head for organization, a vital asset to the company. She works with her husband Hammon on scheduling plays, but she's the one making lists of what props are needed, extant, or on the way; coordinating with dressmakers, wig makers, and other merchant-suppliers; assuring that the right people are in the right place at the right times; and generally acting as mother to the entire company. She lacks Hammon's financial good sense, and the hard-up in the troupe know she's a soft touch for a "loan."

Her magical abilities are not earth-shattering, but mostly are applied toward creation of special effects onstage. The healing spells are minimal, enough to fix an ankle twisted in a tumble or an accidental sword slash from a poorly-rehearsed fight.

**Hammon Brinks.** □ *Human male, Ht.: 5'11", Wt.: 180#, Age 46.* □ *Fighting Prowess: Very Good with all but bow weapons, which rate Fair.* □ *Magic Ability: Average C2, C4, C7, C8.*

Like his wife, Hammon is a very fit and good-looking man with more than an average share of charisma and ego. The professional actor in a company of this sort needs an enormous variety of skills: he or she must be able to carry out a convincing sword fight without becoming winded, perform juggling and the most acrobatic tumbles, sing all the popular songs and perform their accompanying dances, and have the wits to memorize numerous parts of many different plays, to say nothing of being able to ad lib appropriately and ex tempore. Hammon is very good at all this — the unfortunate part is, he's also very well aware of it.

However, he's also well aware that he's no longer the best



— Hammon & Atlantia Brinks —

choice for the young *Hero* parts, and he values the stability that the Gloriana represents, however much he scorned it in his youth. In his early 30s, when he married Atlantia, they decided they wanted a more settled life when they were older. It took a number of years to save the funds, but among Hammon's other skills is a keen financial sense, and the ability to spot the main chance. The Gloriana is prospering, and Lord Westcott's coffers are only part of the reason.

**Otto Breakwater.** □ *Human male, Ht.: 5'9", Wt.: 160#, Age 34.* □ *Fighting Prowess: Fair overall*

Otto was a young man when bitten by the theatre hug, and he's been part of one performance or another all his life. Somehow, through it all, he's maintained a wide-eyed and innocent outlook on the whole business, and can't imagine any other life. He's never had the looks to get the best parts, and at the Gloriana, he does whatever job needs doing most, off-stage or on.

Otto loves people: all kinds of people (except those who threaten him or his friends). He frequents taverns, inns, market squares, and less innocent places — anywhere people gather. His open mind is the perfect tabula rasa from which emerge his newly-penned plays. Their piercing truthfulness accounts for much of his popularity although he's occasionally referred to as Herr Breakwind, for his sometimes lamentably verbose mono-



— Otto Breakwater —

logues — but he seems to be getting better with every work he writes. While many playwrights are as popular as their last bodice-ripper, Otto is riding a long streak of popularity: over the previous five years, his last eight plays have all been well received, and successful in every sense. Without a bitter bone in his body, Otto manages to walk the tightrope where even his most biting satires force their targets to laugh at themselves.

### Secondary Actors, Stage Crew, Assistants, Property Masters, Dressers and Others.

Although not an enormous theatre, the Gloriana could not possibly be run by less than a dozen individuals, and thirty or more could work an elaborately staged production. Although most of the company can perform any job as needed, there's a great deal to be done and many hands required. The "visiting" actors bring news, gossip and knowledge of distant places, and provide a steady turnover of NPCs with hidden pasts and novel personalities. The various races of the City are well-represented, and more than one of the local assistants is in reality a malleable, face-changing Effie (see *CB5*).

### Scenario Suggestions

A brief note: The theatre thrives on and, to some degree, creates conventional stereotypical personalities, and game masters are encouraged to play along — as well as to turn those stere-

otypes on their heads. An adventurer getting involved with the Ingenue, the Hero cutting a swathe through the ladies of the town, and either one getting into endless unlikely perils because they believe their on-stage dragon-slaying personas are sufficient to take on the real thing... these are too obvious to go into detail over, but are not to be missed for a quick, fun evening's adventure.

Moreover, realize that the multitudinous skills and abilities of the theatre folk lend themselves well to assisting player characters with particular difficulties. No one but an actor will know better how to create a convincing non-magical disguise, and an actor's athletic abilities lend themselves to any number of possible scenarios. Additionally, theatre folk move through all levels of society, and they're going to have the inside scoop on almost anyone, high or low. Literate, relatively educated, and usually possessed of a rather irreverent attitude, the theatre folk offer a lot of interplay possibilities to player characters.

**Scenario 1: "What Did I Say?"** The adventurers have been struggling to expose the evil machinations of one of the ruling family's less pleasant members, and have been stumped for a manner in which to see this individual gets his/her comeuppance. Short of killing the person — not a recommended ploy — nothing has worked. No one will believe the adventurers on just their word, and no hard evidence has yet been obtained.

Meanwhile, Otto has been struggling with a new play, and spending more time than usual (even for him) among the *hoi polloi*, hoping to come across just the right situation, person, or interaction that will make his new work sing.

The adventurers see the opportunity: if they get the word out to the public at large, it would at least make things too unpleasant for the noble to cover up, and force him or her to move to distant estates to continue any heinous activities. The characters approach Otto to weave in what they know about the nasty noble, and what they suspect, but cannot prove. (A substantial financial donation to the theatre will do a lot to encourage Hammon Brink's support of the project.)

It's just the jolt Otto needs to pull his play together, and it promises to be one of the finest he's ever written — but the political ramifications are risky. Word leaks out while the play is still in rehearsal, and although the particulars aren't known, the noble's bully boys begin trying to "persuade" the company to desist. Some of the members of the acting troupe are threatened, the visiting Ingenue is kidnapped, and mysterious accidents take place around the theatre.

The adventurers could find themselves trying to rescue the Ingenue, prevent any more accidents, and one might even wind up on stage when an actor doesn't make it to opening night. The only thing they probably won't have to think about is getting the people to attend: the City loves nothing better than rumor of a scandal. Of course, a packed house could be a deathtrap if one of those mirrored torches happened to fall on the dry straw among the groundlings...

**Scenario 2: Take My Play, Please.** Digging through her trunk of old scripts, Atlantia finds one she'd never seen performed, penned on the back of a better script. Reading it gives her the

shivers, but the schedule could use such a spooky, quasi-mystic tale — and she thinks it can be improved with a little rewriting.

The play goes into rehearsal, and Lord Westcott brings his much-beloved nephew to see it. The nephew is thoroughly captivated by the play, and Westcott puts down a substantial donation to assure it gets the best presentation possible. However, strange and supernatural things begin happening as larger portions of the play are rehearsed. A malign imp manifests in the middle of a scene, lightning strikes a nearby house from an empty blue sky, and one of the actors turns scaly and fanged overnight. (He turns back the next day, but still salivates when he watches flies at the windows.) Superstitious as theatre folk always are, everyone decides the play is cursed. Yet, they can't disappoint Lord Westcott, because His Lordship wouldn't want to disappoint his nephew. The adventurers are brought in to find out just what's going on with the play, and to put an end to it.

They won't have many leads, but Atlantia and Hammon can tell them what distant city they were in when they acquired this script (or... was it that place further up the coast?). Not one of their copies they made from memory, this script came into their hands when a mage-friend-turned-unsuccessful-actor sadly decided to return to the adventurer's lifestyle, after previously abandoning a son and a wife who disapproved of the theatre.

While operating under a time limit, the adventurers will have to track down the mage, who hasn't led a particularly settled life. He'll recognize the "front copy" play as one he'd performed, but not the strange thing penned onto the back. However, he does recognize the handwriting as his son's, and the manifestations as related to a dangerous grimoire he'd found in his dungeondelving years. It would appear that his son used the grimoire as inspiration for this play, and the spells are still somehow intact when performed — but have been altered by Otto's subsequent additions. With the mage's assistance, the party can deduce that the lines of the play, as originally penned, were some twisted, augmented manipulation of the grimoire's worst magics.

The mage has no idea what happened to the grimoire, nor how to contact his son (Geroashm), and the PCs will want to hunt them both down. (Access to the original spells could help Otto identify what had to be rewritten, and what (if rewritten) would just make things worse.) Fortunately, Geroashm and the grimoire are together in one place. Unfortunately, Geroashm has become a slightly mad (alright, truly mad), bitter, and basically malicious magician.

The grimoire is well protected by nasty monsters and nastier magical wards. But Geroashm will be the worst opponent.

Even before his father left home, Geroashm had sold himself to the darker arts. He wrote the play with malice aforethought, expecting his father to perform it and thereby open forbidden gates to other dimensions, freeing malign entities to serve his ambition. The script disappeared when his father departed, and his mother died soon thereafter. Now Geroashm wants that script intact, and performed as a whole. Kidnapping Lord Westcott and his nephew would only be the mage's first move to force the Gloriana players to perform the play — if need be, he'll take steps to kidnap the whole company. Of course, all he really needs is the original copy of the play. He can put together any assortment of hack performers to play the lines unwitting of the

consequences. The adventurers have their work cut out for them...

*The shiny glitz, sexy glamour, and seamy scandal of Hollywood today were all present in the theatre of yesteryear. The Gloriana Theatre provides a venue for an evening's entertainment, or an alternative to ye Same Olde Tavern for a place to meet friends and have a good time. So go out there and break a leg!*

# Harrow Downs



*It's hard to have a good time when you've seen it all before. Wealth, freely spent, can and does provide pleasures outside the scope of common experience, but even the unusual pales with repeated exposure. Yet at Harrow Downs, boredom is rare for even the most jaded of patrons. And that is something you can always bet on being true.*

The City's elite have always had rather expensive tastes, especially when it comes to forms of entertainment. It should come as no surprise then, that the City's pre-eminent racetrack, Harrow Downs requires an exorbitant fee merely to enter. If this is not enough to keep out the riffraff, a common worker's yearly wages are insufficient to place even the smallest of bets. Consequently, Harrow Downs is purely a venue of the wealthy. Of course, its rich patrons demand unusual, even exotic fare in return for their freely spent gold. In reply, the 'Downs is noted for its unique spectacles.

Where more pedestrian establishments race horses, dogs, or fowl, Harrow Downs provides contests between any type of creature. Since many monsters do not have salutary manners, combat among contestants occasionally occurs. This, in part, explains Harrow Downs advertising slogan, "Where anything can happen; and usually does!"

Harrow Downs avoids this trap by providing unique entertainment; each race has a different line up of beings and creatures. No two are ever alike. Even race rules are "stretched" at times. For example, it is not strictly forbidden to devour one's opponent, although more mundane establishments might frown on such practices.

The best-laid plans of mice, men and editors often fall flat on their faces (let alone go agley). When several past contributors to CityBook (a.k.a. friends of the editor) had to back out after proposals had been submitted and accepted, dutiful assistant editor, Randy Kuipers convinced TIMOTHY TAYLOR to provide several needed establishments. Here you see but one of them.

## Common Knowledge

Most folk in the City know of the race track, but very little is known about Harrow Downs. Its proprietor, Ralsa Harrow, does nothing to promote or advertise the track; word of mouth is sufficient. Entrance prices and minimum bets are simply not listed. As with most of the finer things in life, "If you have to ask, you can't afford it." It's primarily this reputation for extravagant costliness which keeps away all but the City's wealthiest patrons. However, there are other reasons that folk steer clear of the place.

Terrible noises and a great commotion accompany nearly every race. These are the sounds of fearsome beasts locked in a baneful contest. This cacophony causes all but the most adventuresome to shy away from the track on race days. Locals pass quickly through the streets surrounding Harrow Downs, fearful of unrestrained beasts ravaging the neighborhood. People in the know rarely talk about the 'Downs, which further promotes wild tales and fantasies that circulate in the City's pubs. To wealthy adventurers, such intrigue may prove irresistible.

## The Real Story

As always, the truth is somewhat different. Races are held every weekend, holiday, market day, or when most appropriate. Those who want, or need to know will always be notified. Afternoon post times are most common, but some night races do occur. Usually, more than one contest is held each race day. Beasts (not necessarily of the same type) are standard fare for these races, although quadrupeds (e.g.; camels, lions, wolves, horses, etc.) and the occasional humanoid competitor do crop up. First across the finish line of this half mile long track is the winner. The creature that comes in second is called "place" and third is referred to as the "show." All three positions make money for their bettors. This competition is not always a true race, since a

monster may win by killing its adversaries. Nevertheless, contests won by elimination are rare; most contestants try to win by virtue of speed alone.

In between races, monsters are held in stasis by the magicks of Zeteti the wizard. When new creatures are brought in, Zeteti immediately places them under her spell. They remain unmoving and unharmed until race day, when their contest is about to begin. At that time, the whole field of beastly contenders comes onto the track and take their positions at the starting gate, patiently waiting for the race to commence. When the starter's gong sounds, all contestants speed off down the track. Rookie and veteran alike seem to know what is expected of them.

Few of these cantering creatures are ridden by jockeys—it's just too dangerous. Usually, some other form of control is involved. Zeteti actually controls the minds of all monstrous competitors in order to keep them in line and focused on the race. Mind control keeps these fearsome beasts from devouring the wealthy race patrons and is so complete that there exists the possibility of altering, or "fixing" the outcome of races.

And indeed, Zeteti does fix the occasional race (though Ralsa is not aware of it). However, she only insures the outcome of a race in extraordinary circumstances. For example, if the stakes are amazingly high and a risk of a win might break the track's bank—or if she herself needs quick money. Fixing a race takes the form of subconsciously inhibiting every competitor, except her chosen contestant. Being unimpeded by Zeteti's magicks, her primary choice usually wins, though often even fixed races seem a near thing at the finish line. When fixing a race, she always places bets under an assumed name or through a third party.

## Two-Legged Racing

Ralsa Harrow takes pride in that the track actually performs a public service for the City. When a miscreant perpetrates a crime beyond the pale (i.e., one for which hanging would be too merciful), said convicted criminal may appear as a contestant in a particularly nasty race, with the blessing of City's Justice Ministry. In the case of a heinous criminal, Ralsa Harrow may arrange a race with fearsome beasts (at the behest of the powers that be). If the convict wins, he may go free. Otherwise, he may either be incarcerated or put to death, at the GM's discretion. Of course, the race may be more dangerous in itself than any jail term. More often than not, humanoids race against other humanoids. The many political powers in the City primarily tolerate the excesses of Harrow Downs (and Ralsa Harrow) because they, like their wealthy cronies, find it to be such great sport!

## Layout

An air of excitement pervades the grounds around Harrow Downs on racing days. Colorful banners mounted on the encircling wall ripple in the breeze, pipers on the buttresses play noisy fanfares, and intermittent cheering erupts from within. Expensive coaches debark their well-to-do passengers at the ornate gate, then pull around to the waiting area for their masters return. All are silenced by an expectant hush as the first race begins...

On any other day, the area is generally devoid of people or activity. No one feels safe around the many dangerous beasts rumored to be housed therein. This is just as well with Ralsa—it saves on security expenses.

**A. Encircling Wall** (3640' x 15' x 3', irregular) A 15' high granite wall completely surrounds Harrow Downs; as much to keep the riffraff out as to keep monsters within. The wall is buttressed by solid towers at regular intervals. Sharpened spikes adorn the wall top, and crossbow armed guards are posted on the buttresses. On race days, colorful flags fly from these spikes representing different racing factions of wealthy patrons.

**B. Entry Gate** (8' x 10') A single gateway on the west side of the Race Pavilion allows entrance into the complex. This locked<sup>4</sup> gate is crafted of welded steel and decorated with designs depicting various monsters engaged in titanic conflicts. Passing through this gateway takes one into the Race Pavilion. Two guards and a money-taker are in attendance at all times on racing days.

**C. Waiting Area** (460' x 80') This cobblestone paved area is where patrons' carriages and drivers wait for their return from the races. Several guards usually patrol this area.

**D. Outer Track** (1200' x 540', irregular) This packed earth race track is approximately a half mile in length and measures 100' wide. Between races attendants groom the track with shovels and rakes. They also haul away any carcasses remaining from previous contests. During periods of heavy downpour the track turns into a thick quagmire, adding interest to the race. The starting and finishing lines are located directly in front of the grandstand. On the northwest curve of the track is a heavy gate admitting creatures onto the track from the viewing area.

**E. Steeplechase Track** (1000' x 320', irregular) This shorter and narrower turf-surfaced course differs from the outer track in that it contains obstacles (e.g., hurdles, hedges, ditches, water jumps, etc.) The track is only 80' wide. Only the most agile of runners race on this track. A wooden fence separates the outer and inner tracks. Gates near the finish line made of reinforced wood admit creatures from the outer track onto the Steeplechase.

**F. Middle Ground** (820' x 100', irregular) This well-tended grassy sward has no designated racing function. Upon occasion, more daring patrons may wish to view the race from here. Mounted guards (on armored mounts) patrol here during races.

**G. Grandstands** (600' x 100') Part of the Race Pavilion, this terraced structure provides everyone with a good view of contests. Several arched passageways running under the grandstands (from the Main Hall) allow entry to the area. Five stairways provide easy access to all seats. The finish line for both tracks lies directly in front of the grandstand. Twenty-foot-wide aisles encircle the grandstands leading to the viewing area, betting booths, concession stands, etc.

**H. Viewing Area** (180' x 100', irregular) Adjoining the stables and encircled by wrought iron fencing is an open dirt stable called the viewing area. Any creatures scheduled for the upcoming race are paraded around so that patrons may view their prospective

choices for betting. All beasts are under Zeteti's enchantments, so no danger exists. This is also where jockeys (if any) saddle their mounts, prior to racing. A gate on the south side leads onto the track. A door to the west allows access to the stables.

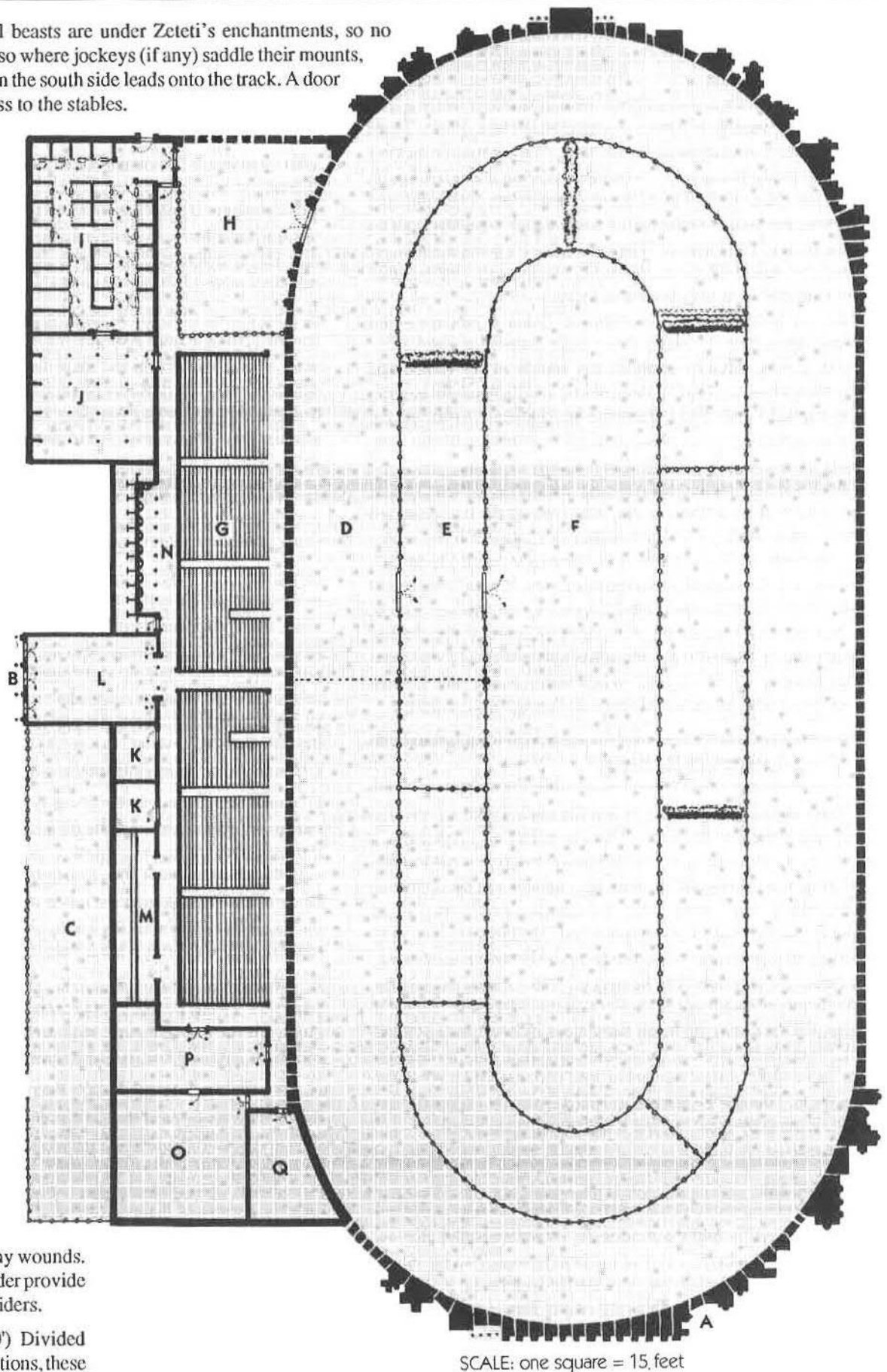
#### I. Stables and Cages

(150' x 120', irregular) All creatures remain here when not racing. Wooden stalls confine the tamer beasts, while iron cages and chains restrain all other monsters. This is merely a precaution, since Zeteti's mind control dulls their aggression. Also within this room are storage bins containing high quality foodstuffs (hay, grain, meat, etc.) for the racers. Tack such as saddles, bridles, and strangely configured harnesses hang on metal hooks from the walls. A door on the north side opens onto a little-used street outside Harrow Downs from whence the monstrous competitors enter the stables.

#### J. Jockey's Dressing Room

(120' x 120') The dressing room contains lockers, basins, bathtub, water pump, and a fireplace. Cots for resting (or for the injured) line one wall. Here riders in an upcoming race don the colorful silks of their stable or racing faction. Afterwards, they clean themselves and dress any wounds. Gaming tables and a larder provide entertainment for idle riders.

**K. Latrines** (50' x 40') Divided into male and female sections, these



SCALE: one square = 15 feet

latrines provide temporary relief for the afflictions common to all mortals. They are both well-decorated and very posh.

**L. Main Hall (120' x 80')** Frescoes and marble tiles greet patrons as they traverse this long, open hall. This is a place to socialize and impress others with ostentatious displays of wealth. Paintings of famous (or infamous) racers and jockeys line the walls.

**M. Concession Stands (130 x 20')** Here patrons may acquire most delicacies available in the City and other more rare treats, for exorbitant prices. These foods are prepared here by Harrow Downs own renowned chefs. Within the eatery, tables and benches fill the east end.

**N. Betting Booths (130' x 20')** Ten windows provide patrons many different levels of betting, from outrageously expensive to nearly inconceivably costly. Since a great deal of currency exchanges hands, all large sums are immediately placed into a waiting safe<sup>5</sup>. At night all income is transferred to the main safe in the Race Official's Headquarters.

**O. Security Guards Headquarters (120' x 120')** This room houses the security guards used by Harrow Downs. The area is subdivided into on-duty, sleeping quarters, and armory — all austere furnished. One chief guard oversees the activities of a dozen security guards who work in three shifts.

**P. Race Official's Headquarters (140' x 60', irregular)** On race days, Ralsa Harrow, Zeteti, and the other racing officials preside over the events. They collect the entrance fees for every race contestant; decide on the length of each race and assign post positions; and make rulings in the case of infractions or disputes. Their main function is to maintain an air of respectability during the racing session. This is also the location of Harrow Downs' main safe<sup>6</sup> (northwest corner of the room). Within the office stand cabinets of important documents, desks, chairs, and work spaces for lesser officials. At least one tenth of each day's "take" is transported to *Ironshield Financial Services* for safekeeping.

**Q. Grounds keeper's Quarters (100' x 60', irregular)** The track grounds keeper and his assistant act as custodians for Harrow Downs. They store all necessary tools and equipment for track maintenance in this area, including carpentry and masonry tools, rakes, shovels, and other such paraphernalia. Workbenches and wooden stools cluttered with utensils adjoin the north wall. When the grounds keeper and assistant are absent, the room is locked<sup>3</sup>.

## Personalities

**Ralsa Harrow.** □ Human male, Ht.: 5'9"; Wt.: 220#; Age: 44.  
□ Fighting Prowess: Fair with a cane, Poor otherwise.

Portly Ralsa assumes the appearance of a wealthy merchant. He dresses with opulence, but maintains a conservative mien. Usually, wearing dark colors — grays, blues or browns. He carries a heavy oaken cane surmounted by a solid gold dragon head. He generally conveys an impatient, yet impassive demeanor.

Ralsa was born to the expansive manors and fine salons of Up Town ... as the illegitimate son of a respected City Official and a



— Ralsa Harrow —

serving wench. At an early age, Ralsa realized that there was a great deal of money to be made by giving people what they wanted. And beginning with an "investment" extorted from his father, he acquired considerable capital for future investment by doing just that ... marketing narcotics, selling the flesh and favors of other people, arranging for collectibles to come into the hands of those who could best pay for them. Those with great wealth would pay most handsomely for what they craved. And no task was too dangerous, no act too vile ... for him to hire someone else to satisfy that craving.

Yet "things" often cost too much to procure. While watching a pair of game cocks tear one another to ribbons in a back alley gaming house, it struck Ralsa that his wares need not be material goods. He could sell experiences — to jaded, affluent people longing for new thrills (with no real danger involved, of course). With his savings (and money that certain dead folk would no longer be needing), Ralsa purchased the site of Harrow Downs.

His first races were conducted using criminals condemned to death. The winner of each race would have his sentence commuted to life imprisonment. Hardened murderers were willing to kill to remain alive — and certain folks were willing to pay lots of gold to watch.

When Zeteti (and her powers of mind control) came along, Ralsa saw a perfect opportunity to expand into truly monstrous entertainment. Today, Harrow Downs provides the best in dreadful fare.

At heart (if such a term can be applied to so heartless a man), Ralsa Harrow is a solid business man. To reach his goal of being

so wealthy as to never have to fear for his life, property or future well-being, he ensures that despite his own personal leanings, the track is run as honestly and safely as possible. First and foremost, all bets placed are secure, made at fair odds, and paid promptly. No races are fixed. Without this assurance, his patrons would not trust the track. Second the security involving the monsters and condemned prisoners must be of the highest quality. Otherwise, the official sanction for his track (gained at the cost of innumerable bribes and extortions) would dry up. And third, he will do whatever it takes to ensure a constant flow of monsters into the track. The wizard, Zeteti is crucial to this operation, but is by no way the only means to Ralsa's ends.

Ralsa realizes that Zeteti "has a crush on him" and returns her attention when she needs a little extra convincing that he indeed loves her. Yet he has no idea that the wizard who wields mind-control so readily at his behest, flutters back and forth between reality and insanity like a leaf in the wind. Clever though he is, he remains ignorant of the fate of his last several paramours. Two women were found dead in the hands of lust-enraged trolls in Sideshow (CB5) and a young man who worked briefly at the track died in a bar fight caused when he propositioned the leader of the Regular Fellows gang (CB3).

**Zeteti.** □ *Human female, Ht.: 5'11", Wt.: 170#, Age: 31.* □ *Fighting Prowess: Fair with a dagger, Average otherwise.* □ *Magic Ability: Excellent in C5, Very Good with C4, Good C6 & C3, Fair in C1, and Average with C8.*

Zeteti is attractive, intelligent, inquisitive, highly skilled, clever and witty. To know her is realize that here is a person of substance and character, one who might make for a stimulating life-long companion. But, alas, Zeteti truly loves Ralsa Harrow, or at least has convinced herself that she does. Ralsa knows this of course and treats her just fine. But Ralsa doesn't know just how *much* this woman loves him.

For you see, Zeteti suffers from one fatal flaw. She's mad. Her grasp on reality has slipped far beyond retrieval. Her ability to discriminate between right and wrong has deteriorated to the point that she believes what is right to be what is good for her "beloved" Ralsa Harrow, and what is wrong is anything that is not. Now, before anyone decides that Ralsa Harrow has a sweetheart deal in this woman, consider that he does not realize the depths of her insanity, or that she is even insane at all. In fact, few people recognize that Zeteti is other than an eccentric mage.

Yet, Zeteti is possessive of what she considers to be exclusively hers. And of course, her most cherished possession is Ralsa Harrow. She will go to extremes to keep others from having, or hurting Ralsa. Beware to the fool who would come between them, or put Ralsa in danger. Nevertheless, she would never use her magics to probe or control Ralsa's mind. She is enough in control of herself to realize that his love must be free and unfettered. She forgives him his dalliances, but "removes" the temptations that cause him to stray.

Around the track, Zeteti works out her devotion to Ralsa by keeping the race beasts in line, capturing new monsters, hobnobbing and betting with the patrons (often entertaining them with parlour tricks), and "fixing" the occasional race to pay her



— Zeteti —

gambling debts and protect Ralsa from overlarge pay outs.

Zeteti's ultimate goal is to always be at Ralsa's side, and failing that, to ensure that no one else gains that goal.

**Baertold.** □ *Human male, Ht.: 6'5", Wt.: 270#, Age: 26.* □ *Fighting Prowess: Very Good with swords, Good otherwise.*

Ralsa employs Baertold as chief guardian of both Harrow Downs and his own personal safety. For this protection, Baertold is extremely well-paid. He once worked as a security guard for Ironshield Financial Services and came well-recommended. Originally, Baertold had planned only to remain in Ralsa's employ for a few years. Yet, Baertold came to admire Ralsa's business acumen. Additionally, he feels a certain sense of pride in being in charge of Harrow Downs. He's quite willing to put Ralsa's checkered past and social behavior down to jealous rumor in the case of the former; and the stresses of running such a successful business in regards to the latter.

Baertold is rash, forceful, and dogged in pursuing his protective duties. Zeteti makes him nervous, the way she can't take her eyes off the boss. He suspects that she had something to do with the deaths of Ralsa's paramours (but somehow can't bring himself to tell Ralsa his suspicions).

**Typical Guard.** Usually human male (75% of the time). Height and weight are average. Fighting Prowess with broadsword and shield is at least Fair.

**Grooms, Handlers, Trainers, Jockeys, Betting Agents, Custodians, Ushers, Chefs and Food Vendors.** An establishment the size of Harrow Downs employs numerous men and women to keep it running. Most are little better than Average in all regards, although those who deal with the race beasts are often at least Good or better at the specifics of their trade. Quite often, one or more of these positions will need filling. An adventurer with the proper credentials (real or counterfeit) could be an ideal candidate.

## Scenario Suggestions

**Scenario 1: Urban Jungle.** A fearsome beast has recently escaped from Harrow Downs, and Zeteti needs help recapturing it. Only if pressed would she consider killing the monster, since they're hard to come by. She might even have to restrain overly enthusiastic adventurers. This won't foster development of an amiable relationship.

On the other hand, the adventurers may simply come across an escaped creature roaming the City. An unexpected melee on the City's streets with a monster is not an everyday occurrence. It would be quite embarrassing for Ralsa Harrow if word got out that one of his beasts had savaged citizens. If possible he would try to cover up any "unfortunate incident" primarily relying on bribery. Remember, Ralsa is unprincipled and ruthless and would have no qualms about "silencing" any adventurer who talks too much — after all it could ruin his business! The same goes for Zeteti, only more so.

**Scenario 2: Trolling for Monsters.** Harrow Downs always needs new monsters to make up for lost contestants. Stable owners may enter their own monsters, and Ralsa does not have to recompense any suffered losses. But casualties in his own stables must be replaced. Sometimes Ralsa acquires beasts captured by adventurers. More often, Zeteti gathers a group of adventurers and goes on safari to a particularly dangerous part of the Wildlands. In this hazardous locale, they hunt for beasts such as, lions, bears, rhinoceri, unicorns, manticores, small dragons, and so on. These expeditions rarely go for more than a day before Zeteti takes her prize and any surviving party members back to the City. If any adventurers incur her wrath (or present a threat to Ralsa) Zeteti might just leave them behind!

As a variation, Zeteti might take the adventurers on safari, believing that they present a danger to her beloved Ralsa. She will then attempt to place them in the way of the most danger.

**Scenario 3: Independently Owned and Operated.** An adventuring party captures a likely contestant for one of Harrow Downs' races. They must tame and train the creature, conditioning it to build up endurance and speed, and pay the steep fee to enter it in the race. The owners must decide whether or not the beast can be ridden and hire a jockey if needed.

**Scenario 4: "Come, Let's Watch the Human Race!"** Perhaps one or all adventurer(s) fall afoul of the law. They could wind up as entrants in one of Harrow Downs races. Most often, such contests involve only other human(oid)s. Only heinous murder-

ers or traitors would warrant racing against beasts. Since contestants can bring weapons and armor onto the track (if they are willing to be weighed down), a competition can devolve into melee combat. Baertold and his guards stand ready to sort out any trouble-makers, so even prisoners are allowed to be armed. Remember, if adventurers win their races, they have their sentences reduced or are set free.

Skilled athletes might dare to run in these races, since they receive a percentage of the total purse based on their order of finish. Doughty warriors could try to slaughter their way to victory. Use of magic within any race is strictly prohibited. Will the other adventurers bet on their comrades?

**Scenario 5: Tyger by the Tail.** A most-wealthy patron has seen the "Tyger" at *Hides Alive* (q.v.) and wants to see it race. The de Nase brothers know Ralsa and Zeteti and will have nothing to do with these debasers of wildlife. Ralsa offers to compensate the adventurers handsomely if they bring the Tyger to the track. If necessary, Zeteti may use mind control on a party member (or a favorite NPC companion) to get things moving. Should the adventurers succeed, they may be further enticed into racing it themselves (Scenario 3, above). Of course, doing so earns the enmity of the de Nase brothers, especially Wulf the hunter. Who knows what he might do for revenge, eh?

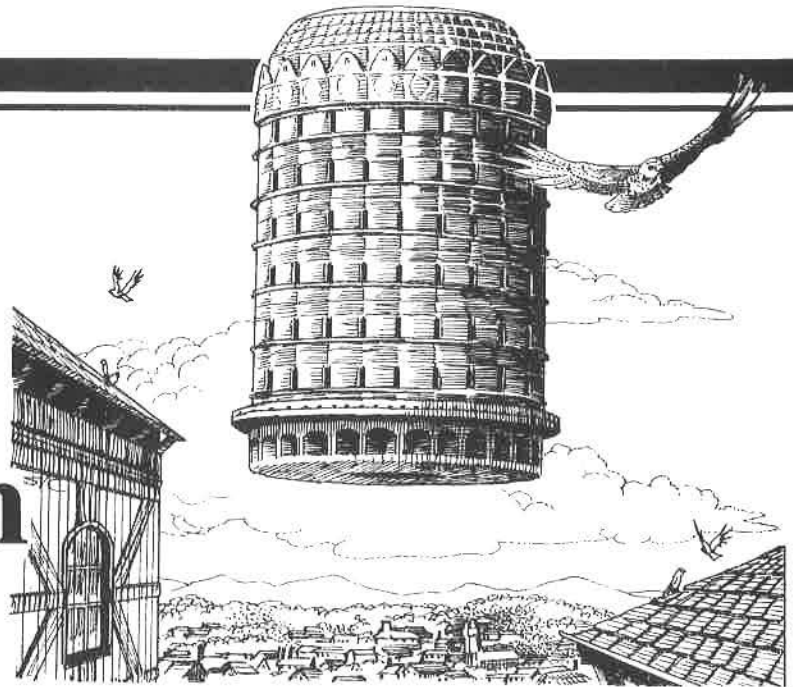
**Scenario 6: Zetetic Inquiry.** Zeteti has had to fix a number of races in a short period of time to make up for large gambling debts incurred at *The Cock and Bull Gaming Club* (CB3). Several important patrons lost, when they felt they should have won. Special Investigator for the Ministry of Justice, Lord Llewellyn Finster (q.v.) wishes to have the adventurers investigate allegations of race-fixing at Harrow Downs. It is up to them to proceed in any manner they wish: openly or covertly, from within or without, etc. Of course, the only time that Zeteti can be confronted is during race time. Shown the reality of her deeds, Zeteti will lose control of the beasts...

**Scenario 7: "Pass the Spicy Ralsa Sauce!"** Zeteti has fixed many races over the years. Ralsa has his suspicions, but no proof ... until now. In private, he threatens to send her to prison. His anger is that proverbial "final straw," and quite calmly, Zeteti brain blasts him dead. To cover her crime, she grinds up Ralsa's corpse, mixing it with food for the carnivorous beasts. Adventurers either discover evidence of this awful deed, or are asked to investigate Ralsa's mysterious disappearance (again, Lord Finster investigates). Meanwhile, Zeteti continues to run Harrow Downs in his absence. Of course, the only time that Zeteti can be confronted is during race time. Shown the reality of her deeds, Zeteti will lose control of the beasts...

Zeteti should prove a formidable foe to the adventurers, for now, nothing restrains her madness.

*The incentives for patronizing Harrow Downs are many. Spine-tingling thrills and unforeseen violence add spice to a day at the track. Lucky gamblers stand to win big if they place bets on the right contestant at good odds. Stable owners who enter champion racers can take home bulging purses offered to the victors ... if luck is on their side.*

# Cidryn's Aerial Palladium



*Home: that place where one's heart can be found. A place to hang one's hat, or helmet, or whatever. Many adventurers worry a great deal about where their next meal will come from, but not often enough about where they will eat it. Of course, those who can afford to live in Up Town rarely have such worries. And those who can afford the rent in Cidryn's Aerial Palladium rarely need to worry about anything so trivial ... except perhaps, strong winds.*

Seen from a distance, the top of an elaborate, ornate, drum-shaped building rises six stories above the sparkling roof peaks of Up Town. Seen up close, ALL of it rises over the City. This is the Aerial Palladium — the floating apartments where security and luxury are guaranteed.

## Common Knowledge

The Aerial Palladium floats 150 feet above ground. Its ornate walls rise six stories further to tower nearly 210 total feet over the City. The whole building is a round double-donut, with suites and flats around the outside, recreational areas every two levels on the inside, and a hole or atrium running the height of the building in the center. The recreational areas are open to the "elements," as are both sides of the apartments. All the rooms have balconies that overlook the City on the lower levels and overlook the country for miles from the top.

Above Up Town describes the location best. It also suggests who can afford such an extravagant setting. Some of the wealthiest merchants in the land may have rooms on permanent reservation. Several retired adventurers live there. A few folk who run businesses within the City business have been moving in as well, but more slowly than the others. Only the most successful or the richest can afford regular residence at Cidryn's.

Yet not all who reside in the floating complex wield the

wealth of kings. There are the occasional citizens who save enough to stay in the Palladium ... for one night. It's also not unusual for merchant class families to use it as a brief vacation. But the thought of actually living there leaves most of them shaking their heads. Who could possibly possess such vast wealth?

## A Stay at the Palladium

While the clientele is small, and many rooms are empty, Cidryn still turns a good profit. Nevertheless, if he didn't own the building, he himself couldn't afford to live there. Such is the lot of the working magician.

The empty rooms are available for rent to anyone. They rent nightly, weekly, monthly, and yearly, and all require a security deposit. Rates are extremely high (as much as 10 times higher than similar luxury accommodations). It is "fashionable" to take minor items from Cidryn's as proof of visitation, because there IS no other way to get any of the items. Such losses are assumed, and expected, and already figured into the cost of lodging.

Although the Aerial Palladium's rooms are available for nightly rental, it is primarily a residence. Cidryn has no "front desk" clerk. Interested parties need to contact Cidryn directly for reservations or on the spot rentals.

## Operations

Cidryn's employs a large staff, the bulk of whom are maids. They turn over on a regular basis, as they earn enough working there in one year to fund whatever goal they have chosen. A curmudgeonly maintenance mage keeps the numerous spells powered up, and all the mechanical parts cleaned and working. He is quite competent, and often has a lot of time on his hands despite the building's size and magical complexity.

The last staff members are the DoorMen. These four people live in a suite on the first floor, but work on the platform directly beneath the floating building. The DoorMen keep the unwanted types at bay, pass on messages to Cidryn, and operate the "lift."

The lift is an invisible, intangible magical column of swirling force that passes through the central atrium shaft and extends from ground level to the uppermost floor of the building, and will

RANDALL G. KUIPERS wanted to make a point of specifically thanking: Glo for the time and the hammer; Mariah for the laughter and the doses of reality; and his friends, who know when he's faking it: Bob, Ross, Don, Geoffrey, Trent, Teri, Chad, Jamin, Duane, Ed, Jim, Paul, Ruta, Lem, Ross, Dave, and Tim. (For more strange writing, check out Randall's contributions to *Central Casting™ Heroes NOW!*)

hold five people at one time. It is the only authorized means of transportation between the ground and the various floors of the apartment building. Its swirls of magic protect the passengers from outside forces.

Residents and visitors signal the DoorMen from the ground with a flashing mirror (located at the base of the lift). One of the DoorMen will descend and either verify the resident for entry or discover the needs of the visitor (none are allowed within the Palladium without permission from a resident).

Nevertheless, residents (and visitors) who have the ability to fly occasionally bypass the lift, avoiding the scrutiny of the seemingly infallible DoorMen.

**Layout**

Although the building floats, the powerful magics used in its creation support the structure as if it rested upon solid ground. Those same magics have been the debate of the City's Magic guild since the building's construction. Cidryn won't tell how he did it and none in the City seem to know how such powerful spells can be maintained without draining away the life of the caster.

The truth lies in the secret of it's construction. No one spell keeps the building afloat. Every stone block, every brick, ev-

ery column was separately enchanted and imbued with the simplest of levitation magics. The spells were not permanent, but they were long-lived. The mortar used to bind them together was also enchanted to link all the individual spells into a unified whole. And each day, one or perhaps several of those levitation spells need renewing by the maintenance mage. For the building to be in serious danger of falling, perhaps a third of the total spells would need to fade away (or be dispelled).

Most of the 47 apartments at the Palladium are unfurnished. Of those that are currently empty, three have been furnished with the basics (but elegant basics nonetheless) for the rare over-nighters and weekend vacationers.

The roof rises sharply from the interior, creating a steep slope as it moves toward the exterior wall. Four flat sections, the size of the suites below them, alternate with the steep ones, and allow for aerial landings by those residents whom Cidryn trusts to be discreet. A walkway leads from each landing platform to the lift, guaranteeing a minimum of interference.

What would be the 48th apartment, found on the first floor, acts as a supply, maintenance and furnishings warehouse. Edgarr, the maintenance mage can be found here by day.

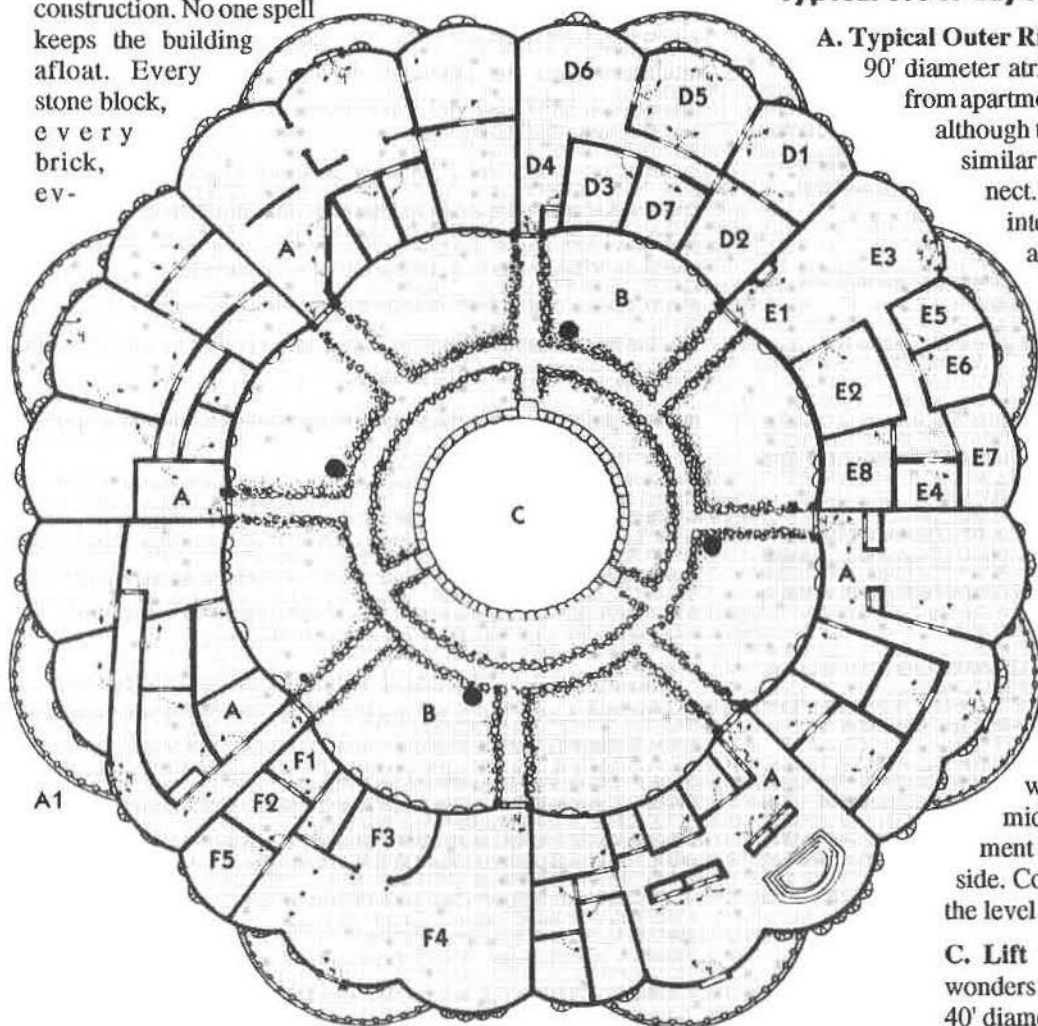
**Typical Floor Layout**

**A. Typical Outer Ring Apartments** (156' diameter, with a 90' diameter atrium shaft in the center). Layouts vary from apartment to apartment (none are standardized), although the apartments on subsequent floors are similar enough allow the fireplaces to connect. Balconies and windows view both the interior and the exterior. All the doors have a lock<sup>1</sup>, and even the window can be locked<sup>2</sup>. The furnished suites are located on different floors, and their availability and location will vary from month to month.

**A1. Balcony** (6' x 30') Each apartment has it's own balcony which is reached either through the centrel, outer room (often used as a dining area) or the room opposite the main entry way.

**B. Inner Ring Recreational Area** (90' diameter atrium, with a 30' diameter lift shaft in the center) Lush grass, flower lined paths, and picnic areas with neatly trimmed shrubs provide a relaxing alternative to the busy world. A three-foot path runs around the middle of the park, and connects the apartment walkways with the lift paths on the inner side. Columns support the recreational area on the level above it.

**C. Lift** (30' diameter) The lift is one of the wonders of the Palladium. The lift originates in a 40' diameter building groundside (styled to look much like the Palladium itself). A signal mirror summons the DoorMen. The mirror will work night or day.



▲ SAMPLE APARTMENTS

SCALE: one square = 3 feet

The magical, columnar membrane of the lift protects occupants from all exterior influences, but allows those within to affect the outside world if desired (such actions as spell casting and missile fire may originate inside the lift but cannot penetrate it from the outside) Only non-living things, however, may pass from the inside of the lift to the outside — like objects or spells. Anything on the outside is merely shunted to one side when the lift is active. If the lift is not in use, nothing impedes the flow of nature. It responds to a preset list of commands (up, down, one — six, stop), and will only stop if a floor or walkway is present, and will only open when stopped.

### Sample Apartments

The apartments and rooms described here are not all found on the same level within the building. The map suggests positional locations where they might be found on their respective floors. The apartments are wedge-shaped, designed to fit around the circumference of the circular building.

**D. Cidryn's Apartments** (30' x 55', irregular) Cidryn dwells on the top floor (which rarely contains more than one other tenant). As expected, the quality here is high, and the collection is an assortment of styles from the places Cidryn has been. If asked, however, he will decline comment, for it reminds him of all those years he wasted adventuring.

**D1. Work Room** (18' x 15') The functional furnishings, include a carpenter's work table, a pharmacist's cabinet, bookshelves, and a cabinet holding stacks of papers. Cidryn keeps his records and money here in three locked<sup>3</sup> safes against the inner wall.

**D2. Bedroom** (12' x 15').

**D3. Bathroom** (9' x 12') Cidryn has added a large heated tub — big enough to hold him and several guests.

**D4. Entry Way and Closet Storage** (7' x 17') The door is sealed with an excellent lock.

**D5. Dining Room** (20' x 15') A table of solid rose marble, inlaid with other stones and a glowing crystal chandelier highlight this chamber. Doors open out onto the balcony.

**D6. Lounge and Recreation Room** (21' x 18') Several comfortable chairs surround a chess table with a game in progress. Other exquisitely carved games can be found around the room. Each a work of art in itself.

**D7. Kitchen.** Always well stocked with supplies and equipment, the kitchen is nonetheless rarely used. Cidryn has accounts with several restaurants and usually has his meals delivered.

**E. DoorMen's Suite** (30' x 55', irregular) Although the furniture is sparse, the walls are covered with paintings, tapestries, and rugs. And each wall exudes a different "flavor", moving from one philosophical focus to another. (See the description of the DoorMen under "Personalities.") The colors vary from room to room, but stay close to pure hues none the less.

**E1. Entry Way and Closet Storage** (6' x 9')

**E2. Kitchen/Dining Room** (15' x 12') The DoorMen prepare their food and take their meals in this austere chamber.

**E3. Work Room/Recreation Room** (21' x 32') This room has been outfitted with target dummies, mats, and an assortment of

nasty weapons. The DoorMen don't use weapons, and the items are here for defensive practice only. If they *have* to pick up a weapon, they are all Good with most of them and Very Good with the primary weapon of their original organization. Doors open on to the balcony from here.

**E4. Bathroom** (7' x 9')

**E5-E8. Bedrooms** (various sizes) Each of the DoorMen has a private chamber. Fixtures include sleeping maps, meditation rugs, a small shrine and a chest for belongings.

**F. Maintenance Complex.** (30' x 55') Located on the first floor, this is the domain of Edgarr, the mage who keeps the entire building afloat and operating. Unlike the rest of the building, these rooms are dusty, grimy, greasy and hung with cobwebs.

**F1. Edgarr's Office.** (7' x 9') The air is thick with the smoke of burning herbs, the odore of infrequently washed robes and the heady aroma of a cheap body lotion. Out-of-date calendars hang on the walls, depicting a popular make of chariot with a buxom maid reclining on it. Edgarr does his best to not notice intrusions.

**F2. Magical Component Storage** (10' x 9') The rare and exotic supplies needed to keep the building afloat are kept in unmarked containers. Surprisingly, there are no special protections.

**F3. Ritual Chamber** (13' x 12') Magical signs, symbols and diagrams mark the floor, all delineated in durable ceramic mosaics. Edgarr spends several hours here each day renewing spells on the building.

**F4. Warehouse** (48' x 30, "L" shaped) The cast-off junk of previous tenants can be found here, broken furnishings, clothing, pieces of art, knick knacks, and worthless collections of you-name-it. Edgarr keeps it all, but does nothing with it ... except to allow others to explore his collection and take things from it.

**F5. Housekeeping Supplies** (11' x 12') The house and grounds keeping staff store supplies here.

## Personalities

**Cidryn Belast.** □ *Half-elven male, Ht.: 6' 2", Wt.: 168#, Age: 115.* □ *Fighting Prowess: Very Good with scythe, Fair with quarter staff, Average with all others.* ○ *Magic Ability: Fair C5, C6, and C8, Average C1 and C3.* ○ *Special Skills: Magic ability increases by two levels at night (to Very Good).*

Tall and thin, with a deep hooded black cloak, Cidryn and his scythe cut a convincing Death's pose. The former adventurer intentionally cultivated this image — until he came much closer to life imitating art than he desired. His wand, with unforeseen malice, performed a ground-zero detonation using multiple fireballs, and very little survived. Only Cidryn (just barely), the wand, and one other personal item lasted longer than ten seconds. The incident curbed Cidryn's desire to explore, and he used his pillaged wealth to build another source of income — luxurious floating apartments. The secret of their construction came from a street performer's act — the woman used multiple levitation spells to float a number of objects and link them together in entertaining sculptural arrangements.

Cidryn's flaming encounter with near death did much to change his life, both inwardly and out. He has no hair on his body.

He is completely bald, and his facial hair is gone. No five o'clock shadow, no eyebrows, no nose hair -nothing. His skin, however, survived the blast well, with only a few tell-tale scars. His right hand is seared with illegible reversed runes where he held the wand. Finely wrought bracers, which can never be taken off, encircle his wrists. They could be removed by command only, and while an unconscious Cidryn was recovering, his skin grafted the magical bands to his body. They provide magical protection as if he were wearing a plate-mail breast plate and greaves.

As with the body, the man's mind changed as well. He lives out his years on a precarious tightrope between fitful sanity and overwhelming paranoia — being particularly fearful of the adventuring life. Cidryn now pleads with would-be adventurers to save their lives and become merchants, landholders, street vendors, ... anything! If he is dealing with returning parties, he suggests renting a suite for a few months, so they can rest, recover, and enjoy their hard earned money. As long as the adventurers make no move to leave, all goes well. If Cidryn finds out that they intend to leave, he becomes protective to the point of interference. He will re-route or "lose" messages, have his staff hide adventurers' valuables, and do anything short of violence to keep them at the Palladium. If they leave, he just knows they will never return.

"You'll come back dead one of these days — or worse!"

**Edgarr.** □ *Human male, Ht.: 5'11", Wt.: 211 #, Age: 51.* □ *Fighting Prowess: Poor.* □ *Magic Ability: Average C3, C7, and Fair C6.*

Edgarr is everybody's school janitor. Quiet and efficient, he simply keeps things running. A ragged vest with many pockets holds much of his professional accoutrement. His pants are a bit loose, but clean, and the grey guild shirt is always rolled to the elbow. Although his hair falls to the shoulders, he has a bald spot developing on top and a neatly trimmed, thick mustache. His constant presence in and around the apartments and grounds lets him hear or learn about more than one would think. While he is quite intelligent, he doesn't always have the background information necessary to capitalize on his knowledge. He does not live at the Palladium, but rents a few rooms midway between *Up Town* and *Sideshow (CB5)*.

Despite his normal appearance, Edgarr can act unsettlingly inhuman. Not quite an adventurer, Edgarr has still visited many cultures. He enjoys wandering through *Sideshow*, the inhuman quarter of the City, and is tolerated if not welcomed at several establishments. However, Edgarr unconsciously picks up the character traits of those he encounters. While this mostly makes him easy to talk to and comfortable to be around, he will also reflect annoying and exotic traits. And his time among the non-humans shows. All the stereotypical qualities of many a race are partly present in Edgarr, if not currently active. These don't affect him all the time, or every conversation, but about 40% of the time he is displaying someone else's dominant character trait, including whoever he is talking to.

**DoorMen.** □ *Various male and female, Ht.: Varies, Wt.: Varies, Age: average age is 29.* □ *Fighting Prowess: Excellent, in Martial Arts and hand-to-hand combat when alone, but Legendary if all four are fighting together.* □ *Magic Ability: Very Good in C5, but it is intrinsic, only working when all four are present and willing, and then only for attack coordination*



— Cidryn Belast —

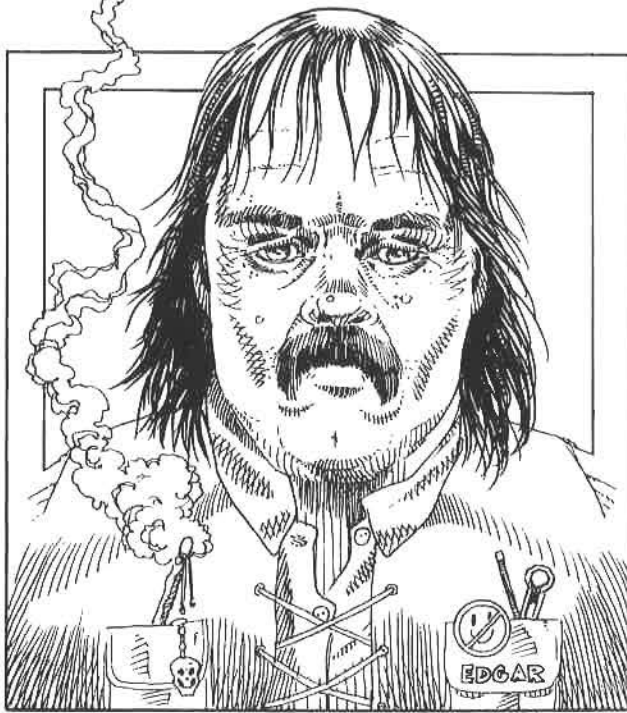
(raising their Fighting Prowess one level in combat).

When Cidryn wanted security, he remembered the effectiveness of the unarmed combatants he had met in distant lands. He sought the best and found them. The DoorMen are two men and two women whose dedication to training and natural psychic links make them one of the most formidable fighting groups in the City. They will not adventure and will never willingly separate. Although only one will be on duty at a time, he or she is usually an effective deterrent. The public has never seen all four in action, and few other than confidants and trusted employers (Cidryn is one) know of the mental link they share.

Each of the DoorMen practices a unique martial arts style, based on equally varied philosophical disciplines. They did not grow up or train together, but instead, rose to the top of their disciplines before leaving. Each had been dissatisfied with the narrow mind set of the masters, and sought further enlightenment.

Their embodying philosophies represent, as they see it, opposing or negating universal forces: Spirituality (Good), Power (Evil), Precision (Technical Skill), and Freedom (Unpredictability). Their respective disciplines would be appalled to find one of their members working with a student of just one opposing group, let alone three.

The four dress in black body suits, and outside of their room they wear black scarves that cover the face from forehead to just above the nose. They are extremely cordial and always smiling for the clients, as befits one finally at peace with life and the universe. They are content to work and live together, and will help Cidryn with whatever he needs — which includes prevent-



— Edgarr —

ing adventuring parties from leaving. They will not, however, endanger party members, and if a fight is attempted, they will either disarm the party or back off.

**Housekeepers & gardeners.** These workers are mostly young, single men and women often in their teens, and have appropriate skills. Nevertheless, Cidryn does not perform extensive background checks on the staff. It is likely that several of the people represent organizations within the City that might profit from knowing more of the activities and lives of the City's wealthiest citizens and visitors. *Madrikan's Fine Catering* (q.v.) has several employees with similar occupations.

### Guests/Residents

The Palladium currently houses 17 occupants, 13 of whom are permanent residents (no plans to leave). The transients are merchants and visiting dignitaries (one). Most of the permanent clientele are wealthy business people or government officials, but a few are retired adventurers.

**Cordell and Gnorlbagis** are two retired adventurers. Human and gnome, they are "old," but still more than formidable if necessary. They share an apartment and are often found playing board games in the central garden area.

Cordell is, or was, a knight ordained into the service of a temple. In days now long gone, his Combat skills were Excellent. Even now, they are still Very Good. Cordell is still devout in the service of his deity and remains active as a hospital chaplain.

Petty and sharp-tongued Gnorlbagis is a Mage whose magic ability remains Excellent in C1-3 and C8, and Very Good in C4. His eyesight is going, however, and he wears whatever THICK corrective lenses the game system and world set-up offers. His home is littered with minor magical devices, toys really, that might be of some use ... or danger to the adventurers.

### Scenario Suggestions

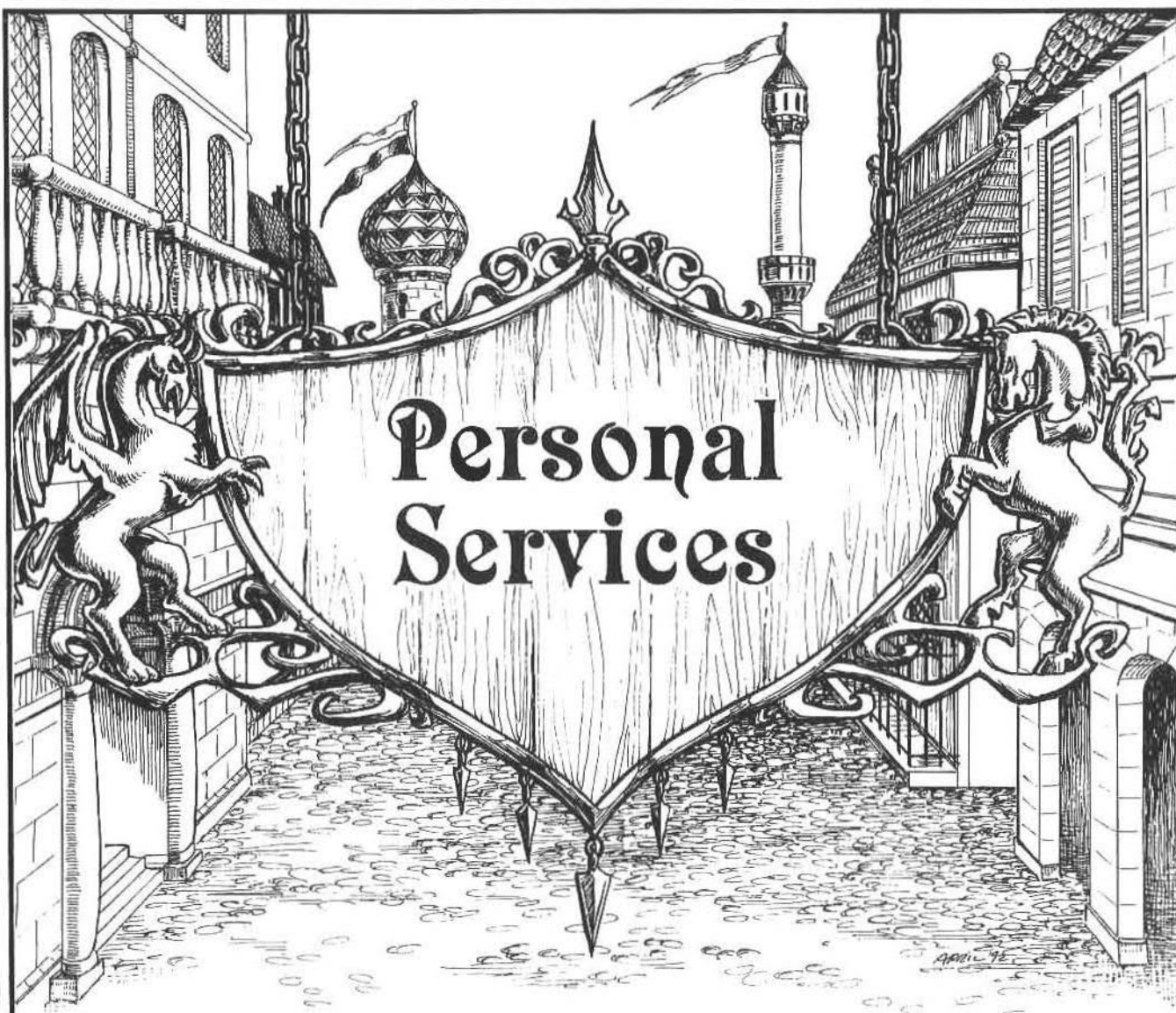
**Scenario 1. I Canna Hold Her Together Captain!** Something has interfered with the magical bonds holding the Palladium down, and now it has *really* gone aerial. Only the party, Cidryn, Edgarr, 1d12 guests and 1d4 Doormen are aboard. The soaring building could take them over unexplored or hostile lands, although they'd be more concerned about landing it in one piece.

**Scenario 2. Hello, Anybody Home?** Cidryn has finally completely flipped out. He had just heard of the death of an adventuring client when he lost it. Now **NOBODY** leaves the Aerial Palladium. He managed to separate the DoorMen, and only two are inside. They will obey him at first, but quickly realize he's being far more than his normal paranoid self. Although Cidryn is no maintenance man, he is still familiar with **HIS** building and can move around it like no one else. And he's especially dangerous at night, when the darkness boosts his already adequate magical powers.

*In the business of real estate there are three primary factors to weigh when determining the value and prestige of a property: location, location, and location! And what more prestigious location than a residence that looks down on all of Up Town? Whether adventurers live here or not, their patrons might, as might their well-heeled foes. And consider the implications involved in the need to obtain some item from an apartment high above the City. (Wrongfully taken from its original owner of course!)*



— The DoorMen —



High society places demands on its denizens. They must dress, live, eat and entertain with a certain air of elegance. To those not born to money — and few adventurers are so blessed — it can be comforting to know that establishments exist to make their lives easier ... and their purses substantially lighter in the process.

While most adventurers won't have to hold state dinners on a regular basis, it's nice to know that *Madrigan's Fine Catering* is there when the need arises. To those who need to suitably decorate a newly-acquired manor house, or liquidate the estate of a late companion, *Exeter's Antiques Emporium* provides just the right touch. Appearance counts in Up Town and many among the City's upper echelon can afford to keep their own hairdressers on staff. But adventurers who seek to improve their looks could do worse than to have their shaggy manes tamed at *Haprice's Golden Scissors*. Whether purchased for decoration or more practical adventuring purposes, ceramic wares have their uses and Joseph of *Feats of Clay* provides a most unique range of product. One might say they are "hot items" in Up Town. Distinctive pets, guard beasts, and living conversation items are to be had at *Hides Alive*. *The Cask & Bottle* serves fine wines (and the occasional mystery) to citizens of all ranks (and means). Carrying large amounts of coinage can be a problem. Better to convert it to easily portable gemstones at *Jasmine's Fine Jewelry* (and Explosives). Just be careful not to get them wet....

# Madrigan's Fine Catering



*Up Town folks are not the sort to do their own cooking, and even the richest rarely have the staff necessary to prepare properly for banquets and dances in opulent style. For that, they turn to Madrigan's.*

## History

Eighteen years ago, Madrigan was a cook's apprentice living in the home of a wealthy and bored duke. One fateful day, the duke insisted that his master chef start making more varied and wilder dishes, to the disgust of that culinary artist. Said master chef promptly resigned. Madrigan was immediately forced to start producing experimental recipes, which to everyone's surprise (her's more than anyone's) turned out to exceed the duke's newly-defined, stringent requirements. She continued to set a fine table for him until his death three years later (rumor has it he died of gluttony). When the will was read, she was amazed to find that he had left her a healthy portion of the estate. She had gained notoriety among the duke's guests, so when she decided to open a catering service, it became an immediate success among the nobles. Madrigan had trouble with the business at first. She did not understand how to organize, direct or monitor the waiters, wine stewards, cleaning crew, decorators and others. The first dinner she catered was a near disaster, as the baroness' own staff had neglected to even clean the cutlery.

Zombadzle arrived the next day, and a much relieved Madrigan hired him. The appearance of her new majordomo and chief butler seemed like a sign from the gods that she was meant to be a caterer, and she gave a proper tithe to her temple afterwards. Zombadzle quickly hired staff who cleaned, decorated, and served with skill and minimal overseeing. The next few contracts worked out to everyone's satisfaction.

Then Lady Docent insisted on having Madrigan arrange the

evening's musical entertainment. A bard-errant named Colin Harpswood appeared and offered his services as player, when such would be acceptable to the client, or as talent scout and Master of Ceremonies, when the party-giver had more unusual talents in mind. Colin's connections with assorted musicians and dancers made it possible for Madrigan to assemble a vast array of acts and styles to amuse the jaded tastes of the nobility.

Time has shown that the catering business requires enough staff to manage two or, infrequently, three different affairs on the same night. Colin rarely finds this difficult to handle, as he knows a host of players and other entertainers. Zombadzle can, if the need arises, hire additional workers and leave the overseeing to John Long-thumb or one of his other subordinates.

Madrigan, however, has had trouble keeping sufficient staff in her kitchens to stock several parties at once. At this time, she has two underchefs, Roberta Whitehair, a half-elven waif, and Sylvia Stripe, a former thief. Both are competent, and handle assignments from Madrigan without questioning the mixtures that she instructs. A bevy of scullery maids and potboys do the cleaning, preparatory work, and some lesser dishes. This team seems to work well together, with only rare instances of temper, generally during the summer, when the kitchen's heat is nigh unto unbearable.

## Services

Madrigan's offers the preparation and service of unusual (and sometimes distinctly odd) dishes. Her offerings include meat, fish, sauces, vegetables, fruit, baked goods, and sweets, served in unusual combinations, out of order, and in colorful displays. Her late employer, when presented with such food, devoured it with gusto. Mere steaks or chops are disdained by this chef. Instead, beef might be shredded, served in a chocolate sauce, preceded by an exotic melon, and followed by hot fresh rolls with a spiced butter. Madrigan's staff will assist in the decoration of the site.

If the noble desires to allow his staff some time off, Zombadzle will hire workers who are paid a minimal amount for their labor. Occasionally, Zombadzle will purchase the materials for

BILL PALEY, whose *Silver Pelt* restaurant in *CityBook V: Skidshow* was a howling success, makes a second *CityBook* appearance here, drawing on his own family's experience with caterers in writing *Madrigan's* (though espionage was not necessarily a regular part of family functions). Bill was able to deliver this piece despite buying a new home AND buying into a professional practice at roughly the same time.

## Layout



### First Floor

Madrigan's business is contained in a two-story building on the outskirts of the Up Town district. It's an unpretentious structure of stone with a gabled wooden roof and facings.

**A. Office (15' x 20')** It is a well-appointed room, with beautiful dark, polished wood paneling and comfortable couches and chairs. There is a *kaffé* urn, filled with the finest dark, bitter beverage available. The office also contains a work desk, and materials for contract writing. Zombadzle has the prospective customer describe in detail whatever is wanted for the affair, and he is careful to write it out to the last detail, before informing them of the price. If changes are made by the client, it is made clear that the service charges are high. Although these offices are quite beautiful, they are little used by nobility, as they tend to call Madrigan and Zombadzle to their manors.

**B. Kitchen (40' x 45')** One cannot enter Madrigan's without being tantalized by the lingering scents of yesterday's, today's, and tomorrow's sumptuous repasts. With good reason, the kitchen and associated storage take up the remainder of the ground floor. Ovens, fire pits, hearths, work tables, shelves nearly groaning under the load of kitchen ware, spices and expensive fare are surrounded by bustling, busy people. During winter, the room is nearly as hot as a smithy, while in the summer, staff

members often swoon. On all surfaces lay any type of kitchen utensil that can be found, all well-used, all clean, unless presently in use. At least one work table is always surrounded by the dishwashers, with a large tub of soapy water, and piles of dishes and utensils.

**C. Outdoor Storage (10' x 10')** Bulk foods, such as sacks of grain, large lots of vegetables, and tubs of salt, are kept here.

**D. Laundry Shed (5' x 15')** Located across the yard is the laundry shed, where the staff uniforms, napkins, tablecloths, and other useful items are cleaned.

**E. Pens (10' x 10')** A number of hogs are kept here, where they are fed the kitchen scraps and are raised for the staff tables. They are butchered elsewhere.

### Second Story

Apartments are found upstairs. Given that preparations must often go on around the clock, Zombadzle had the building's empty upper floor converted into quarters for the senior staff.

**F. Madrigan's Suite (20' x 20', irregular)** The owner has a three-room suite, including her bedroom (F1), with a four-poster brass

the decorations, but this incurs a *very large* fee. Zombadzle also arranges for grooms and watchmen to patrol the parked carriages, and can, if desired, arrange forage for the horses.

In a fit of charity, Zombadzle once hired a street urchin named Cylebeeze, who has since risen to the post of Chief Groom. Preening himself constantly in his ostentatious uniform, Cylebeeze keeps a close watch on the other grooms and wagoners.

In addition, Zombadzle has a second-in-command, John Long-thumb, who is a capable and swift worker. His primary duties are managing the set-up of the tables, decorations, bars, chairs, stages, and chamber pots, and choreographing the routes of the serving staff.

Colin Harpswood is a well-known bon-vivant, and he knows nearly everyone involved in the town's entertainment industry, from Atlantia and Hammon Brinks at the *Gloriana Theatre* (q.v.), to the mysterious *Augustine* himself (CB4). For example, were a noble to want an orchestra, he can find the fiddlers. When a wizard's convention required an instructor in limericks, Colin was unfazed. Once, but six hours before a society ball, a Countess decided that she couldn't have her soiree without 1,000 yards of green ribbon, held aloft by 100 male and female dancers, dressed in green silk and green painted faces. Colin had them there, dressed and painted, with 30 minutes to go.

bed, desk, and bureau. In (F2), she has a sitting room, where she often entertains with card games. Room (F3) is her bathroom.

**G. Harpswood's Room** (13' x 15', irregular) Colin Harpswood belongings can be found here, along with a showcase in which he keeps a number of special musical instruments. A number of printed handbills with his show dates on them are on the walls.

**H. Zombadzle's Room** (10' x 10') Zombadzle has a room which is strangely devoid of any personal effects.

**I. Assistants' Room** (15' x 15') Whitehair and Stripe share a room, each with a bed and bureau which are locked<sup>2</sup> with a clasp. A large, faded tapestry of a forest glen hangs between their two beds. The other staff either live in the surrounding neighborhood, or in the dormitory room (J).

**J. Dormitory Room** (20' x 36') There are six double bunk beds, and each pair share a bureau, generally unlocked (90%).

**K. Bath and Toilet Facilities** (15' x 6') Available for all staff, except Madrigan (who has private facilities).

## Intelligence Services

The nobility of the City controls its power: military, political, economic and religious. While enjoying the nightlife of Up Town, they often speak too much. Sometimes it is to impress the listeners, sometimes to forestall activities of others, sometimes to lie, sometimes in drunken error. These slips, intentional or not, are valuable to certain parties, and so, are traded.

Madrigan's is a fine cover for intelligence operatives. The nobility are wont to treat their own servants as invisible, and all but the most cautious see nought when they look at Madrigan's workers. Thus, Madrigan's senior staff, as well as most of the understaff, add to their salaries by selling information to businesses and government agencies ... or to the enemies of the City.

## Personalities

It is worth noting that none of the staff are actually aware of the other staffers' covert activities. Each believes his or her insight into using the caterer as a "cover" to be original and unique.

**Madrigan.** □ Human Female, Ht.: 5'2", Wt.: 165#, Age: 28. □ Fighting Prowess: Poor with meat cleaver or kitchen knife.

Madrigan is a chunky woman with a shy disposition — until an argument develops over food. In the world of the kitchen she is as imperious as the queen herself, although in the street outside she clearly avoids any contact with other people. Generally she will be found wearing a soiled apron, plain dress, and a clashing head scarf. She is usually splashed with sauces or other detritus, but if examined, her fingernails will be quite clean. She has thick, dark brown eyebrows, although her hair is never seen. Her scullery maids laugh about the single black hair growing out of her chin.

Madrigan is so unworldly that she is completely unaware of the use to which her company is put by the various information



— Madrigan —

seekers who have hired her staff. She can keep such excellent people solely because they are getting this extra pay, although she does pay a fair wage. She is vain enough to think that they are with her due to her own charisma.

**Zombadzle.** □ Human male, Ht.: 5'9", Wt.: 170#, Age: 32. □ Fighting Prowess: Good with quarterstaff. Fair with knife.

Zombadzle is an enormously, even prodigiously dignified person, with a quiet impassive face that only a fine butler could manage. He wears lifts in his boots to give him an extra two inches of height, and his boots have a two-inch heel to add to this. He has a long, aquiline nose, with which he often sniffs to show displeasure. Balding at a young age, he is often seen testing out hair encouraging cures. He sports a very impressive waxed and curled mustache of deep auburn. He is deep-chested, and has a very thin waist, although Madrigan is constantly pushing food on him to fatten him up. He is often seen (when not carrying out a butler's typical duties), heaving bales and crates, and mucking out the trash heap with a shovel to exercise. He generally wears somber, dark clothing, with lightning flash markings along the legs. He always wears a hat, except when he must doff it for nobility.

Unknown to Madrigan, Zombadzle receives a stipend from the office of the Royal Steward of the City. He reports after each party about any statements that he overhears from any noble or ambassador in their conversations. Thus far, he lists one duke, three counts, five knights, and a guildmaster of sea captains among his victims, all exposed as treasonous (or at least incredi-

bly, stupidly foolish). He has chosen this duty as a grimly satisfying method of causing the "Better Folk" the same grief and fear that he and his family had when he was a serf on a farm several leagues south of the City.

**Colin Harpswood.** □ *Human male, Ht.: 5'11", Wt.: 188#, Age: 38.* □ *Fighting Prowess: Very Good with rapier and main gauche. Good with short bow. Fair with broadsword and mace.*

Colin is strikingly handsome. He also has a master's touch with make-up, and he can alter his appearance with ease. He has hair so blonde that it is almost white, with eyes of ice blue, extremely straight white teeth, and thin lips. His voice is deep and warm. His manner can best be described as dangerously charming. Nearly every woman in the establishment has been his paramour at one time or another, and in every case he left the woman without her being the least bit angry with him. He is never without a musical instrument of some kind — his room is stacked with them, and with musical writings and books of poetry and mythology. His favorite instrument is the harp, but he is excellent with any stringed instrument, and good with song or wind instruments. He has taken up percussion, and is often practicing the singing drum. Typically he wears bright blue clothing under a deep navy blue cloak. He sparkles with a variety of golden jewelry.

Colin has been hired by a consortium of services that work for the three closest city-states to the City, who fear the nobility there as being expansionist, and war-like. Each week he is debriefed, usually being given certain generals or admirals to pay especial attention to during the festivities. He also has close connections with the guilds of musicians, bards and players, and he often passes on tidbits of information to them in exchange for favors.

**Roberta Whitehair.** □ *Half-elven female, Ht.: 6'2", Wt.: 122#, Age: 313 (though she appears no older than 25).* □ *Fighting Prowess: Good with carving knife, Fair with long bow, Average with spear.*

Roberta is a tall slim half-elf with blindingly white hair. Her figure is almost boyish, her features petite, with almond eyes of pale green, and a tiny mouth. Her voice is sweetly musical, with a hint of trilling to her accent. While she works, she generally sings in odd languages. She has an extensive knowledge of herbs, and thus is the senior of the two sub-chefs on the staff. Because of her half-elven status, and her own tendency towards acerbic wit, she is avoided by most men of any race. Although she insists that she prefers her life this way, her actions suggest otherwise. She is often seen silently crying by the window of her room. She will always be found in clothing of medium green color, usually tunic and pantaloons, with sandals or suede moccasins.

Roberta is an informant for a small violently militant group of half-elves who have taken it upon themselves to eradicate all humans who are prejudiced against half-breed races. There are whispers about them in the bazaar. They intend to try their hand at striking down a noble one day, should the insult prove severe enough. Roberta was one of them, but now it disturbs her to see racist tendencies even among the elves who frequent the parties. She is wracked by her own deeply internalized argument as to whether she should not drop out of this group — and perhaps betray their deeds.

**Sylvia Stripe.** □ *Human female, Ht.: 5', Wt.: 101#, Age 19.* □ *Fighting Prowess: Very Good with thrown dagger. Fair with knife.*

A tiny woman, Sylvia tries to hide, subconsciously, wherever she might be. Her earlier time spent as a thief is quite clear to those who know what to look for. She prowls rooms along their perimeter, staying as much as possible in the shadows, and backing into them when observed. As the kitchens are only moderately well-lit, she can continue in her habit. She tends to wear little makeup, and that generally intended to make her less noticeable. Her clothing is colored gray, brown or black, never with bright colors. Her hair is black, and her eyes are brown. Her features are regular, and if not for her blank expressions, would be pretty.

Not surprisingly, she still works for the thieves' guild. It is her duty to watch, listen and learn about the various homes that Madrigan's serves. This information is generally stored, and reviewed regularly with similar material gleaned from other sources. So far, there have been no burglaries or assassinations among these homes.

**Cylebeeze.** □ *Human male. Ht.: 5'4", Wt.: 130#, Age: 19.* □ *Fighting Prowess: Fair with club.*

Cylebeeze is a brash, loud fellow whose voice can shake wagons at twenty paces. He has an interest in military affairs, and considers himself (for no good reason) a cavalryman. He wears an outlandish uniform of his own devising. Its frills, and ribbons



— Roberta Whitehair —



— Cylebeeze —

would be a warrior's nightmare in combat, but Cylebeeze has invented a patten to go with his rig that has made him a heroic figure in the eyes of several scullery maids. In fact, he has had no military experience at all.

He has brown hair and golden eyes. He does have a scar (from a barroom brawl) down his left arm, and has a tattooed snake twining around the old wound.

This young man has been retained by an operative who works for a consortium of mercenary forces that work in the region. Their commanders find it helpful to have advance warning of changes in politics. Cylebeeze reports who is traveling with whom, and what he overhears at the carriage stand. Thus far, he has been of only minor use to his handler.

**John Long-thumb.** □ *Human male. Ht.: 6'4", Wt.: 225#, Age: 42.* □ *Fighting Prowess: Very Good with short sword or pike. Good with mace or Brass Knuckles.*

A solid-looking fellow, John is capable of significant feats of strength and endurance. In addition, he is very good at tricks of observation and memory. A former border scout, he ended his career with an arrow wound in his left calf which has given him a scar and, when he is tired, a limp.

Medium brown hair frames a deeply tanned face, out of which peer his squinting gray eyes. He always wears grays and black in town, while in the countryside where he often goes bird watching, he wears browns and greens. He has a pierced nose, and wears a golden skull in it, with eight bones stuffed in the open jaws. He is very quiet, and tends to answer questions, if at all possible, with monosyllables.

Having been long in the border scouts, John had close ties with the local Customs Service. His friends there are aware of several people of high position aiding and abetting smugglers and other persons of evil reputation. He listens for clues that might lead Customs investigators to find these persons. He does this because fighting against smugglers killed several of John's friends from his days as a private in the border infantry.

## Scenario Suggestions

**Scenario 1: Oh Waiter!** The adventurers have been out of the thick of things for a while, and need some cash, and possibly a patron — when they hear word that Madrigan's is hiring for a major party. A carriage full of their usual team accidentally overturned, and several waiters and pot boys were injured.

This could be a chance to get close to some of the real powers-that-be in the City, or maybe secure a paying assignment. If the group is well-supplied with thieves, they might be able to scout the place for a burglary. Of course, the tough, single-minded adventurers will need to behave properly as servants, and not warriors, no matter what provocation the nobles might give them. And as GM, it will surely be your job to provoke them!

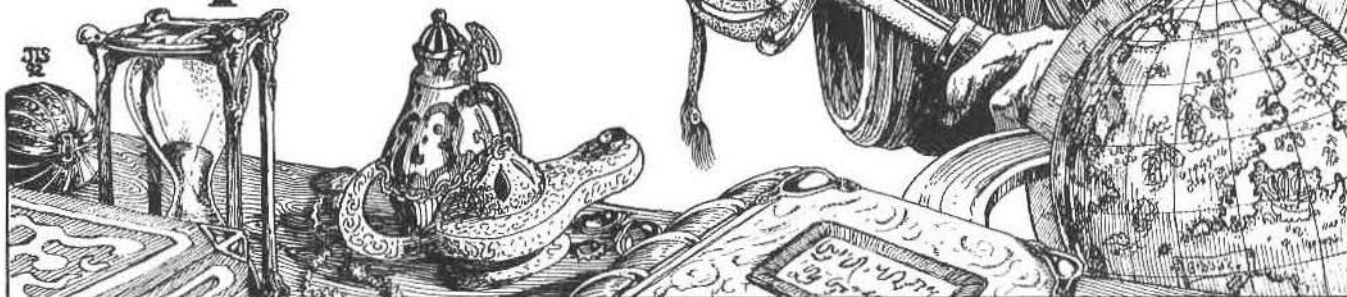
**Scenario 2: Waiter... There's a Spy in My Soup.** As in scenario #1, Madrigan has a sudden need for servers and pot boys, but the situation is less innocent. Special investigator for the Justice Ministry, Lord Llewellyn Finster suspects that all is not as it seems with Madrigan's. He suspects the caterer herself of running a notorious espionage ring. He has arranged for Lord Westcott to throw a feté; for Madrigan to cater it, and for a number of her staff to have pressing business elsewhere. The adventurers pose as staff to discover what Madrigan is up to, and if possible bring her to justice. Of course, Madrigan herself is blissfully unaware of it all.

**Scenario 3: In Your Honor.** Noting the recent successes of the adventurers, a local lady of distinction has decided to throw a party in their honor. Friends of those who the adventurers had recently defeated hear about this event, and decide to turn it to their advantage. They sneak one or more confederates into the servant team (or suborn present members). These persons can (depending on the viciousness of the person's involved) gather information, or attempt a poisoning of the characters.

**Scenario 4: Hot Leftovers.** Madrigan's often sells leftover food from large jobs at a street stand. The staff share the duties at the stand. Occasionally, one will place a message, or a purloined bauble into a tasty pastry or meat pie to be sold only to a special client. But sometimes things become fouled. While eating at his or her favorite food purveyor, the adventurer bites into a dangerous state secret. The host will of course declare his or her own innocence and finger Madrigan's. The host will also indicate who bit into the misplaced secret to whatever group that comes looking for it. If the party goes to the Justice Ministry, then scenario 2 would come into play. Meanwhile, they have a group of espionage agents on their trail, desperate to plug leaks.

*Madrigan's is not a place that might immediately attract an adventurer's attention. Even the most ardent role-player may not see the fun in having a party catered. Yet here we have a nest of charming spies whose clients actually pay them to come in and steal their secrets. And who's to say that some other social, political, or criminal faction might not want to hire an adventurer to uncover secrets, or that competing factions might hire several adventurers in the party?*

# Exeter's Antiques Emporium



*The passing of time has a tendency to make more valuable those things which survive its travails. Yet those who possess ancient things may often be unaware of their worth. It falls to others to recognize the worth of "one man's trash" and transform it into "another man's treasure." Enter the antiquarian, the scholar-turned-merchant (or merchant-turned-scholar) who trades in things ancient ... and who often may not ask from whence they came.*

All things and all people must die, even the well-to-do. Often the wealthy pass on their worldly goods to their heirs in an amicable fashion by using a Last Will and Testament. Sometimes, however, unclear directions are given or perhaps no Will is available or no heirs can be found. In such a case, the estate often falls to Exeter Shadmock to auction off. Proceeds from the sale, minus Exeter's professional fees, are split evenly between any heirs and the City's government. Exeter Shadmock keeps any goods that remain. Items remaining unauctioned are put on sale in Exeter's Antiques and Expropriations Emporium.

Simple deduction will reveal that these left over items are not the most desirable. Thus Exeter augments his business by buying, selling, and trading in exquisite antiques, curios, oddities, and divers other rarities.

Exeter's Emporium has a reputation for being one of those strange shops where clientele with unusual tastes may find what they seek. The flotsam of wrecked lives passes through his shop. Who knows what a thorough patron may come across while browsing Exeter's shelves?

## Exeter's Block

Located in one of the most densely populated parts of the City, Exeter's Emporium is sandwiched in between a number of

other shops catering to the gentry's needs.

The antique shop section of Exeter's establishment opens at dawn and closes at dusk, like most of the surrounding stores. Exeter Shadmock occasionally opens his shop for private appointments and important deals.

Estate auctions are held on the first business day of every month. At that time, the personal wealth of dead personages goes on the block — for sale to the highest bidder.

## Auctions and Other Business

Exeter's Emporium is first and foremost an antique shop. Patrons entering this establishment immediately perceive the immense number of exotic items (and junk) cluttering every corner of the shop. Some attempt at categorization is apparent in the designation of "special interest rooms" catering to one type of commodity. But generally, shelves and walls present a hodgepodge of different folk's former belongings. Old memories would make these things priceless to their previous owners, but to dispassionate observers they are often nothing more than useless trinkets and oddities. Occasionally, one can find the most amazing items by pawing through Exeter's mountain of memorabilia. But seldom are they magical or highly valuable, since those objects always sell readily at auctions.

Exeter is a sharp trader and will likely detect a customer's excitement over curios, whereupon its price doubles!

## Buying only the Best

Exeter's Emporium also serves as a very discreet pawn shop. Folk in need of quick silver can have their merchandise appraised. More often than not, such exchanges are conducted by clerks. Exeter himself rarely deals with the "riff-raff" (his words). Only for "special" clients will he make an appearance.

The shop initially offers only 10% (cash) or 20% (in trade) of an item's resale value. Exeter drives a hard bargain and is not above squeezing a few extra coins out of someone down on their luck. Private rooms are set aside just for such bartering sessions.

Auctions take place in the rear of Exeter's Emporium the first

Although TIM TAYLOR has written for Iron Crown Enterprises, he noted that for the first time, CityBook made him think of an adventure solely in terms of its own internal story and the motivations of its characters. No game rules existed to use as crutches for a scenario or setting. Once freed from the confines of a game system, anything became possible. He guarantees that in the future, all his work will be the better for it.

working day of every month. Estates of the wealthy deceased are auctioned off on this day. Each object has a minimum bid. If no buyer makes this bid, Exeter sets the item aside for sale in the antique shop section. Auctions are heavily guarded affairs, although open to the general public (or perhaps because of it). Every once in a great while, a magical item goes up on the block. Known magical objects invite spirited bidding. Minimum bids for such objects begin high and shoot upwards rapidly.

### Side Business

Exeter's Emporium also fences stolen goods as a sideline. Only the finest contraband is considered worthwhile, and only a few thieves ("special customers") are trusted with knowledge of this secret function. Exeter pays only 20% of his evaluation of an item's resale value. Still, for cognoscenti, a tidy sum can be made dealing with the dark side of Exeter's Emporium.

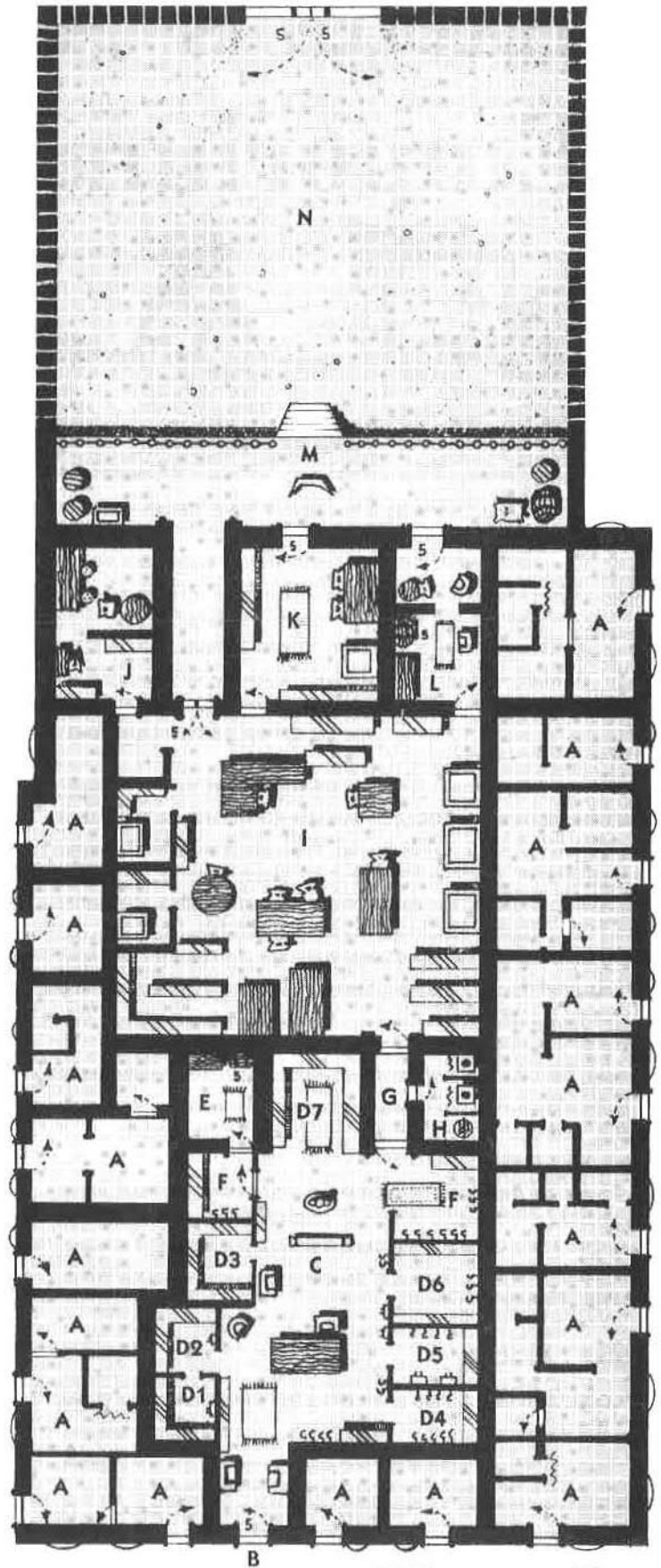
It is said that Exeter has other, even darker contacts, and may be able to procure just about anything that one would wish ... if one is willing to pay. Of course, this is only rumor.

### Layout

Exeter's Antiques and Expropriations Emporium can be difficult to find. It occupies the center of a commercial block (entirely owned by Exeter). It's surrounded on all sides by numerous other shops. If people don't know where to look, they might pass right by Exeter's modest sign—it looks so much like any of the other store's signs which line the streets on all sides. The front door, which faces a main thoroughfare, provides access for patrons wishing to browse Exeter's antiques shop. A rear entrance is for use on auction days and remains locked<sup>5</sup> at all other times. For those who know of its existence, a visit to Exeter's Emporium often proves worth the trouble of locating it.

**A. Other Storefront Shops.** (varies) Myriad other upscale stores encircle Exeter's Emporium. This whole City block represents a labyrinthine marketplace specializing in providing wealthier patrons with services they desire. In fact, every shop represents the highest quality that their type of business can attain; all markets in this block are considered among the City's finest. The nature of each individual shop is left up to the Game Master's discretion. Some possibilities include: gold smith, silver smith, jeweler, cobbler, tailor, wine merchant, apothecary, bakery, restaurant, foods market, assayer, and so on.

**B. Main Entrance (9' x 5')** The lock<sup>5</sup> on this steel door remains unlocked during business hours. Patrons first notice a facade in the shape of battling gryphons surmounting the door. This portal has a magical property. Anyone passing through it with an item which has not been purchased (all items bear the residue of an enchantment that is dispelled by the counter clerk) causes a shrill alarm to sound. This alarm can be turned off at Exeter's discretion. A guard always stands here.



SCALE: one square = 3 feet

**C. Antique Shop** (80' x 50', irregular) Numerous shelves containing all manner of bric-a-brac, pawned goods, exotica, and other unusual paraphernalia line the walls of Exeter's Emporium. People never know what they might find searching these shelves. Larger objects, such as musical instruments, weapons, shields, tapestries, etc. hang from the walls wherever there is no shelving. At least three guards are always present, protecting Exeter and preventing pilfering. Exeter or one of his clerks always remains on duty at the glass counter in the room's center. This glass counter houses much of Exeter's finer goods, such as jewelry, incense, perfumes, and other oddities.

**D. Special Interest/Display Rooms** (varies) Each of these rooms has a theme such as weapons (D1), armor (D2), musical instruments (D3), tapestries and rugs (D4), fine furniture (D5), and works of art (D6). All of the highest quality merchandise of the appropriate type is displayed in these rooms. Patrons entering these rooms are carefully watched by the attendant guard, who has orders to forcibly stop any would-be thieves. Clerks patrol these rooms to offer assistance or information.

**E. Antique Shop Office** (12' x 15') Exeter works here most of each day, keeping records on the antique shop part of his business. His desk sits in the northwest corner of the room, with shelving above to accommodate the emporium's voluminous records. In the northeast corner is a large, locked<sup>5</sup> chest. This chest holds the funds generated by Exeter's Emporium, antiques division. This room is very cluttered and reeks of the odious herbs which Exeter habitually smokes.

**F. Private Viewing Rooms** (varies) Customers wishing to pawn items are directed to one of these side chambers. Here Exeter and his patrons haggle over an object's value. The rooms are set aside because Exeter's ruthless bargaining often provokes shouting matches. At least one bodyguard stands in the room.

**G. Inner Passage** (15' x 6') This corridor connects the two halves of Exeter's Emporium. To the north lie the auction facilities and to the south, the antique shop. Generally, patrons may not pass through this corridor, except to visit the lavatory. A guard always stands watch here.

**H. Lavatory** (9' x 15') Spartan furnishings allow for answering nature's call and freshening up afterwards — just barely. Men and women must use the same facilities.

**I. Main Storage Room** (51' x 57') Items waiting to be auctioned as well as miscellaneous goods not yet on display in the antique shop are housed in this room. No order exists here except among the personal effects to be auctioned, which are strictly separated according to estates and placed in large bins. Tables and shelving hold everything else. Patrons are not allowed enter this room and at least one guard always stands watch here.

**J. Repair Shop** (27' x 18') A trusted artisan repairs broken items in this small, crowded chamber (often disguising flaws that by rights should lower an item's value). A long table cluttered with several current projects rests along the northwest wall. Clients are not allowed in this room, unless examining a work in progress (that Exeter hopes to sell to them). A pile of debris (broken sculpture, pottery, glass shards, etc.) lies in the northeast corner.

**K. New Acquisitions Storage Room** (27' x 24') An old, musty smell of lost memories and forlorn hopes pervades this place. Any recently acquired merchandise gets stored here until they are checked, repaired, priced, and display stands or mountings are made ready for them. The northern door is locked<sup>5</sup>.

**L. Auction Office** (27' x 15') This room contains documentation: the records, schedules, account books, and other materials needed to run auctions. A large, locked<sup>5</sup> chest rests next to the desk along the southwest wall. In this chest, Exeter keeps the proceeds from each auction, carefully divided into three parts; the heir's share, the City's cut, and his own fee. The northern door is locked<sup>5</sup>.

**M. Loading Dock/Auction Platform** (15' x 90') Merchandise gets unloaded from wagons onto this wooden platform for storage inside. The podium may be moved out of the way while loading or unloading. At auction-time, attendants carefully arrange items around the central podium (and the auctioneer, Exeter). Each item receives a "lot" number prior to display. After auction, this platform serves as a loading dock for the out-going wagons of patrons. A central set of stairs rises three feet to the platform's level.

**N. Auction House Floor** (90' x 75') In this grassy, open and unroofed area bidders vie for possession of items auctioned off. All goods come from disputed estates. People stand within this area, signalling when they wish to bid. Other times, wagons load and unload their goods from here. The 20' tall walls hold a carved stone frieze depicting heavenly gardens and groves (whether these came from some noble's garden or an ill-fated temple is not known ... but they are for sale). At night, Exeter unleashes a massive, totally vicious guard dog which roams this enclosure.

**O. Rear (Auction) Entrance** (25' x 10') Closed by a locked<sup>5</sup>, reinforced wooden gate, this portal allows entry into the auction house part of Exeter's Emporium. A guard is always on duty here during business hours.

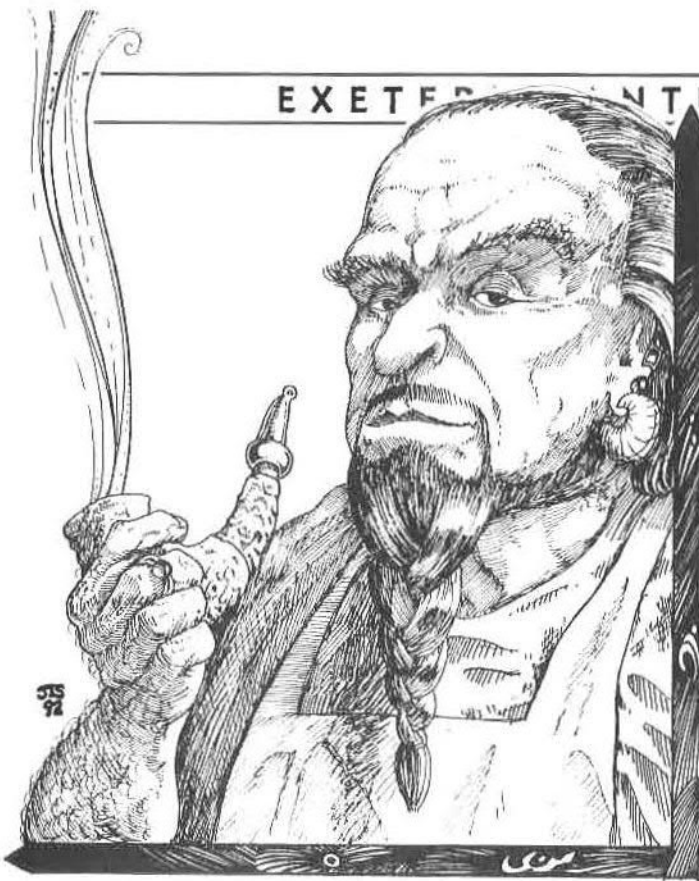
## Personalities

**Exeter Shadmock.** □ *Human male, Ht.: 5'7", Wt.: 160#, Age: 62.* □ *Fighting Prowess: Very Good in a defensive (parrying) capacity, Poor otherwise (no offense to speak of).* □ *Special Ability: Barter (negotiate trades) at Excellent to possibly even Legendary capability.*

Appearing remarkably spry for all his years, Exeter Shadmock presents a gruff and eccentric appearance. He dresses in the same greasy tunic and leather apron every day, despite his otherwise fastidious personal hygiene. These clothes are "lucky" he claims. However, the most noticeable of Exeter's aspects must be the swirling cloud of smoke that engulfs him at all times — issuing from his ever-smoldering pipe. He acts as if he were superior to all, belittling the knowledge and prowess of those who dare to cross him. He can take apart anyone's ego with his sharp tongue and keen wit. The best defense is to avoid irritating him. Still, he is notoriously easy to provoke.

Exeter reacts whenever he encounters stupidity, laziness, unkindness, love, foolishness, boastfulness, machismo, infor-

## EXETER ANTIQUES EMPORIUM



— Exeter Shadmock —

mality, nobility, idealism, and piety. He has caused women to cry and men to curse. Some enraged clients have even attacked this vituperative little man — hence his employment of so many bodyguards.

Nevertheless, Exeter Shadmock barter better than any other man alive and can break the resolve of most patrons. He drives hard bargains. Other than accepting Exeter's paltry offers (and insults), a patron's only option is to leave with the goods unsold.

Yet, as a shopkeeper, Exeter is a failure. His tongue drives away customers more readily than anything else. For this reason, even-tempered clerks usually man the antique shop counter.

Exeter Shadmock is a skilled and efficient auctioneer and pawn-broker, but he prefers to be called an "Antiquarian." His forceful demeanor has garnered a prize position — official liquidator for the City of disputed or disarrayed estates. It's a sweet-heart deal, because any unauctioned stock reverts to sole control of Exeter's Emporium. If grieving relatives come to reclaim their progenitor's belongings, he has been known to laugh in their faces. The only legal recourse remaining is to purchase these keep-sakes from Exeter (at inflated prices, of course).

Exeter also harbors many eccentric notions, which he eagerly relates if the slightest interest is shown. He believes that midwives know a hideous truth concerning childbirth; keeping it secret with a conspiracy of silence. He considers his diet the perfect regimen: beef, tea and pipe weed. Finally, Exeter maintains that intelligence directly relates to the size of one's brain. Of course, he has a high-domed forehead.

**Guards.** (x25) □ Human males and females, various ages and sizes. □ Fighting Prowess: Good to Very Good.

All these guards stand watch during the day, while only 10 patrol the building at night. Five guards are superior to the others

and give orders. Exeter has instructed them to feel no compunction about killing would-be thieves.

**Clerks.** (x5) □ Human males & females, various ages and sizes. □ Fighting Prowess: Poor to Fair.

These young men and women are employed by Exeter to be helpful and courteous to customers, so he doesn't have to be affable. They all trade effectively. A qualification for this position is a Good eye for merchandise, Fair to Good bartering skill and at least Fair knowledge of art and antiques.

### Scenario Suggestions

**Scenario 1: Gone too Long.** The adventurers have been questing far from the City for a long time. Upon returning, they are shocked to discover that have been declared legally dead. Sadly, all their property is scheduled to be auctioned off on the first of the month. Or perhaps, it's already been sold. Only a few "special" items remain for sale in Exeter's Emporium. When Exeter learns this, the price of those items increases. Adventurers may find more excitement in retrieving their scattered goods, than from any wilderness experience.

**Scenario 2: "What am I Bid?"** A noblewoman hires the adventurers to act as "shills" during an auction of property from a disputed estate. Lord Westcott (or some other person of note) will be at the auction and few will bid against him. The adventurers are to bid the price up on certain items lest Westcott obtain them too cheaply. Their sponsor promises to cover any costs they may incur. Unknown to the party, they are being set up to buy items of little value at great cost. Most of those bidding against the party are heirs to the disputed estate. They have conspired to set a price beyond which none of them will bid. The party will seem to get stuck with every item. Afterwards, their "sponsor" (actually one of the heirs) is no where to be found ... and Exeter demands his money for each and every purchase.

Plots and twists from this point could include: trying to avoid Exeter's collection agents, agents from the City and agents from the heirs ... all of whom want their money; trying to track down their "sponsor" and obtain the promised money; discovering (simultaneously with the heirs) that one of the items has a value beyond price (even noted antiquarians can make mistakes).

**Scenario 3: Straddling the Fence.** Reports of resold stolen merchandise associated with Exeter's Emporium have circulated for months. The adventurers are commissioned to investigate these rumors by posing as thieves. Either they will try to sell stolen property, or offer their services to Exeter.

*The proprietor may not be charming and the shop a bit hard to find, but where better to transform those fancy pots, those useless and unwieldy paintings and statuary, those delicate knick-knacks and flimsy furniture hauled back from expeditions into gold and silver? Any time the Game Master wishes to spice up play, he or she can introduce an unusual item for sale at Exeter's Emporium.*

# Haprice's Golden Scissors



*Few adventurers can expect to "clean up" perfectly by themselves for important meetings with wealthy patrons. For in Up Town looks are not just important ... they are often everything ... the difference between success and failure, wealth and poverty. And there is one man who can turn even the most average woman into a goddess. Morrison Haprice is known far and wide as the master of hair styling and beauty. For those who need to look "just right," Haprice's is the place to be.*

An adventurer who looks like he or she just crawled out of a hole in the ground can't expect to be welcomed with open arms into the posh establishments of the City's finest neighborhood. A change in wardrobe may do wonders for the body, but without a fashionable haircut or proper styling, even the most powerful hero is little more than a backwoods rustic in the eyes of the denizens of Up Town.

## A Place to be Polished

The Golden Scissors hair salon is located near the residential part of Up Town, and is frequented by the ladies and gentlemen of high society who have the time and money to do whatever it takes to look their best. The shop gains its fame from its proprietor and chief hair stylist, Morrison Haprice.

He is joined by his partner Ray Kreeger and their staff who cater to the customer's every whim. The shop is open from mid-afternoon to early evening six days a week. Appointments are not generally necessary but are required if the patron wishes to have Haprice himself perform for them. Prices are very expensive, but the quality is the best in the City. The results nearly always improve the customer's appearance.

Haprice's styles vary widely. Because people come to the City from far and wide, stylists such as Morrison must use improvisational abilities in order to copy and improve on a style they have just recently seen. Some men and women prefer their hair cut short, while others prefer elaborate structures of hair which are then covered with fine powder. The hair powders are available in white as well as many other colors. Any style imaginable is available from Haprice's, although the most elabo-

KEVIN CROSSMAN wrote *The Bottomless Keg* for *CityBook V: Sideshow*, and is currently nearing completion of a Masters Degree in library science. Kevin was able to finish this project thanks to composer Danny Elfman.

rate creations are usually done by Morrison himself.

In addition to cutting and styling hair, Haprice's has recently begun making wigs for both women and men. Haprice's buys hair from the local City-folk for five g.p. per 30 inches of hair (the minimum usable amount of hair for wig-making). Two regular wig customers are Duke Alfeas (*Daub, CB4*), to whom Morrison also sells secrets, and Judge Horatio Horris (*CB3*), with whom he shares alcoholic misery. The *Gloriana Theatre* (q.v.) also regularly buys wigs for new productions. Most wigs are created after they are commissioned, but the store does always have a few completed wigs for spur of the moment sales. The wigs are quite natural appearing, and would enhance any disguise — something that might interest an adventurer on the lam.

## Layout

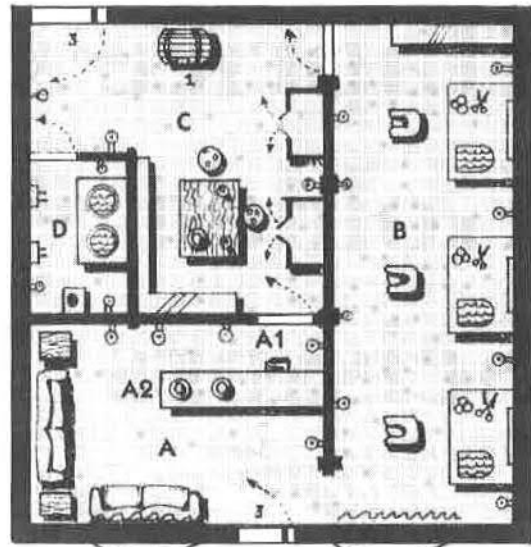
The Golden Scissors salon is located in a 28' x 27' stone building with an exterior that has been coated with light orange stucco. Green trim borders the two large west-facing windows in the front of the store. The entrance is a heavy, locked<sup>3</sup>, polished oak door with an ornate brass handle.

**A. Front Room/Waiting Area (16' x 10')** Two opulent couches provide a relaxing area for waiting customers as well as for Haprice's admirers. A locked<sup>3</sup> money box is kept behind the counter (A1), along with the financial and customer records for the store. Once a month, Ray takes these home to be stored ... and recopied in his duplicate book set. At (A2), a pair of display wigs are shown. Other finished wigs for sale are found on the shelves in the Storeroom (C), located through a door on the east wall. White drapes are drawn on hot days.

**B. Haircutting Area (9' x 26')** Three plush leather chairs provide comfort for the customers in this area. Each station also has its own sink and area for holding scissors, soaps, towels and other tools of the trade. Large silvered glass mirrors above each sink allow the customers to view Haprice's handiwork. Tasteful paintings adorn the north wall, providing a soothing ambiance to the room. Shelves on the east wall contain soaps, dyes, powders and other supplies. A door on the north wall leads to the Storeroom (C). White drapes are provided for the large window, but they are rarely drawn during the winter when the afternoon sun warms the building.

**C. Storeroom (16' x 17', irregular)** This room functions as the storeroom as well as Morrison's frequent night accommodations. The table is set up for the manufacture of wigs. Finished wigs and wig-making supplies are located on the shelves nearby. A massive cabinet holds big containers of soaps and dyes, as well as candles, lamp oil and other supplies. A second cabinet contains Ray Kreeger's hair sample collection (see Personalities).

The locked<sup>1</sup> chest on the east wall holds Haprice's personal belongings such as his clothes and personal toiletries along with hidden compartments for his drugs, and alcohol. On lonely and cold nights, he can often be found in a drunken or drugged sleep, huddled against the chest. A locked<sup>3</sup> back door leads to an alley, and serves as Haprice's usual entrance and exit.



SCALE: one square = 1 foot

**D. Lavatory & Privy (5' x 7')** Two sinks allow both hot and cold water to be drawn and afford Ray the opportunity to give Haprice a good cleaning up when circumstances dictate.

## Personalities

**Morrison Haprice.** □ Human male, Ht.: 5' 10", Wt.: 140#, Age: 29 (looks about 5 to 8 years older). □ Fighting Prowess: Average with scissors or dagger, Poor otherwise.

## Common Knowledge/Legend

Morrison Haprice is a slender, attractive man with shoulder length black hair. Full lips, bright eyes, and tanned skin give him a certain sensual quality, but his mannerisms are what fully describe the man. Self confident and assured about everything he does, Morrison looks forward to meeting new people and is a crowd pleaser. He attends all the major parties and functions in the City, and is considered a witty and fascinating guest. Described by many as a creative genius of hair styling, Morrison loves his work and is proud of his successful business. Morrison began as a barber's apprentice when he was 13, but soon outperformed his master. When he turned 20, he opened his own shop and has had raging success ever since. Although currently single, Morrison would not avoid a serious relationship should it develop.

He habitually wears a pair of ornate, gilt scissors on a chain around his neck, a signature item of sorts for him.

## The Truth

The Morrison Haprice who arrives in his cheap apartment flat after a night of haunting the bars and low dives of the City by night might not be recognized as the same man who cuts hair by day. Puffy, haunted eyes, limp greasy hair, stinking clothing, stumbling gait and shaky hands mark Morrison Haprice the drug addict and drunk.



—Morrison Haprice—

Morrison first revelled in his gift for cutting and styling hair. As the years have gone by, the women he serves have increasingly been showing more interest in him than the hair he cuts. These days, he rarely has an unhappy customer, not because of his great ability, but because the women are excited and honored to have their hair cut by the "Great Haprice." Because of this pressure, Morrison began to abuse alcohol to "relieve" the stress. Morrison consumes drugs at all times of the day and has been frequenting *The Yellow Poppy* (CB3) for several months. The increased addiction and his decaying mind are taking a toll on the quality of his work; even Ray has noticed the deterioration. Soon, so will his patrons.

Although he works in Up Town and is an invited guest to all the major social events, Morrison Haprice is not a rich man. He has frivolously wasted his money on booze, drugs, extravagant clothes, and gifts for ladies he fancies. In fact, he rarely sleeps in the seedy boarding home that is technically his home; he keeps most of his good clothes in the shop. To pay for his fast-lane lifestyle, he has begun selling the confidentialities told in his shop. Though he hates himself for betraying the trust of the women who adore him, on some nights Morrison finds himself needing a constant supply of alcohol, drugs, or other more exotic vices. On these nights there are those who are ready to provide what Morrison wants — but the price is always high.

**Ray Kreeger.** □ Human male, Ht.: 5' 6", Wt.: 130#, Age: 32.  
□ Fighting Prowess: Average with scissors or broom, Poor otherwise.

Ray Kreeger is a small, pale man with thinning hair and spectacles, who, despite his unimpressive appearance, is also an excellent hair stylist. Because of Haprice's increasingly erratic behavior, Ray opens and closes the shop, supervises the crew, and does most of the actual haircutting. Born of well-to-do parents, it was Ray who suggested to Haprice that they open their own business when Morrison's apprenticeship ended. Though originally more of a silent partner in the business, Ray has moved closer and closer to the spotlight as the years have gone by. Ray tolerated Haprice's eccentric behavior at first because he knew it was good for business and because Morrison was a friend. Lately, however, Ray has seen how the women blindly pushed Morrison into the world of drugs.

While both men are excellent hair dressers, their skills complement each other as well. Morrison's forte is styling and creativity, while Ray's strength is understanding the nature of hair. Ray is a devoted hair maven, and takes pride in his wide knowledge of hair-related subjects. He has often helped the local peace-keeping force, for his ability to identify species' hair is unmatched. From a single strand he is able to tell what sort of being shed the hair, the being's living conditions and often, even its normal diet. The GM may consider Ray to possess this skill at Excellent or even Legendary ability, but only as it pertains to all types of hair.

It should come as no surprise that Ray has an extensive collection of hair samples that he keeps in the shop. The samples are kept in tiny cloth bags in a cabinet with compartmentalized drawers. Each bag is identified by a code. The key to the code is kept in notebooks at Ray's private residence. Most of the samples come from the salon's customers, but a substantial share of the collection comes from animals, monsters and other races.

Due to his honesty and integrity, Ray has grown close to the powerful men who frequent the shop for the simple, conservative haircuts he provides. Because Ray has rewarded the trust of others with silence, he has learned a great deal about the lives of many of the City's leaders.

Ray is frugal with his money, and so far has saved a good deal as a form of security should the business fail. While Ray pities Morrison's haunted existence, he also resents the attention that the flamboyant hair artist receives.

**The Staff.** In addition to Haprice and Kreeger, the staff also includes two apprentice hair stylists and one full time wig maker. One hair stylist job currently remains open (it could be filled by one of the adventurers). Well-liked by the customers, each staff member was chosen for his or her ability and creativity.

## Scenario Suggestions

**Scenario 1: Bar hopping in Nightside.** Morrison regularly slums in the worst section of the City, boozing and drugging himself into a forgetful stupor. But when he fails to return on the morning before a command performance at an important noble's

estate, Ray becomes worried enough to take action. He needs to find his partner quickly, but the seedy section of town frightens him. In desperation Ray hires the adventurers to escort him in hopes of finding Morrison. The adventurers need to crash every gambling dive, every bar, every drug den and house of prostitution in the worst part of the City, find the errant hair dresser, clean and sober him up in time to perform at a noble's estate. Of course, most of these establishments shut down during the daylight hours and resent intrusions by strangers.

Morrison could be sleeping off a drunk, or perhaps have become the prisoner of those who seek to pry secrets from his brain, or sell his handsome body to slavers.

**Scenario 2: Hairy Situations.** Someone has stolen Ray Kreeger's hair collection, but not the code book that tells which sample belongs to whom, or what. If any one of the adventurers has had their hair cut at the Golden Scissors, Ray hires them to protect him and the code book, regain the lost collection, and if possible find out why it was stolen. The scenario definitely involves the adventurers, because the hair collection contains samples from nearly every client. The thief also has hair belonging to one or more of the adventurers.

The thief, a vile wizard who practices dark arts, desires the hair clippings to help him gain power over the wealthiest folk in the City. Should he be able to determine the identities of the hair

clippings, he can use them to further his evil plans.

**Scenario 3: And it Looks so Natural Too!** A peddler sells the salon a number of hair locks at a substantial bargain. Although they normally buy hair from local people, the wig making business always needs supplies, and Morrison sees no reason to refuse a good deal. Over the next few weeks, the hair is made into wigs and sold to customers. Of course, the hair locks were more than a little unusual. They could have been shorn from the heads of undead beings who will come to reclaim their lost locks, perhaps taking the life of the wig-wearer as compensation.

Or perhaps they were sheared from a captive magical being and imbue some strange and possibly socially or personally embarrassing magical effect upon the wearer.

What if the hair was taken from the crypt of some powerful person ... whose spirit decided to tag along and possess the first person to wear the wig for any amount of time.

**Scenario 4: Hair Remover.** The adventurers are approached by a prominent person in the City, someone who would prefer that his (or her) name not be spread about carelessly. This person has discovered that Ray Kreeger has kept a lock of his hair from a recent cut. The person wants it out of Ray's collection, or better yet, substitute a false lock in its place. The adventurers are not to destroy the hair collection or the salon during their efforts.

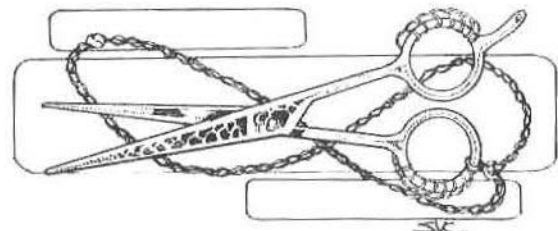
On the first visit, they will discover that the hair samples are all coded. They will need to find the proper code before proceeding. On the second visit, Morrison Haprice will be in the shop, drunk, careless of his safety and willing to aggressively defend the salon to his death (remember, he always carries those golden scissors). Few in Up Town will be pleased to hear that the finest hair stylist in the City has been killed by a band of ruffians. And one can certainly bet that the adventurers' patron will be no where to be found.

Should the adventurers succeed in their mission (and not kill Haprice), then a horrible crime is committed in the City, a society murder. The only evidence linking the perpetrator to the crime is a lock of hair ... which exactly matches the sample the adventurers removed ... some of which they may yet have in their possession. If the adventurers try and track down the murderer (using Ray Kreeger's hair identification skills), they will run afoul of both his hired thugs and the City Guard, who are also making use of Ray's skills.

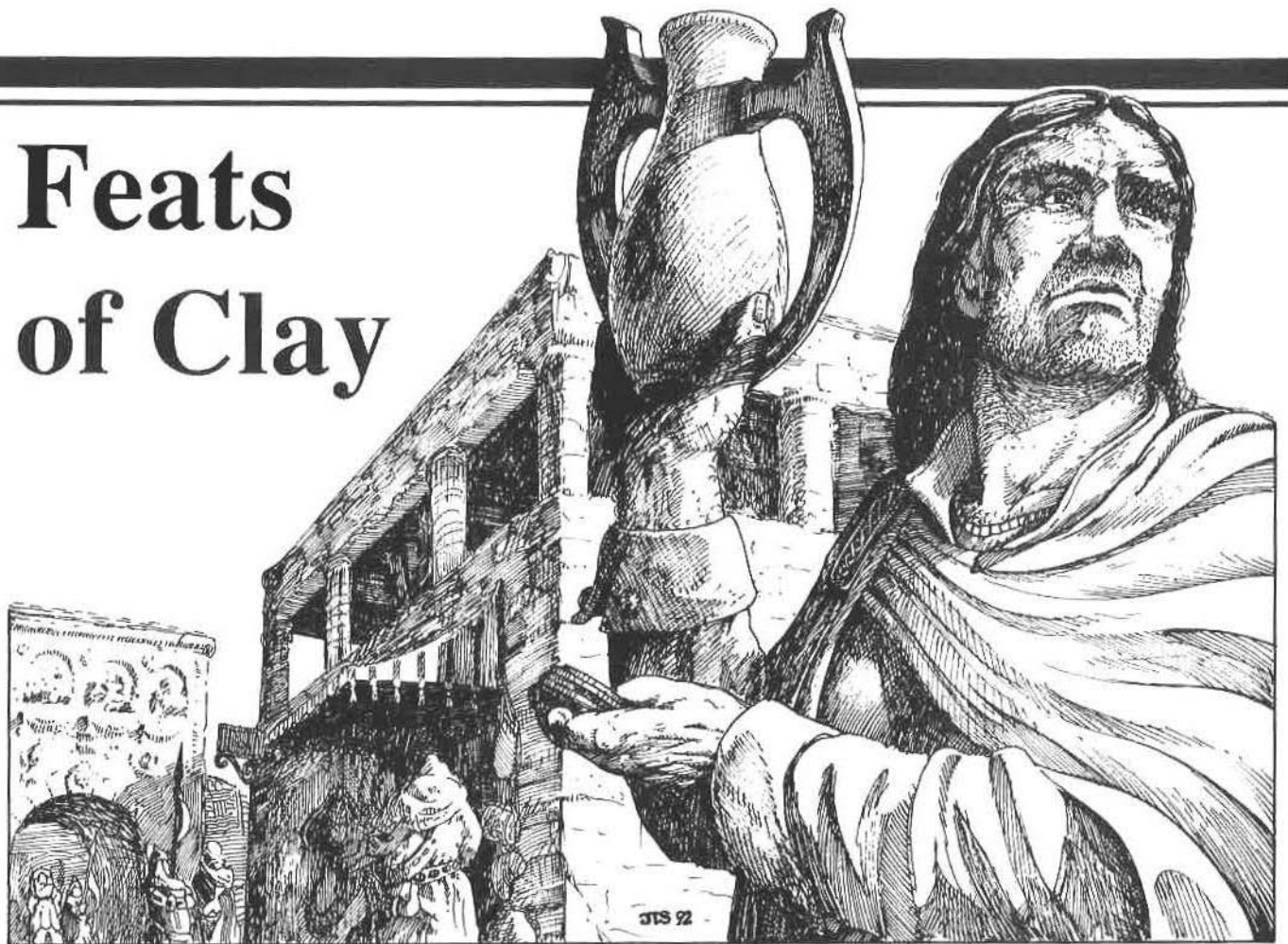
*Where better to overhear hot rumors and juicy gossip (from both men and women) than a hair styling salon? What better place to catch the rich and famous off guard than while they relax in a hair dresser's chair? Where else to complete a disguise kit with a clever hairpiece? All this and a good haircut too!*



—Ray Kreeger—



# Feats of Clay



*Everyone has seen the big man hurling delicate-looking pottery to the stone floor. No one can escape his shouts, "Ten gold pieces to the man who can break my vase!" Again and again he hurls the delicate rose vase onto the stone floor, yet it never breaks, chips, or cracks. The prices may be high, but quality demands it. Containers and vials that will not shatter are blessings at any cost for action seeking adventurers. Well, maybe not exactly blessings.*

In a world without Tupperware® self-sealing plastic containers, ceramics provide a strong, lightweight, easily customized material. They are not as fragile as glass, are not subject to termites, rust, or moths and they can hold most perishables. Clay can also be formed into pipes, inkstands, and incense burners. Depending on the artistry of the potter, the types of clay available, and the minerals available for glazes, ceramics can be cast in any shape or color.

## History

Joseph was a good potter — his practical sense made very useful household goods and his artistry produced eye-pleasing forms. While doing a little browsing in lower class neighbor-

As an editor of CityBook, I see a lot of "vanilla" proposals for establishments from first time contributors. They're adequate, but... Then along comes DON WEBB with ideas that burst with freshness and read like next week's best seller. My only regret is that I couldn't reach all the way to Texas and twist his arm to write more for us. Special thanks to past CityBook contributor, Allen Varney for pointing Don in our direction.

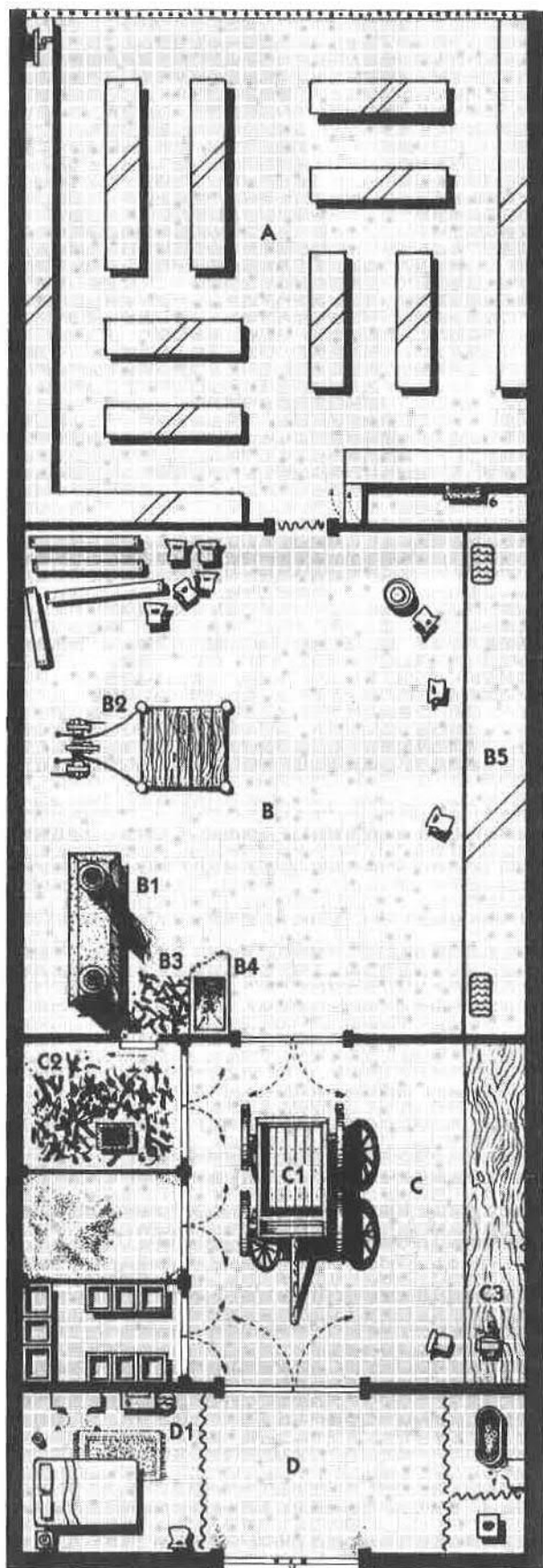
hoods, Lord Westcott, the noted patron of the arts, discovered Joseph's wares, purchased a number of them ... and suddenly Joseph couldn't make enough to satisfy the demands of trendy noble folk.

Using the sudden influx of money, he moved his shop Up Town, purchasing the building of a retired smithy. He built his kiln into the existing forge, began production, and was puzzled. No matter what glaze he painted, the pottery came out yellow, red, and orange—all the "warm" colors. And they were unbreakable. You could pound at an eggshell-thin bud vase with a sledgehammer, and eventually the sledgehammer would begin to chip. Joseph realized that he had a very valuable product indeed. He announced that he had developed a secret process, and began to charge twenty times as much for his wares. Twice a week he charges people who want to come in and make their own pots, potion bottles, etc., which he fires for them.

The problem is he *knows* he has no secret process. This wealth and fame may disappear tomorrow. But, lately business has been very busy, and he has hired an assistant, Leigha, to help him make even more things to sell.

## A Secret Fire

Within the kiln of Joseph the potter is the dungeon of Rissassar, jailer of fire spirits. When the capricious ruler of the fire spirits orders a subject jailed (for a few years for telling the wrong joke at court, or for a few millennia for traitorous thoughts), Rissassar binds him in an unbreakable jail. Before the current



▲ GROUND FLOOR

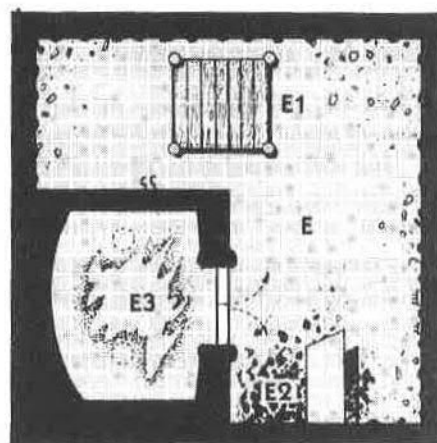
SCALE: one square = 1 foot

tyrant, the few elementals banished to the world of men were encased in rubies of wondrous hue. But rubies are notoriously difficult to fashion, even for fire spirits. With sentences executed left and right, Rissassar makes use of Joseph's pots. The bound intelligences are mostly undetectable, except to Excellent or better magical probes (using C3 or C5 spells). With Rissassar's binding magic the ceramics are unbreakable, unless tapped by Salassar's Key (see below).

## Layout

### Ground Floor

**A. The Shop (30' x 30')** This large well-lit area displays the pricey Feats of Clay goods. The shop is open the same hours as the majority of shops in neighborhood, plus four additional evening hours for the biweekly classes. When the shop is closed, an interlocking ceramic lattice (unbreakable, of course) is lowered from a winch near the ceiling. Four bright saffron ceramic spheres from *Enefene* (CB5) have been magicked to provide a continual light. The shelves display all manner of ceramic goods: incense burners, food canisters, plates, figurines, pipes, (empty)



▲ THE CELLAR

potion bottles, wash basins, seals for signet rings, oil lamps, candle holders. Behind the counter, Leigha or Joseph tends store. A large amount of ready cash is on hand in a large ceramic box (unbreakable of course). In case of trouble, Joseph slams the box shut. The bottom of the box is filled with lead bars, which make the box too heavy for less than three men to carry — it can't be cracked open, and the lock<sup>6</sup> is the best that money can buy.

**B. The Work Room (30' x 30')** is stifling hot and humid. The heat radiates from (B1), the kiln chimney. Stacked along the wall are the folding chairs and benches used in the twice-weekly workshops, held in this room. The dumb waiter (B2) has a built-in rack for carrying trays of objects to be fired or finished objects to be cooled. Near the chimney is a shovel and a pile of charcoal (B3)



— Joseph —

which can be shoveled down the open funnel (B4) where it collects on the floor of the kiln room. Along the opposite wall is a large cabinet (B5) which serves as Joseph's work surface. It has sinks at either end. The cabinet is cluttered with pots of glaze, drying plates, two hand-turned potter's wheels, and other implements of Joseph's trade. Near one sink is Joseph's foot-turned wheel. This room is well lit.

**C. The Storage Room** (30' x 20') is cooler and darker. A single *Enefene* ball illuminates this room of bins. Here charcoal, dry clay powder, and glazes are stored in open 4'-high bins along the walls. A large wagon (C1) sits near the center of the room — it clearly runs back and forth through double-sized wooden doors to Joseph's bedroom, and beyond through the double-sized ceramic door to the outside. The wagon is filled by the clay man during his fortnightly visits and the charcoalier during his semi-weekly deliveries. In the charcoal bin (C2), hidden beneath the charcoal, is a large cash box (identical to the one in the shop). Joseph's mill (C3) is entirely ceramic, and is used to grind ore for glazes. Currently it is half full of an ore bearing uranium, a silvery white metal, which — in any shop but Joseph's — produces a yellow-green glazing agent. Dwarves will recognize the substance as something that ruins a good silver mine; non-dwarves

may mistake it for silver.

**D. Joseph's Bedroom** (30' x 10') is an extremely modest affair for a man making money hand over fist. Along one wall is a table (D1) with mirror, wash basin, and shaving supplies. Nearby are a wardrobe, bed, a freestanding oil lamp, and a tapped keg of rum on a night table. At the far side of the room is a small toilet and bathing area.

### Cellar

**E. The Kiln Room** (20' x 20'). The dumb-waiter (E1) moves things between floors. To enter the kiln room, one must use the dumb-waiter and the hand-powered winch (B2). The charcoal pile (E2) supplies fuel. The kiln (E3) is actually a gateway to the Plane of Fire. The walls hold tongs, poles, bellows, and pokers.

### Personalities

**Joseph.** □ *Human male, Ht.: 6'1", Wt.: 250#, Age: 38.* □ *Fighting Prowess: Average with clubs and blunt instruments, Poor otherwise.* □ *Magic Ability: Average with C6.*

Joseph's raven black hair is becoming gray, his strong muscles are being replaced by fat, and his strong gray eyes are becoming permanently bloodshot. He used to be artistic, inventive, and friendly. Now every time he puts pots in to be fired (every 36 hours) he's afraid that the magic will go away. He desperately needs more help in the shop and yet is equally afraid they'll find out he's a fraud. Joseph has taken to drink in a serious way — he's offended other merchants in the block by being loud and slightly drunk most of the time. He used to love adventurer's tales and strange lore, but now he tends to tell people strangely mixed-together stories. He can be your bosom buddy for hours and then be rude and sullen. He has no heirs nor close friends, and wants to unburden himself about the lack of a "secret process." He'll start to tell you in deepest confidence, but then stops. His magic is mainly manifest in the beauty and ingenuity of his creations, but if he or his shop were under attack, he could whip up a wall of stone or similar protective magic.

**Leigha.** □ *Human female, Ht.: 5'7", Wt.: 115#, Age: 20.* □ *Fighting Prowess: Poor.* □ *Magic Ability: None, but trainable.*

Leigha is a blue-eyed, blonde-haired farmer's daughter, very fetching in a naive way. She is cheerful, overworked, and bored. She is currently living with her aunt, a seamstress, in the Merchant's Quarter. The first really good-looking man who comes along will become the focus of her attentions. Rissassar has fallen in love with her, and has granted her total immunity to fire as a preparation for abducting her to his plane. She is occasionally seen removing *extremely* hot things from the cooling rack with no protection. She thinks she's merely gotten used to it.

**Rissassar.** □ *Salamander Duke, Ht.: From 1" to 7'1", Wt.: As smoke, Age: 2,400 (although he looks 50 years younger).* □ *Fighting Prowess: Good with Cane Sword, Average in others.* □ *Magic Ability: Very Good C1, C8 (fire-related only), otherwise Fair.*

Generally appearing as a tall handsome human with dark red, slightly scaled skin, Rissassar is one of the great romantic poets of his plane. He can materialize within 100' of the kiln, although he has not yet done so. He can overpower one individual and transport him/her to his home plane, or invite any number of willing individuals into the realm of fire for a day's time. He can look through any flame — no matter how small — into the world of men, and he can make any flame burn intensely hot, icily cold, or at any variation in between. He is very jealous of Leigha's attentions, who, like almost all humans (save for a few specialist fire magicians), is unaware of his existence.

**Salassar.** □ *Salamander Count, Ht.: 5'8", Wt.: 150#, Age: 54 (human appearance).* □ *Fighting Prowess: Good with Kris, Fair otherwise.* □ *Magic Ability: Good C7, C8, otherwise Average.*

Salassar, a count of the flame creatures, has traveled to the world of men to free his son from a rose-colored vase, one of Joseph's most popular items. His hair, which is silver, gold, and red, and the pupils of his eyes, which sometimes flash with fire, are the only things which might give him away. He appears to be a prosperous merchant staying at the Gray Minstrel Inn (CB1), although no one can quite say what he sells. His son is imprisoned in a tiny bud vase, and Salassar hopes the vase hasn't left the City.

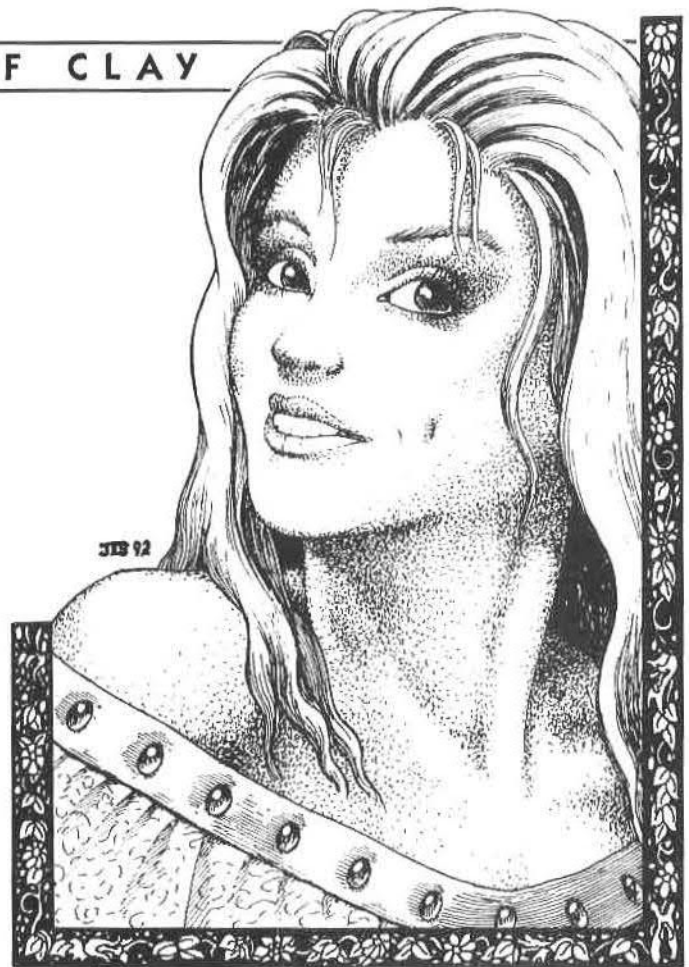
As a human, Salassar travels under the name of Logan Sterling. Salassar (wrongly) believes that his son isn't guilty of the foul murder of which he's accused. Salassar doesn't dare come to Feats of Clay, lest Rissassar smell him out. So he remains outside, approaching strangers and offering to pay them handsomely for any bud vases they buy. He'll tell them that he's trying to ferret out Joseph's "secret process." He takes the vases he can buy to a forlorn valley outside the City and taps them with a small metal bar — this oddly-angled length of unknown metal is called Salassar's Key. The Key releases the trapped fire spirit in a massive fireball, which also serves as its gate back to its home plane. This blast, naturally, leaves Salassar unharmed.

Salassar has no marketable skills in this world, and finances his operations by using magic to cause common pebbles and flowers to appear as gems (he could actually turn some stones into gems, but it requires much more energy). He's also very unfamiliar with the world of men and often mentions long-dead kings and wizards in his conversation as though they were still alive.

## Scenario Suggestions

### Scenario 1: I'm Sorry — Did Your Pipe Say Something?

A party member buys (or receives as a gift) an unbreakable clay pipe. One night, as they engage in the noble art of smoke ring-blowing, letters begin to blow out instead of rings: "HELPIAM-TRAPPEDINTHISPIPE!" A minor court official is doomed to seventy years imprisonment for telling a paladin joke in the royal hall of Bitomassalar, King of Salamanders. The official knows that somewhere in the world of men, Count Salassar is on his son-freeing quest. If this jester, Mercerasar, needs to lie and promise wealth to spur the party to action, he will lie. Anything is better than 70 years of spit! He has no special powers other than the ability to communicate through smoke, and to sense the presence



— Leigha —

of other fire spirits within 100'.

**Scenario 2: Gone in a Flash.** Leigha begins a relationship — just a couple of dates — with a party member. Then one day a gout of flame comes from the floor, envelopes her, and she vanishes. The now loveless character must seek out his lady. If the party doesn't pursue romantic quests, have Rissassar kidnap his rival instead. Alternately, the rival could be a young nobleman, perhaps even Lord Westcott's favorite nephew.

**Scenario 3: Free at Last! Thank the Great Flame, I'm Free at Last!** Some ceramic object that the party has purchased from Feats of Clay (or stolen from some noble, or found on an adventure) contains a prisoner whose sentence ends in their presence. While Mishaaha may be thankful to be free, her attitude towards the adventurers depends on how they treated her prison. Pounding with a steel hammer may not break the prison, but it certainly annoys the prisoner. On the other hand, being used as a baking dish isn't such an awful fate. Mishaaha won't fight to the death, but may divert some of her departure energy against the adventurers for good or ill.

*Feats of Clay will provide adventurers with the safest possible place for their precious potions, waters, and fluid "samples" — an unbreakable container. Even mundane items will survive the worst abuses and the farthest falls better than the adventurer who accompanied them. Nothing natural can destroy these vessels — and nothing can keep the earthen prisons from their eventual violent end.*

# Hides Alive



*Looking for that special gift to pave your way into the heart of some one special? What you need is something that will live on, to serve as a faithful reminder each and every day. What about a nightingale, trained to medley lilting songs? Or perhaps it's not the gentler emotions that drive you, and a wolfhound trained to the hunt is what you seek. On the other hand it could be the status of having the seemingly untamable power of the clouded leopard at your beck-and-call that brings you to Hides Alive. Regardless of the requirement, if trained animals are what you seek, you've come to the right place.*

As you enter Hides Alive, a bewildering array of sights and sounds assault your senses. All about you in cages, tethered, or even flying free, is a swirling galaxy of brightly colored feathered bodies — each one chirping, calling, warbling, or talking.

Out of the kaleidoscopic chaos steps a tall thin man. Despite his pleasant smile and warm greeting, his long sharp nose combined with equally thin features makes the smile seem less warm and even predatory. Corwin de Nase, eldest son of Lupo de Nase, founder of Hides Alive, manages the business and on most occasions is the first to greet the customer. Corwin fervently hopes that each customer has come for one of the many birds

which he features in the main “gallery” but he will understand if desires lead one to his more powerful, if less lovely charges.

## History

Hides Alive was founded by Corwin's father and mother, Lupo and Barengaria de Nase. In their youth, they were animal trainers for Gnambulon's Traveling Circus and Menagerie. As time went by, Gnambulon drank up most of the profits; the show folded, and the de Nase couple inherited the menagerie portion of the show.

By itself the animal show never drew enough of a crowd to pay its way, let alone support the young couple. It was with much sadness that Lupo decided to sell off the animals.

His fear was that there would be little call for trained leopards, tigers, bears, hawks, and owls. He reckoned not with the caprice of the monied few. He set up his first “shop,” an animal training facility, in an open compound near Up Town. The idea of having one of these “domesticated” predators as a pet became something of a status symbol among the rich, and before long Lupo, and his wife, and their new-born son Corwin were on the road to unexpected success. With the passage of time the business and Lupo's family grew. He used the profits to construct an impressive retail compound in Up Town proper. At the same time he had a house and training/holding complex built for his family on the outskirts of the City.

As their family grew, Lupo and Barengaria taught each son in turn the techniques of animal mastery and training that they

BEAR PETERS (don't call him James, he says, that's his father's name) is a CityBook perennial. For nearly every book we've put out, he's been there with a contribution. Look for his story, “Where There's a Wizard, There's a Way” in *Mage's Blood & Old Bones*, from *Flying Buffalo*, a rollicking anthology of fiction set in the *Tunnels & Trolls™* universe.

had perfected. Each boy found different parts of the training more to his liking. As a result, no son is the equal of the father, but together they exceed him in abilities and techniques.

Corwin, the eldest, gradually took over management of the company. The boy's mother taught him reading, bookkeeping, social graces, and the patience that would be necessary for dealing with the family's Up Town clientele.

The second son, Wulf was the clear choice to take control of acquisitions and expeditions, aiding Lupo in the capture of the various exotica required. Obtaining some animals not only required safaris of many weeks or months, but also skill greater than the average game hunter as well. Wulf developed both a hunter's instincts and a taste for travel.

The third son, Felix, became the trainer. While all the boys train various creatures better than almost any other living person, Felix's skills and patience left his brothers behind.

In time, Barengaria passed away. With her death, Lupo began to waste away. His interest waned first in the business, then in life in general. A brief lapse of attention while unloading a Pampas dire wolf ended the old master's life. As a result, Hides Alive will neither buy nor sell the otherwise popular dire wolf.

## A Visit to Hides Alive

Corwin de Nase offers to show each customer around the compound. His manner is both ingratiating and gently probing. If one has a specific animal in mind, the tour will be short — ending at the holding area reserved for that creature. If the creature one seeks is not in stock, he will show others of its type, then lead the customer back to his office where arrangements will be made to obtain whatever is sought.

Not everyone has a specific creature in mind when they shop at Hides Alive. Corwin will attempt to match an animal to the buyer's personality and financial means, discreetly of course. Unlike the buyer who has a particular creature in mind, the browser may end up with an animal much more suited to her. Finding an animal that suits the temperament, and fiscal ability of a customer is one of the secrets of Hides Alive's success.

For example, hunters are asked what game they seek and what species of "partner" they prefer. The individual temperament is now even more important than in the ownership of a "pet" — depending on the type of prey, the lives of both man and animal may depend upon the results of Corwin's ability to match them.

If one's needs run to exotic "guard" creatures, specific details are routed through Corwin's office, where type and quantity of animals required will be determined; followed perhaps by a trip to the pen of one's future protector to assess its suitability.

Price is seldom the first topic of conversation when dealing with Corwin. It is understood that most of these animals are difficult to obtain, often requiring journeys of some duration. Also understood is the fact that most are difficult to train, not just to a specific handler, but so that mastery is transferable.

Some of the smaller birds and such are inexpensive, but the larger, more sophisticated creatures often command dazzling prices. To some customers, that is the allure. The status of having "perhaps the most expensive, and difficult to obtain animal Hides

Alive has ever sold" has set more than one social climber's feet on the golden path.

## Hours of Operation

Hides Alive is only open four days of the week, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. Corwin will not let a purchase be concluded by one of his assistants, and with the brothers training and traveling schedules being as full as they are, the three "off" days are essential to the training regimens.

## Layout

**A. The Gallery (24' x 18')** This room is the main entrance to Hides Alive. Corwin likes to call it the Gallery because he feels that some of the most beautiful of the creatures they sell are found here. Works of art, really. In this room are the most easily handled, if not the most easily obtained of Hides' exotic creatures.

**A1. The Front Door.** Locked<sup>s</sup> when the shop is closed, these great oaken panels are carved with high-relief likenesses of great cats, dogs, predatory birds and apes. Inlays of ivory, multi-colored woods, and semi-precious stones highlight details of eyes, teeth, beaks, plumage and coloration. Upon seeing the doors for the first time, Lord Westcott commissioned a similar pair for his hunting lodge in the mountains.

**A2. Hanging Cage.** In the window at this point is a cage of cockatiels (Cost 20-60 gold pieces. (g.p.))

**A3. Wall Cage.** The last cage on this wall holds an hawk-headed parrot, not as bright as some of the others, but trained to a variety of tricks. (Cost 400-600 g.p.)

**A4. Window Cage.** The other window features a brilliant blue hyacinth macaw perched atop a stand. A more beautiful bird would be difficult to obtain. (Cost 3,700-6,500 g.p.)

**A5. Gilded Cage.** On the counter is perhaps the dullest looking creature in the room. It is the truly exotic gold-capped mynah. These birds are trainable to a vocabulary of over 50 words, or complex word groups. This one generally greets those entering the shop with a cheerful, "Good Day, You Arresting Creature!" (Cost 500-600 g.p.)

**A6. Perch.** Off in this corner is the largest of all the animals in the room. On a perch, with an eye on all the shop's comings and goings, is the rare and truly exotic, Antipodean sheep-eating parrot. This bird is not for sale. Corwin has trained it to attack on a given hand signal. The attack would not in all likelihood be lethal, but the distraction and potential injuries inflicted would give anyone operating the shop a fighting chance in the event of a robbery. The average customer would never suspect any of this. To all outward appearances, the parrot just sits there on his perch preening, but at 36 inches in height he is one of the largest parrots in existence. (While this one is not for sale, Hides Alive will contract to obtain one like it for 13,000-15,000 g.p.)

Other cages in the room contain songbirds, smaller parrots and other smaller avians.

**B. West Corridor (6' x 36')** The hall is lined with cages and an alcove at the north end. A pair of heavy wooden doors form the south end. The doors separate the animals beyond this point from the cats, who would become quite uncomfortable with the scent of what lies beyond.

**B1. West Alcove (12' x 12')** Three cages sit along the walls.

**B2. Jaguarundi.** Barely larger than a common house cat, this rare gray jungle exotic is an adept killer of small animals, amphibians and birds. Its graceful elongated shape and shimmering gray coat make it hauntingly attractive. (Cost 200-300 g.p.) The other cages contain more mundane felines.

**B3. Coastal Forest Wildcat.** Spotted and sleepy.

**B4. Tortoiseshell Tom.** Rare, sleepy and multi-colored.

**B5. Southwest Corridor (6' x 12').**

**D. Clouded Leopard Cage (12' x 6')** Herein lies (or paces) the rare clouded leopard. Not as large as the tiger, perhaps, but legend has it that this white and grey spotted feline is untamable. This may be true, but the de Nase brothers have "trained" if not tamed it. (Cost 1,750-2,525 g.p.)

**E. Red Desert Lioness (12' x 12')** Ruddy-coated, lanky great cat with sabre-like fangs.

**F. Tyger Cage (12' x 6')** This cage contains the supposedly mythical Tyger. The beast looks like its more common namesake the tiger, with striped, heavily muscled fore quarters and slim, powerful hind quarters. The Tyger differs in three main respects. Its legs end in scaled bird-like talons; its "fur" is actually long, tiny feathers; and instead of a fanged muzzle, it has the sharp, tearing beak of a giant bird of prey. As one might imagine the price of this creature is truly fantastic. (Cost 25,000-50,000 g.p.)

**G. Wyvern Cage (12' x 6')** Not having any other more likely place to put this creature, they have mewed a Wyvern here. Seldom seen, and almost as "mythical" as the Tyger, the wyvern is believed to be related to dragons and supposed to be fire-breathing. The wyvern is a large, iridescent, green-winged flying lizard. It has only the most rudimentary brain functions. Coupling this with flight and heavily clawed legs, it is punishingly hard to train. (Cost 16,250-17,500 g.p.)

**H. East Corridor (6' x 30')** This area is nearly identical in every way with the west Corridor (B), except for its occupants.

**H1. East Alcove/Monkey Cages (12' x 12')** Cages H2-H6 contain various monkeys and small primates from around the known world.

**I. Baboon Cage (12' x 9')** In here one finds a small troupe of polychromatic baboons. Their brilliant coloration, combined with the formidable fangs of the males, make these creatures a wonderful addition to any garden of exotics. They also make excellent security, what with their pack hunting skills. (Available in numbers up to 20, not all are here of course. Adult male 1,500 g.p. Adult female 750 g.p. Adolescent 500 g.p. Juvenile 300 g.p.)

**J. Wolfhound Cage (12' x 9')** There is no canine, nor part of the fossil record, that can match the size and hunting power of the

animal in this cage. The Island Wolfhound stands almost 50 inches at the shoulder. (Cost 1,250-2,000 g.p.)

**K. Bear Cages (12' x 9')** These cages contain trained bears.

**L. Dog Cages (12' x 9')** These cages generally contain trained dogs, representing a variety of breeds. Some are guard dogs, some simply well-behaved pets and companions. Hides Alive supplies the City guard with watch dogs at cost, plus a little quid pro quo.

**M. The Raptor Mews (15' x 12')** If Corwin has his way when one leaves the Gallery, it will be to this chamber. This is the Hides Alive mews, famous throughout the City. Herein are the pride of Corwin's life — his hawks, falcons and other birds of prey.

**M1. Golden Eagle.** Masked and perched, here sits that rarest of all hunting birds. This bird will not be sold to just anyone. Money is not germane to the issue, only a handful of true falconers can cast an eagle, and Corwin will let her go to no lesser man. (Cost 12,500-15,000 g.p.)

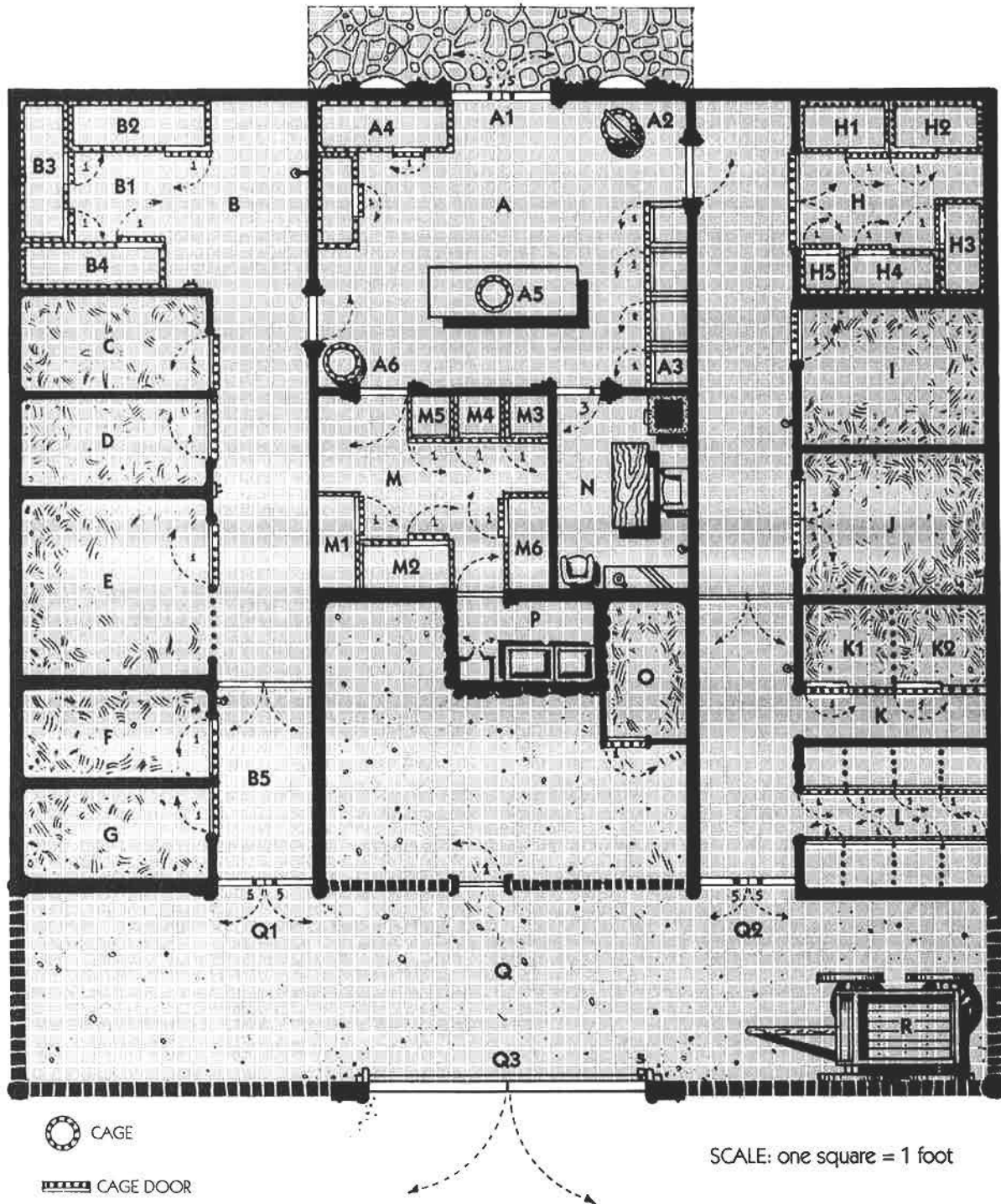
**M2. Laughing Falcon.** The denizen of this enclosure seems to belong back in the Gallery. Black with bright yellow bands, head and striping, it is by far the brightest of all the raptors. It is small, perhaps smaller than the kestrel. This falcon comes from an island so far from the City, that months of travel are required to reach it. The price is high but its bright beauty coupled with its jungle bred agility make this one of the very few raptors that can be cast indoors! (Cost 3,000-3,500 g.p.)

**M3. Great Horned Owl.** Few masters of the falconers' art can effectively train owls to hunt with a man. Corwin is one of these few. The advantages of a night hunter, an animal that can fly in the narrow confines of the forest in low light, are obvious. As a hunting companion, an owl is second to none in caverns, old abandoned keeps, and such like places. It's the training, not the availability that makes this bird costly. (Cost 1,750-2,000 g.p.)

**N. Corwin's Office (9' x 12')** The locked<sup>3</sup> southeast door out of the Gallery is the entrance to Corwin's office. Somewhat cramped, with a large lock box<sup>4</sup> (N1), desk (drawers locked<sup>2</sup>) and a wall rack for scrolls of transactions, and invoices. Each brother has keys to all three locks. The comfortable chairs are for clients and Corwin. If more than one client is present, Corwin will conduct business in the Gallery, or at a nearby alehouse, turning the operation of the shop over to one of his brothers or the assistants.

**O. Ostrich Pen (24' x 36')** Out back of Hides Alive is a large pen for the maintenance of Ostriches. These large, obnoxious but exotic creatures can be trained to perform a variety of tasks, including pulling a cart, and guard duty. In the case of guard Ostriches, the beak and taloned, heavily muscled legs, serve as excellent deterrents to trespassers. (Cost 1,000 g.p. per bird.)

**P. Stone Shed (9' x 6')** Within area O is a stone shed, used to store food for the animals. A magical spell cools it, permitting prolonged storage of butchered meat, a commodity in great demand by the denizens and merchandise of Hides Alive. A small granary keeps the grain and nuts for the more colorful and less carnivorous occupants. The stone shed is reached through the raptor mews (M).



**Q. Back Yard** (60' x 12') Surrounded by a 10' high stone wall topped with iron spikes, this is an open area behind the shop where animals are first brought to the premises and later exercised by the staff. The doors into the building at Q1 and Q2 are locked<sup>5</sup>. The gate to the alley at Q3 is barred, and the bar secured with a lock<sup>5</sup>.

**R. Multipurpose Caged Cart.** It is used to transport some of the less cooperative, or more delicate animals. Horses (kept at the family estate outside the City) pull the cart.

## Personalities

**Corwin de Nase.** □ Human male, Ht.: 6'3", Wt.: 195#, Age: 35. □ *Fighting Prowess: Fair with daggers, poor with all other. (Special note: Excellent with any of the animals in Hides Alive. These attack values vary based on animal and circumstance.)*

Corwin is dark, thin and imposing. On his narrow face, the distinctive de Nase nose seems severe and blade-like, yet a few moments with him either socially or at the business and one finds him warm, friendly, outgoing and sincere. It is upon Corwin's

personality that Hides Alive success is pinned. He is genuinely happy to place the animals in what he regards as "good situations".

There is very little to Corwin that does not meet the eye. He is a good businessman and to those who are worthy, a friend. The only aspect of his personality unseen is his shrewd investment ability. He has taken Hides' profits and multiplied them through wise investment in the City's business community. He also uses his contacts in the City government to spot likely investment opportunities.

Corwin's specialty is the training of hawks, falcons, owls, eagles, and the other hunting birds. He is second to none. His patience and even temper are an invaluable asset to harnessing the raptors' skills, teaching words to the mynahs and parrots, or teaching tunes to the nightingale.

**Wulf de Nase.** □ *Human male, Ht.: 6'2", Wt.: 210, Age: 33.*  
 □ *Fighting Prowess: Very Good with whip, net, rope and any other containment devices. Excellent with a bola. Fair with daggers. Average with most other weapons.* □ *Magic Ability: Excellent with C5 in very rare cases. Like his mother he can sense when a higher order animal is about to attack. (As noted with his brothers he is lethal with any of the Hides Alive predators. In Wulf's case this goes even further.)*



— Wulf de Nase —

Wulf is strikingly handsome, the de Nase nose gives him a Roman "beauty" that others find remarkable. He is dark, and his eyes burn with an intensity not seen in either of his siblings. He is the hunter and traveler, and obtains most of the animals for Hides Alive's stock. He seldom visits the shop, or for that matter even the City. When he is around, he is most often found in the kennels out at the country estate, or "entertaining" prospective clients.

The second son's trapping and training techniques do not set well with Felix. It is he who often cares for the injuries that result. Yet the animals Wulf trains are among the most effective guard creatures they sell, so Corwin is reluctant to step in. When Corwin is not around Wulf treats Felix like a servant, and when Corwin is present, with barely concealed contempt. For tranquility's sake Corwin keeps the two as far apart as possible.

No one knows that Wulf has a much larger plan for his life than the mere wealth he can achieve training and trapping animals. He aspires to a position of power in the City. Working alone, he has trained a number of the creatures to respond to a hand gesture. The animals he has trained are invariably large predators — mostly dogs, but a few bears, and big cats as well. The gesture is different for each creature and it can be given by any who know it.

These well placed "time bombs" have been taught to kill their owners on command. Wulf has effectively set up a network of assassins in the households of the rich and powerful. He can sell death and destruction for favors, power and fabulous amounts of money. To date, he has been biding his time.



— Corwin de Nase —



— Felix de Nase —

**Felix de Nase.** □ *Human male, Ht.: 5'9", Wt.: 175#, Age: 30.*  
 □ *Fighting Prowess: Good at hand-to-hand, with ropes, nets, and such containment devices. Otherwise poor. (Note, as with Corwin above, he is lethal with animals trained by Hides Alive, particularly the larger predators.)* □ *Magic Ability: Excellent with (C5) Communication Magic, but it only works on "animal intelligence" creatures. Anything significantly smarter than a smart dog or less intelligent creatures that are "instincts only" will not be affected. Birds, reptiles, fish and invertebrates are included in the "instincts" category. If it is smart enough to learn simple commands but not smart enough to analyze its situation, it can be affected by Felix's ability.*

Felix is also dark, but shorter and stockier. He would be handsome if not for a pair of deep scars that run diagonally across his face from the center of his forehead to the lower left jaw line. He obtained these training the wyvern. It was able to surprise him because his magic ability could not pierce its lower level mind.

Felix's magic skill grew in him as a boy, and was guided by his mother. She had felt stirrings of a power like this in herself, but only when an animal was about to make an attack. This was of great value in her early animal acts. In Felix, this ability progressed even further — he can sense the animal's thoughts across the full spectrum of its mental functioning. This requires concentration, and Felix seldom works with more than one animal at a time.

The close link between the youngest of the brothers and their mother had two tragic side effects. When she died, the already shy and introverted Felix became even less communicative. He will

seldom work in the store, only doing so if Corwin, who he respects and admires and perhaps even loves, pointedly asks him. Whatever emotion prompts it, he is unswervingly loyal to Corwin, and will do anything to protect him.

Far more damaging is the hatred of Wulf. Wulf believes that in some way Felix "bewitched" their mother, and stole her love away from him. In fact it was Wulf's increasingly brutal nature that was his own undoing.

Felix spends most of his time with the animals, shaping their thoughts and training them. If he is at the shop, it will usually be in the back, overseeing some new addition, or updating the training of some more recalcitrant animal.

**Assistant Animal Handlers.** They are average men and women, mostly young and fairly nondescript. They are hired to be pleasant to customers when none of the brothers are available. The less socially gifted clean out empty cages, and see to the feeding of the animals that don't require special attention, or diets. In general they are "entry level" young people who soon move on to better jobs. They have no particular loyalty to the de Nase brothers, and so will tell them if something is amiss, but will not risk their necks to protect the establishment from intruders or loose stock. At any given time there will be one or two around Hides Alive.

### Scenario Suggestions

**1. "Hot Dog."** The wolfhound in cage J isn't really a dog. He is, in fact, the youngest son of one of Up Town's most influential families. He is either bewitched, or a hereditary lycanthrope, but in either case, for social reasons he can't just turn human, nor can the family reveal his identity and reclaim him. As a result the player characters have been hired to "liberate" him as stealthfully as possible.

**2. Tyger, Tyger, Churning Fright.** A large dangerous creature, worth tens of thousands of gold pieces has escaped, due to the ineptitude of one of Hides Alive's assistant animal keepers. Now they need help scouring the general area and catching it. Again remember the object is to take it alive.

**3. The Keeper's Brother.** Felix has found out that Wulf is up to something and Corwin can't accept the truth and believe him. Felix hires the adventurers to spy on Wulf and obtain tangible proof that some kind of evil plot is afoot. (Demonstrating the "kill" signal would be excellent if the party can repeat it with an animal that has been likewise programmed. A Game Master can decide which of the available animals may be so programmed.)

*In the dangerous world of adventuring, a man or woman's best friend may be also be his ONLY friend. When one is tired of cheating, lying, and back stabbing party members, it's nice to know that the time and money spent at the de Nase establishment has blessed you with the perfectly matched confidant and protector. Always a wise investment — unless, of course, one buys an animal specially trained by Wulf de Nase.*

# The Cask & Bottle



*In societies where the quality of water and animal milks are often questionable, wines and other fermented drinks provide relatively safe beverages. Yet for many, wine goes beyond mere beverage status, approaching the level of art. And in the City, the showrooms of the Cask & Bottle are art galleries; and its cellars ... treasure vaults.*

The City boasts a large number of wine merchants, but none with the selection (or quality) of Tor'nar of Oenath. The shop of Tor'nar sits next to the river and consists of two street-side buildings joined to a warehouse as well as part of one side of the adjacent shop-lined bridge.

Tor'nar's shop, or shops really — since he services three different classes of City society with three different store fronts — boasts the greatest cellar for size and variety of any to be found for over 500 leagues. Once you enter his chilly shops (never warmer than 50° F), you enter the tasteful world of wine.

## The Wine Bridge

This is the smallest of the three shops, though one of the busiest in the City. The Wine Bridge sells inexpensive wines. Here, Tor'nar offers a wide variety of table wines. Nothing outstanding, just good, serviceable wine for everyday consumption. These are wines that few connoisseurs would deign to allow near their lips, let alone sully their palates. Yet, an adventurer seeking merely to restock a travel keg would find this shop an excellent choice.

Prices are very competitive and his profit is more in volume than mark-up. Here he also off-loads the occasional premier vintage purchased from abroad which — for reasons such as poor aging or vintrning — does not measure up to its initial promise, and so is not fit for the customers of his other two shops.

Located on the end of Bridge street which enters the upper class section of the City, this is as close as many of Tor'nar's customers get to real wealth.

J.D. KIRKLAND-REVELS was another one of those authors whom the editor felt could be prevailed upon to provide "just one more establishment" at the last minute. With the number of characters in these CityBooks who suffer an undue attraction to alcohol, that establishment, of course, had to be a wine merchant.

## The Cask & Bottle

"The Cask and Bottle" services the gentry, those to whom wines are typically more than a passage to forgetfulness and oblivion, but not necessarily an art form. Affordable elegance is the byword of this emporium. Well-off (but not rich) wine connoisseurs come to procure something to impress their friends and amuse their own palates.

This is the original shop established by Tor'nar's ancestor, Maap'nar, and it's still the collective name by which most in the City know the shops.

The selection is vast, though many of the vintages can be obtained by going through the inventory of different shops in other quarters of the City. Often, those same shop owners will have purchased some of their goods from Tor'nar themselves. Tor'nar sells the wines offered in "The Cask and Bottle" to other dealers on one condition: that they are not located within short walking distance of his own shops. As his shop is somewhat centrally located, this means that Tor'nar only deals with a dozen or so competitors situated on the periphery of the City. Naturally, he does not sell off his best vintages to the other wine merchants.

## Vin d'nar

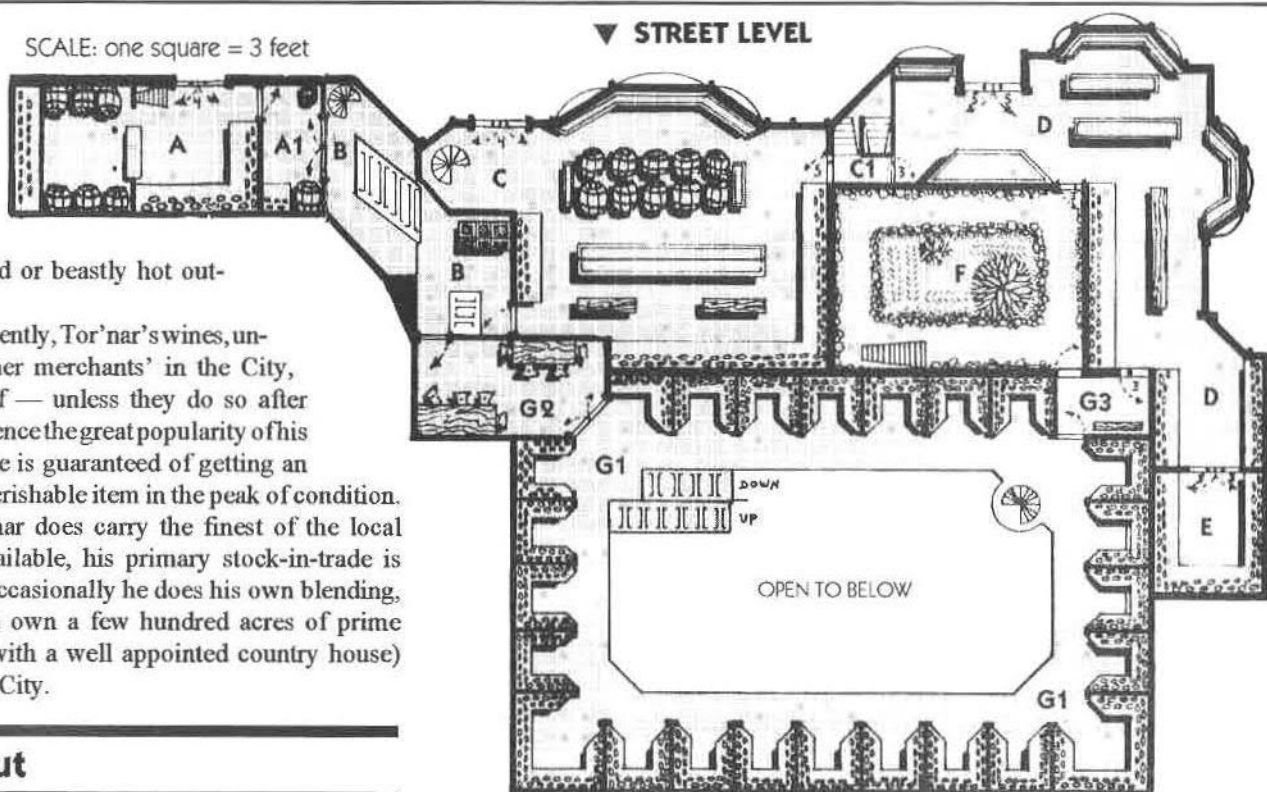
"Vin d'nar" is a name to set even the most cultured palate a-tingle. This is Tor'nar's pride and joy. From this exclusive boutique, he vends the finest vintages in the realm (at exorbitant prices) to his wealthiest customers. Note, however, that since most of his vintages are brought in from abroad (making them unique in the City), he can command any price he chooses.

## The Secret of Success

There is a secret to Tor'nar's success. At the founding of the family establishment some 200 years ago, Maap'nar of Oenath secured an enchantment (as part of a wish granted him by a grateful djinn) — extending over the entire set of buildings — which insured the most favorable conditions for the storing and aging of fine wines within his establishment, regardless of outside weather conditions. In short, the buildings remain at a constant perfect temperature without any assistance, whether it is

SCALE: one square = 3 feet

▼ STREET LEVEL



freezing cold or beastly hot outside.

Consequently, Tor'nar's wines, unlike any other merchants' in the City, never go off — unless they do so after purchase. Hence the great popularity of this shops — one is guaranteed of getting an otherwise perishable item in the peak of condition. While Tor'nar does carry the finest of the local varietals available, his primary stock-in-trade is imported. Occasionally he does his own blending, and he does own a few hundred acres of prime vineyards (with a well appointed country house) south of the City.

## Layout

### Street Level

**A. The Wine Bridge Sales Room** (40' x 20') Two large, locked<sup>4</sup>, iron-bound oak doors mark the entrance into Tor'nar's lower class establishment. Here Tor'nar displays a variety of inexpensive wines (mixed and often watered vintages) in casks and ceramic jugs for the undiscerning public. A set of stone niches covers one wall and spills onto the next.

**A1. Import Room** (10' x 20') Entered through an arched opening, this room holds the overflow from the main room. Here one will find an array of imported table wines, at a slightly higher price than the local vintages.

**B. Arch Room** (15' x 30', irregular) This steeply sloping-floored chamber serves as a storage area for the Wine Bridge shop. The room is odd because it is formed in part by the rising arch of the bridge, and it passes through three levels: the bridge level, the arch and the street. There are storage platforms along the inclined ramp (it roughly follows the arch's contours), as well as at the top and bottom of the room. A circular stairway at the north end ascends to the working stockroom (I). A ramp leads down to the Ramp Room (U) on the Cellar level.

**C. Cask & Bottle Sales Room** (65' x 45', irregular) Outside the shop stands a large bronze statue of a portly man holding a bunch of grapes in his left hand and raising a glass of wine in the right. The shop is entered through a set of large, locked<sup>4</sup>, brass-bound (always polished), oak double-doors. The doors are inlaid with dark woods used to depict a great cask on one, and a bottle on the other. A large bay window is used to display new arrivals.

Inside, stone niches, three high, cover the walls; and a double-sided display case occupies much of the back half of the room. A rack of small and medium-sized casks fills much of the front; for those customers planning a large gathering. A pair of long, high

tables in the back are used for tasting. A circular stair ascends to the balcony display area (J).

Tor'nar leaves the keeping of the shop in the hands of Pietre, who is usually around during the busiest times (late afternoon to early evening).

The east door is locked<sup>5</sup> and leads into the entrance (C1) of Tor'nar's apartments (L2-3). A door in the back corner leads into a storage area (B) which must be passed through to reach the tasting room (G2).

**C1. Stairwell to Apartments** (10' x 20', irregular) This is an entrance to Tor'nar's private apartments above.

**D. Vin d'nar Showroom** (60' x 70', irregular "L" shape) Entrance is through a large set of recessed, locked<sup>5</sup> oak double-doors, each inset with a series of intricate carved wooden panels showing the wine-making process. Windows on either side of the front doors display bottles, as do two large bay windows on the north and east walls. Stone niches cover most of the wall space and contain a wide variety of fine local and imported vintages.

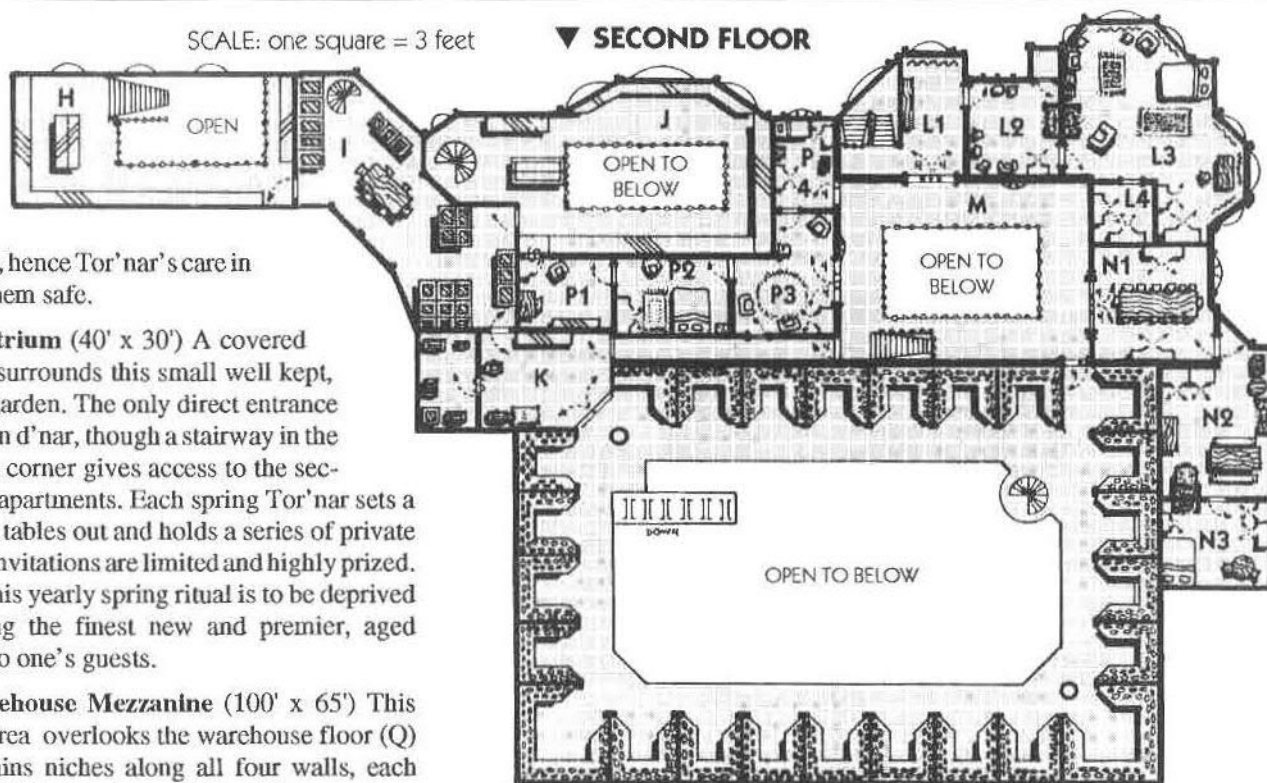
The room has four other exits: three other single doors, constructed of plain, solid oak, and a pair of similarly constructed doors in the south wall. All are locked<sup>3</sup>.

Two long display cases sit towards the front of the building and a long, stand-up, tasting table for sampling Tor'nar's wares runs north to south. He is very generous with his customers as far as tasting goes (at least in this shop), since he knows that eventually, his patrons will buy almost exclusively from him.

**E. Vin d'nar Imports** (20' x 20') A locked<sup>3</sup>, solid oak double-door secures this area. The walls are covered on three sides with niches (about 10 per level, three high). Each niche contains a different vintage. These are among the most expensive to be found

SCALE: one square = 3 feet

## ▼ SECOND FLOOR



in the City, hence Tor'nar's care in keeping them safe.

**F. The Atrium** (40' x 30') A covered walkway surrounds this small well kept, open-air garden. The only direct entrance is from Vin d'nar, though a stairway in the southwest corner gives access to the second floor apartments. Each spring Tor'nar sets a few small tables out and holds a series of private tastings. Invitations are limited and highly prized. To miss this yearly spring ritual is to be deprived of offering the finest new and premier, aged vintages to one's guests.

**G1. Warehouse Mezzanine** (100' x 65') This balcony area overlooks the warehouse floor (Q) and contains niches along all four walls, each holding a different vintage. The niches rise three high. For a price, Tor'nar will reserve a niche or two on the upper level for his best customers; should they wish to keep a personal selection of fine wines in the best of conditions. Two stairs (one circular) connect all three warehouse levels (G1, O & Q). The mezzanine can be reached from both tasting rooms (G2 & G3), the warehouse floor (Q), and the upper balcony (O).

**G2. Tasting Room** (30' x 15') Kept for the customers of the Cask & Bottle, Pietre caters to middle-class patrons who consider themselves of sufficiently knowledgeable and discerning palate to judge good wine. As ever, this is merely another way of inducing the buyer to part with yet a few more coins.

**G3. Private Tasting Room** (15' x 10') Entered from either Vin d'nar or the mezzanine level of the warehouse, this area is reserved for long-established, well-liked customers of Vin d'nar. The usual result of a visit here, however, is to part with a large sum of coins in order to purchase several bottles of some exquisite wine sampled at the behest of the proprietor. It is true, however, that Tor'nar has, on occasion, brought enemies here under the pretext of sampling a fine wine, only to remove them from this life (usually with poison) and dispose of the body in the river.

## Second Floor

The use of the second floor is divided between sales space for the shops, storage of wares and family apartments. The area devoted to the latter has grown and shrunk with the number of family members in residence. Tor'nar is now the head of the only line of Maap'nar left in the City, and, as he only has one child, a few areas of residence have been rearranged to better accommodate the shops. Consequently, the apartments are smaller now than they have ever been.

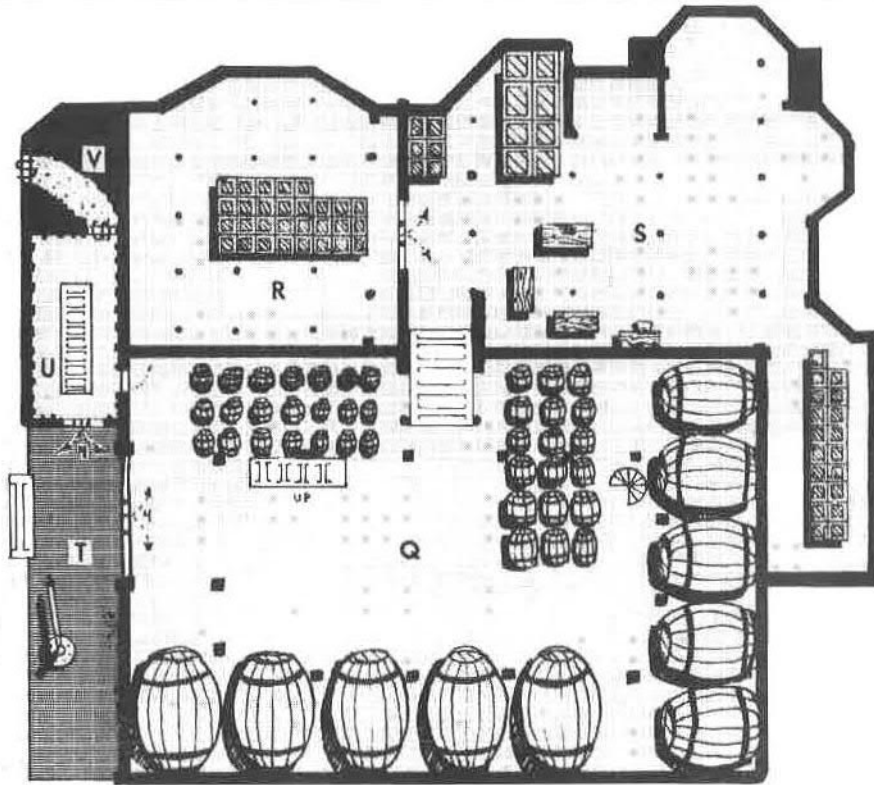
**H. Wine Bridge, second floor** (35' x 20') This area contains an assortment of more expensive (relatively speaking) local and imported wines. Many patrons never venture up the stairs, and so are deprived of the best "cheap" wine in the City. Originally, like its counterpart in "The Wine Bridge", this area did not have an opening to the room below and was used as quarters for the family servants.

**I. Working Stockroom** (35' x 40', irregular) This room contains a large number of wine bottle crates. There is also a long table with chairs where the staff can take their daytime meals. This room allows them to monitor both "The Wine Bridge" and "The Cask & Bottle" at the same time. Usually two of Tor'nar's employees may be found here, if not attending to customers in either of the two shops, during business hours. Pietre is their direct overseer and is likely to be here if not handling the warehouse inventory.

**J. Cask & Bottle Balcony Display** (55' x 27') The higher priced wines are kept up here. Almost all are imports. Displays are arranged on shallow racks along the walls and on one two-sided case. A door leads into the working stockroom.

Originally, this was used as part of the family's private apartments. Tor'nar was responsible for converting it to retail use.

**K. The Vault** (30' x 15') Disguised as a general storage area, the hidden half of this room is actually where Tor'nar keeps his valuables. The entrance is by a secret door in what appears to be a stone wall. Inside, there are several large chests of gold and silver pieces, along with a few small chests and boxes of precious stones and jewelry.



### ▲ THE CELLARS (RIVER LEVEL)

SCALE: one square = 3 feet

**L1-L4. Tor'nar's Private Apartments** This area above the Vin d'nar shop consists of four rooms decorated with tired furnishings, once fine, but long out of style.

**L1. Foyer** (20' x 20') The entry into the residence of Tor'nar. Access is through a set of ornately inlaid rosewood doors from the atrium balcony (M), or via the stairway (C1) below. The sparsely decorated chamber contains only a mirror, a small table and three uninteresting pictures of past family members, including Maap'nar the founder. A faded old curtain partly covers the window overlooking the street.

**L2. Drawing Room** (15' x 15') It is here that Tor'nar receives (very seldom) any company. A single fireplace heats the room throughout the year (remember, the temperature of the entire set of buildings is constantly kept in the mid-50's range by a spell). A sideboard holds a set of six cut crystal goblets and several bottles of the best in the house. Various paintings of wine-country scenes and dead ancestors adorn the walls. Four chairs and two end tables complete the furnishings. A small closet in one corner contains the forgotten keepsakes of several generations.

**L3. Tor'nar's Bedroom** (30' x 35') While Tor'nar lives in relatively simple style, his own rooms are well-appointed and comfortable. In addition to the usual furnishings, Tor'nar has a large writing desk and chair for doing his work, along with two well-stocked sideboards where he keeps his private reserve. The desk contains many of his most important papers (the others are in the secret portion of the vault (K)) and 200-300 gold coins.

**L4. Dressing Room** (10' x 10') This contains Tor'nar's unstylish clothing, his dead wife's clothing, and various dusty odds and ends belonging to numerous ancestors, male and female.

**M. Atrium Balcony** (40' x 30') The covered balcony encircles the open-air garden below. Doors line the walls on all sides. All are locked<sup>4</sup>. The southwest stair descends to the atrium (F) below.

**N1. Formal Dining Room** (20' x 20') A large table for 16 is situated in the center. Two sideboards stand opposite each other on the north and south walls. More family portraits, including Tor'nar's mother, are spread around the room.

**N2. The Kitchen** (20' x 25', irregular) The usual kitchenware can be found here, as well as a long table and benches at which the servants take their meals.

**N3. Nontop and Sh'rar's Quarters** (20' x 15') It contains two wardrobes, a bed, sideboard, a table and two chairs.

**O. Warehouse Upper Balcony** (100' x 65') This area is nearly identical to the warehouse mezzanine (G1). It can be reached from the warehouse mezzanine or the atrium balcony (M) by a stair, or through the vault (K). Tor'nar often

rents a niche or two on this level for customers who wish to keep their prize vintages in prime condition.

**P1. Pietre's Study** (15' x 13') This room has a secret panel passage into the Cask and Bottle — the wine rack in the shop swings out. The existence of the passage is unknown to all but family members.

**P2. Pietre's Bedroom** (18' x 13') The sleeping room is very comfortably furnished.

**P3. Receiving Room** (15' x 25') The furnishings are plain, though the walls have several excellent paintings and etchings by popular artists. The oversized sideboard contains several excellent vintages, though it lacks the selection of Tor'nar's sideboard.

**P4. Po's Room** (10' x 15') This originally housed a manservant. Po the cook now lives here. She has a bed, wardrobe, sideboard, night stand and a small casket containing her dowry (100 s.p.), given to her by her father before she left home.

### The Cellars (River Level)

**Q. Lower Warehouse** (100' x 65') Every wine shipment, whether it comes by crate or cask, first enters into the holding of Tor'nar here. The wines are stored in different areas by special design.

Entry into the warehouse is by a set of oversized double-doors facing the riverside. They open onto the wharf area (T) where the barges deliver their goods to Tor'nar. Large and medium size casks are stored here.

This room may also be entered into by way of a stairway from the mezzanine above, or via a long, low inclined ramp leading down a half level from the adjacent upper-tier area (S).

Ten massive casks (holding several thousand gallons each) are set against the south and east walls. The medium-sized casks are stacked (up to five high) along the north wall. When the wines kept here have matured, they are decanted into smaller casks or bottles and moved on into other areas.

**R. The Vintage Cellar (45' x 45')** Once the vault for the family's private reserve stock, this room off the upper-tier is always locked and sealed (by spell), except when in use. The room has special properties for the most profitable means of holding the finest vintages. In fact, this is the secret to the family's great success in the past few decades, surpassing the business done by previous generations (which was considerable) many times over.

A few years prior to Tor'nar's birth, his great-uncle (the one who raised him) purchased a spell from a wine-loving wizard (using one of the rare vintages kept in the family's private vaults as coin). The spell is localized to the room, and, in effect, ages wines an average of one month for every day they are held inside. In this way, Tor'nar can know within a few months if a really good vintage has the potential to become a great vintage. He carries upon his person the only key (magical) to the lock. Among others, there are presently several dozen cases that have been in the room for ten years or more, making them priceless. To a connoisseur, the value of the wines contained herein is incalculable.

**S. The Upper Tier (60' x 90', irregular "L" shape)** This area holds the small casks and crates of bottled wines. The wines are stored here as room allows. In short, there is no systematic placing of the casks and crates.

An arrangement of three tables and an upright desk with a stool create a work space. This is where master Tor'nar oversees the work, though Pietre is just as likely to be found here as his father-in-law. From two to four assistants will be working around here rolling, carrying, arranging, shifting, stacking or unloading the wines during the course of the day.

**T. The Dock.** This is the riverside landing area for the wine shipments. The area includes a hoist and a set of steps leading down to the water. There are doors leading off the wharf area to the lower shop entrance and the warehouse.

**U. Ramp Room (15' x 30')** The well worn ramp leads up to the Arch Room (B) on the Street Level.

**V. River Dump (15' x 13', irregular)** This hidden passage is entered only through a secret door (the catch-release is recessed into the "false" wall). It leads leads down into the river. It is Tor'nar's "dumping" area.

## Personalities

**Tor'nar.** □ *Human Male, Ht.: 6', Wt.: 203#, Age: 54.* □ *Fighting Prowess: Average with fists, Poor otherwise.*

Tor'nar is a most unhappy fellow, except when he is inhaling the bouquet of a vintage red or sweet white wine. Born the illegitimate son of a wealthy merchant's daughter and a minor nobleman, he despises those of position and great wealth, though he himself is not poor.

The facts surrounding his birth are well known to all within



— Tor'nar of Oenath —

the established echelons of society. Shortly after his birth, his mother died under extremely strange circumstances, and Tor'nar's arrival was marked as the singular cause of one of those rarest of incidents in the City — a true scandal. His maternal grandfather, a hard, shrewd and successful wine dealer, would have nothing to do with him; thus leaving him to be raised by his great-uncle, a partner in the family business.

As a result, Tor'nar carries much bitterness within — and an abiding hatred for the inhabitants of the City, particularly the nobility and well-to-do. It is not surprising then that he was recruited at an early age as an ally and assistant to Jak (the Old Man). Tor'nar only leaves the shops for any length of time is during the fall when the grapes are harvested at his own vineyards.

A widower, he lives alone. His beloved daughter Valen and his grandchildren, live in the family's country manor house, while her husband works at the wine business.

**Pietre.** □ *Human male, Ht.: 6', Wt.: 200#, Age: 37.* □ *Fighting Prowess: Fair with military short sword and piltum.*

Chief shop assistant and Tor'nar's son-in-law, Pietre's greatest asset is his memory. He forgets nothing, especially wines — and remembers the customers who come into the shop (as well as their purchases). Pietre can name every vintage on hand (several thousand bottles) and every delivery expected. Not surprisingly, he has become indispensable to his father-in-law. He is quick with figures and can reckon to within a few silver pieces the value of their current holdings.

Pietre actually likes Tor'nar and defers to him in all business

decisions. He'd be the perfect son-in-law, if Valen's bed was the only one he shared.

**Valen.** □ *Human female, Ht.: 5'11", Wt.: 190#, Age: 34. □ Fighting Prowess: Poor.*

She is the only child of Tor'nar. As her husband handles so much of the shop work for Tor'nar, she retains an entirely domestic role, overseeing her house as well as her father's. This she does primarily at a distance, as she shares her father's dislike of the City. Preferring to stay at the family's small manor house in the hills a few miles south of the City, she seldom leaves the country estate. Her five children are usually at the estate with her, though the eldest two (young teenagers) occasionally come in to assist their father and grandfather in the business.

**Maap'nar.** □ *Shade, Ht.: 6', Wt.: N/A, Age: 234, appears about 50. □ Fighting Prowess: None. □ Magic Ability: Walks through walls, takes on hideous forms as needed.*

Founder of the family business. His shade still inhabits the buildings. His appearances have been more regular since Tor'nar took control of the business, as the two have been acquainted (and friendly) since Tor'nar's youth. This is probably attributed to the fact that Tor'nar is the only family member who shares Maap'nar's exuberance for wines. His usual haunts are the vintage cellar (R), the blending area of the upper-tier (S) (where he discusses the properties of varietals being mixed together for Tor'nar's special label), and Vin d'nar (D).

Though he died in his eighties, Maap'nar usually appears to be around fifty. He is bearded, portly, well dressed, and always wears a heavy, braided gold necklace—from which is suspended his tasting cup. His personality is jovial and egregious. On those rare occasions when he appears to non-family, he will speak at length on wines past, present and future.

Nevertheless, thieves captured within the shop have been found pale and shaking, telling of a ghostly horror that shrieked and howled its rage until they could take no more ... and fainted.

**Monty Presqueisle, Lord Kyry.** □ *Human male, Ht.: 6', Wt.: 200#, Age: 53. □ Fighting Prowess: Very Good with fencing sabre, Good with crossbow, Fair otherwise.*

A frequent patron of Vin d'nar. Lord Kyry is a minor nobleman who considers himself the finest judge of wines in the City. He shows up almost daily to sample wares and usually ends up with a purchase of 3-4 bottles. He will talk of wines — to the point of boredom — to anyone he meets.

Tor'nar dislikes the besotted noble, but continues to humor him, as he has come to the knowledge that Kyry is the only *other* living offspring of his noble father. In short, Tor'nar is cultivating him for a most rewarding revenge. Several customers have noted that Tor'nar and Lord Kyry could be brothers — even twins.

**Bondahl.** □ *Human male, Ht.: 5'7", Wt.: 120#, Age: 33. □ Fighting Prowess: Average with fists, Poor otherwise.*

One of the hired shop assistants, he has worked his way into a place of trust. He is, however, a spy hired by the merfolk (see *The Blue Maid, CB5*) who know of Tor'nar's relationship with

Jak. Bondahl likes plump, cuddly Po, the family cook, but could never really love her. He is addicted to conjugal relations with the blue-skinned merwomen, an eventually fatal condition.

**Nontop, Sh'rar & Po: the family's servants.** Trim, mature, energetic Nontop is the butler (and occasional sales clerk during holidays), good-natured, but eternally grumbling Sh'rar (his wife) is the maid, and jiggling, giggling, Po is the cook. They are all very devoted to their employer.

Po knows about Pietre's marital indiscretions; but would never, ever, ever tell of them ... well maybe just a little, if her interrogator were cute enough and said really nice things about her. She herself, has been getting friendly of late with Bondahl, but does not suspect his true nature.

**The Wharf Rats.** Several oversized river-rats (over a meter tall) who work the docks and wharfs along the river by night, loading and unloading the shipping barges carrying trade goods. These rats are very strong, highly intelligent and fiercely loyal.

Rittitch is the leader of a small pack (six or seven) that work for Tor'nar whenever a shipment comes in. These rats — or their relatives — have served the house of d'nar for generations, and have no compulsion about harming humans when ordered to do so, though that is a capital offense. On the rare occasion when Tor'nar needs assistance for work of a "darker" nature, they are quick to help.

## Scenario Suggestions

**Scenario 1: Tor'nar of Oenath, Lord Kyry.** After learning all he can of the man, Tor'nar kills Monty Presqueisle with poisoned wine, the last bottle of a rare vintage (the old sot died happy) and pays the wharf rats to make the body disappear forever. Tor'nar announces a vacation and disappears. Soon thereafter, Lord Kyry becomes an agitator for war with other states, an outspoken champion of the lower classes against rich (noble) oppressors. Needless to say, many folk in Up Town become concerned.

**Scenario 2: Water of Life.** A elderly nobleman has become obsessed with a certain vintage of wine. He believes that it, and it alone keeps him alive and healthy. His own stock is gone. Tor'nar has the last of it, and for unknown reasons, he won't sell. The nobleman hires the adventurers to remove all the wine of that vintage that they can from the warehouses and Vin d'nar shop, leaving behind more than enough gold to pay for it all. Problems include: locating the wine within the shop, avoiding staff, guards and servants, and dealing with the old ghost of Maap'nar. Of course, it may be that the wine *does* have magical properties.

*Adventurers are noted for frequenting bars and taverns. Why not invite them to a tasting at the Cask & Bottle? Of course, should they see, or hear about the giant rats scuttling about on the dock below the bridge at night, they may investigate for themselves.*

# Jasmine's Fine Jewelry (and Explosives)



*Quality. Beauty. Taste. Value. The things one would expect from a jeweler who serves high society. Steeped in traditions of dwarven handiwork, Jasmine's purveys all these. And to those in the know, those with a need ... she sells more.*

The beauty of dwarven metalwork and gem-cutting lies in the depth and function of the creation, in the way that its form supports its function — not in mere appearance alone. Trained in secrets not taught outside the dwarven holds, Jasmine brings this inner beauty out for others to see in her own creations, and can do the same for any damaged or worn ornament brought to her.

Jasmine buys gems and jewelry from anyone, turning them into beautiful, expensive baubles for the socially conscious. Though located near one of the City's most expensive merchant streets, her shop is open to all. She sells to those with the money to buy. And along with the exquisite pieces whose price is beyond the grasp of many a titled noble, numerous more affordable creations line the walls of Jasmine's.

And for those who know, Jasmine's is the only "safe" source for the truly remarkable *choubli* crystals.

## History & Business

Many a noble household in Up Town possesses work bought from the old Silver Forge shop. Jaspar the metal smith, and indeed, his father before him sold elegant jewelry boxes, fine lanterns, and table ware for generations. None in the City could match their subtle use of contrasting metals and gem insets.

PANDA ENGLAND managed to give us a look at these three dwarven sisters in between rewrites of her several novels-in-progress and her duties as manager of interloan for a library, AND managing two kids and a variable number of cats, dogs and rock bands, and one wild man. She continues to overcome her dislike of aerobics and other forms of organized exercise by training service dogs for the blind and physically handicapped.

Although she was the youngest of three sisters, Jasmine inherited the jewelry business from her father when he died. She displayed the most competence and aptitude at old Jaspar's craft. Under her watchful eye and creative flourish, the shop expanded from simple, functional metalwork and inlays to elaborate fine ornamentation and delicate gem-cutting.

Unwilling, like so many jewelers, to simply parrot popular styles, her jewelry and cut gems have a distinctive look. She merges the tradition of ancient dwarven technique and taste with the best, and the trendiest fashions of human high society.

And while most customers look for more mundane purchases, Jasmine's Fine Jewelry also enchants some of their wares. The shop is quite discreet about the practice and just will not make it available to everyone. A simple enchanted piece would cost 1-5 years of an average City worker's wages.

## The "Explosives"

Searching for a better way to create a hot but precise welding fire, Jasmine experimented with numerous unstable chemicals. Tabitha accidentally allowed certain chemical powders to contaminate the powdered gems that Jasmine melted the next day to form a boule. The resulting synthetic gem was sold to another merchant who used it in the dwarven Greeting Cup ritual.

During the ritual, the guest is served a flagon of wine in which the host places an unset gem. The glasses are drained of wine (strained through the teeth, one is NOT supposed to swallow the gem), and then set down before initiating conversation. Dwarves believe that the gem imparts truth to the exchange.

After the Greeting Cup, the customer's bizarre gem began to hop and sputter. Flinging the jewel outside, he watched the gem lay spitting fire on the cobbles for some 15 minutes.

When Jasmine learned of this, she saved her relationship with her customer by giving him a piece of jewelry three times the

value of the errant gem. By quizzing her sisters, Jasmine discovered what had happened — and that soaking the gem in wine had been the catalyst.

Ecstatic with the peculiar breakthrough in her experiments, Jasmine developed the *choubli crystals*. These synthetic, explosive gems have a similar refractive index and relative hardness as their counterpart precious stones. They remain stable until soaked in a catalyst liquid. The longer they are steeped, the more powerful the reaction once they touch air again.

□ **Cerulean choubli crystals** imitate sapphires. Soaked in wine, they emit a highly concentrated bead of blue fire, perfect for welding or cutting fine lines.

□ **Asterealm choubli crystals** look like emeralds. Soaked in mineral oil, these become a contact explosive, doing moderate to heavy damage when pressure is applied to them.

□ **Massinea choubli crystals** appear as diamonds. Soaked in blood, they are a timed explosive. The longer the item is left in the catalyst, the shorter the time until the explosion. They do twice the damage of asterealm crystals.

The crystals will not explode until removed from the catalyst and exposed to an oxygen containing atmosphere. The only way to deactivate the crystals once they've been exposed to the catalyst is to immerse them in a salt water/ammonia solution. Urine works well for this purpose.

Jasmine rarely sells these crystals. Nevertheless if someone had impeccable references (say, from Lord Westcott), she will part with one or perhaps even two. Prices would be triple the normal value of the gemstone.

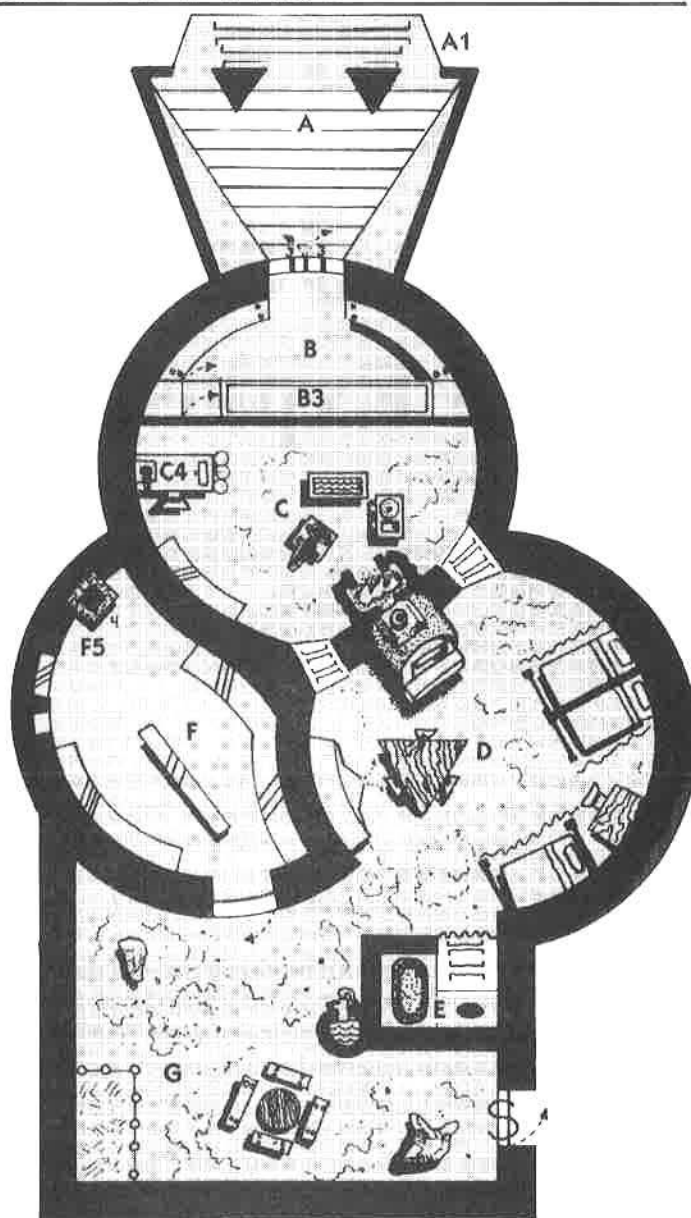
## Layout

**A. Entry Corridor** (16' x 10', irregular) Jasmine's Fine Jewelry is an imposing-for-its-small-size structure, elegant as only dwarves can make it. A tall, brass covered trapezoid, about 16 feet across, forms the only exterior structure. The obelisk's gleaming smooth sides taper upwards 10 feet to a point just above the opening. On the manicured lawn behind the small building squats a stone gargoyle chimney (carved of fine, blue marble) with smoke issuing from its fanged maw.

A slight ramp (A1) leads up from the avenue to the long wall of the structure. This side is open to the street, with two triangular pillars standing like sentinels equidistant from the sides and each other. The entire width of the interior is a broad stone stair leading down to the next level.

On the stair, and throughout the entire subterranean building, cave-carpet moss grows. Nearly impervious to traffic, and devilishly hard to remove once established, the greenish-gray cave-carpet imparts a good grip to the feet. At the bottom of the stair one finds a pair of iron doors<sup>3</sup> with massive troll-tiger door knockers.

**B. Shop Area** (18' x 7', irregular) Upon passing through the great doors, one finds a round room, the near third of which is partitioned from the back by a wall to wall, waist-high display case (B3). The jeweler's handiwork is set out behind virtually unbreakable transparent panels of rock crystal. Within the case are



SCALE: one square = 1 foot

the items for which the rich and famous are regular customers ... rings, necklaces, pendants, cups, earrings, bracelets and all manner of costly and beautiful items created by Jasmine. The walls of the near third of the room are lined with stone benches, above which is carved a handsome stalactite relief.

**C. Work Area** (19' x 15', irregular and mostly circular) Beyond the partitioning display case is the jeweler's work area. Scrolls and tomes on metallurgy, smelting recipes, gem fracture points, metal and gem designs will be found on a wall shelf.

The jeweler's workbench (C4) is a cluttered affair, backed by a bank of small drawers containing ring shanks, tiny silver leaves, bezels, bails and split shanks. On one end is a small anvil and attached to the sides of the bench are three medium size quenching tubs: water, acid, and sodium bicarbonate.

In a ceramic cup are an assortment of dapping tools, files and chisels. Beneath the bench, the first drawer holds metal shears, molds, setting burrs and calipers. Drawer two contains design



— Tabitha, Jasmine & Wynnona —

stamps, a mandrel (ring sizer), drawing plate and drawing pliers (to make wire), bow pliers, cleavers and more molds. On the side of the bench opposite the anvil is a jeweler's mill to flatten metal, and a treadle-powered stone-polisher.

The forge is in the back of the shop, flanked by arches into the living chamber. A ceramic crucible and large quenching tub of acid sit to the left of the forge, and a tub of water to the right. Between the forge and the workbench is a large anvil for fashioning tableware. The vent shaft above the forge area has a treadle-powered fan arrangement turned by the family's pet rock bear. Bellows and fire implements stand in a rack nearby.

**D. Dweller's Cave** (18' diameter circle) In this roundish room one finds the cook stove and oven back-to-back with the forge. There are hanging baskets of needlework, and on the wall, a painting of Jasper, the sisters' father.

Along the wall are the sleeping cupboards, outfitted with angora blankets, linen sheets and fluffmoss pillows. Also there is a three-drawer vanity table with an attached mirror, and appropriate toiletries and unguents.

A small harp, a flute and a flat drum form a wall arrangement (all three sisters play). A triangular table, three chairs and a dish and pan cupboard complete the furniture.

**E. Privy** (6' x 4') In the private corner there is a bathtub and a privy which is flushed with a bucket of water.

**F. Store Room** (18' diameter half-circle) Crocks of butter, eggs, mushrooms, etc. are in the main store room. Large stone jars of hydrochloric acid, bars of bouillon, chubs of beeswax, plant glue (to set gems), cyanide, plating salts and other items of the business are stored here as well.

A large safe<sup>4</sup> built into the back wall (F5) contains trays of gems rough and cut, gold plates, cups, flatware and some finished

jewelry. The accounting ledgers are kept in the safe at any given time. These detail an inventory of items sold, their value, and who purchased the item.

**G. Garden** (22' x 14') This is the dwarves' "rock garden" and where they exercise their pet rock bear. A small well and stone formations grace the yard. Benches surround a small table with a pits-and-pebbles game carved into the top. In the corner of the yard is a pen containing a graza lizard, which produces the dwarves' breakfast eggs.

## Personalities

**Jasmine.**  Dwarven female, Ht.: 3'6", Wt.: 90#, Age: 98. No beard!  Fighting Prowess: Fair with a dagger, Average with ax or war hammer.

Jasmine always loved working with the precious metals and gems. She is certified by the City's jewelers' guild, and has a gift for creating exquisite designs. Her clothes swirl with golds, browns, and yellows, indicating a love for pattern that goes beyond professional. Good-looking by any standard, Jasmine has cultivated a presence that is both relaxed and business oriented. Her brown hair is pulled back, off the shoulders, and is knotted with an intricate comb of ivory.

Jasmine is pioneering a way to create "synthetic" gem crystals. By crushing small and lesser quality gems, then melting the powder, the liquid is dripped slowly onto a heated ceramic surface where it crystallizes again. The resulting "boule" is usually somewhat cylindrical, but can be faceted and polished, creating larger, more valuable gems than the original materials.

Jasmine will not sell enchanted items to anyone with evil goals (for how she knows this, see the description of her sister

Tabitha). If someone with such intentions comes in and commissions a magicked piece, she will, at first, try to beg off that she is just a simple jeweler, and such lofty wizardry is beyond her. If that is unsuccessful (the patron offers proof positive that he or she *knows* she can), she will make a beautiful piece of jewelry, but will not have it enchanted. When the dissatisfied owner returns to complain, she will proclaim a flawed stone, bad timing, interfering magic or whatever excuse she can think of. Luckily, such occurrences are few and far between.

She will *buy* gems from any source. She can tell a bogus gem, despite any illusionary magic that may disguise it.

**Tabitha.** □ *Dwarven female, Ht.: 3'8", Wt.: 103#, Age: 138. No beard!* □ *Fighting Prowess: None.* □ *Magic Ability: Very Good C3, as an intrinsic power, and only to discern good and evil.*

The eldest of the three dwarven sisters is a mild and loving girl, despite being a half-wit. Tabitha has the natural ability to discern good or evil in all creatures. A child's natural eagerness shines from within her, and indeed, much about her is child-like. Simple, dark clothes with buttons make up much of her wardrobe. The large pockets carry her collection of costume clip-on earrings, which she changes every few hours, and not always in pairs. Her hair is tied back in the morning, but has usually worked its way free by early afternoon. She is always cheerful, except when evil in some form enters her magical detection perimeters. She is as helpful as she can be, and does well with household chores, with coaching. Nevertheless, she is not allowed to touch the business tools.

**Wynnona.** □ *Dwarven female, Ht.: 3'5", Wt.: 92#, Age: 115. No beard!* □ *Fighting Prowess: Fair with ax or war hammer.* □ *Magic Ability: (Special)*

As a toddler, under the less-than-capable eye of Tabitha, Wynnona grabbed a tray full of sparkling gems, and spilled them on the floor. Especially irresistible, one of the sparklies seemed to glow. She put it in her mouth and, moments later, swallowed.

Tabitha reported it to her father, who was acutely dismayed. The glowing gem was an enchanted ruby he was to have set in a ring for a wizard!

The bizarre accident gave Wynnona the ability to lay enchantments on jewelry. The wizard was persuaded to help her attune herself to her new ability. In return, the dwarven family would supply him with one enchanted piece each year, and Wynnona's body after she died! Wynnona can only enchant, or implant spells. The actual spell to be enchanted must be cast from an item, read from a scroll, or cast upon the item in Wynnona's presence by someone with an ability with the spell. (Since Jasmine would like to keep this fact a family secret, they have used scrolls and items so far.)

Wynnona is the most typical dwarf of the three, both in appearance and outlook. She examines gems for quality and does most of the purchasing. While not as attractive as Jasmine (in purely human terms), Wynnona carries herself with the confidence and attitude that attracts male dwarves. She has accepted that one day her "gem" may be removed and her ability along with it, and has worked hard to develop her more dwarven skills to compensate. The rock bear was her idea.

Other than enchanting jewelry, even the simplest magic will not work for Wynnona. If the ruby were removed from her intestines, she could no longer perform the enchantments.

**Rock Bear.** □ *Ht.: 4' at shoulder, Wt.: 800#, Age: ?* □ *Fighting Prowess: Very Good with Jaws.*

Vaguely bearish in shape, such creatures come from tunnels and caves below the mountains. Resembling a large cub from a distance, the rock bear is a ball about 3 1/2 feet in diameter with four solid, stumpy legs and a smaller ball for a head. It has large, light-gathering black eyes and ears that stand up. The mouth is located in the exact middle of the face, and the jaw dislocates to allow the animal to open widely for burrowing through rock. As expected, Rock bears diet on various rocks, from soft limestone to the harder marble. The sisters feed it scraps from the gem-cutting table, and it looks forward to this treats. It also eats magical gems of any sort without any particular discomfort.

Occasionally domesticated, they make excellent guards. Though slow in movement, their relentless power and ability to withstand a great deal of damage makes them formidable in a fight.

## Scenario Suggestions

**Scenario 1: Out of Her Head.** Tabitha cannot get away from "all the evil everywhere," and the adventurers need to find out if the cause is a plant in the shop or a symptom of a much larger problem. This might be the lead into a GM-created campaign dealing with a general infusion of evil into the City: undead beneath the streets, the rise of an ancient dark lord, resurgence of a powerful thieves' guild, a swarming of gargoyles and so on.

**Scenario 2: Have You Seen My Ring?** The rock bear has escaped, and having been fed gem treats for so long, it is wandering around town, eating through walls and munching on both magical and non-magical valuables. The sisters want their pet back, with as little fanfare and publicity as possible. Of course, someone is going to figure out that a beast which can eat its way through walls might be a tremendous asset. There's sure to be more than one group looking to bring this bear "home."

**Scenario 3: Whose Explosion Are You?** A series of devastating explosions occurs around town, and those who know are beginning to whisper about Jasmine and her crystals. It won't stay quiet much longer, and the characters need to find out what is happening before Jasmine is innocently(?) implicated. Jasmine needs to track down the last dozen or so customers who purchased crystals from her shop. The perpetrators might be the thieves' guild, the *Sliming Path* terrorist group (CB5), the *Big Fish Gang* (CB3), or perhaps someone acting on his, or her own initiative.

*At Jasmynes' your adventurers can find a ready market for the gems they recover; a source for those special adornments so necessary in an appearance-conscious high society; a place to have that special magical item made up; a respected contact with dwarven society; and of course, the right explosive for their next foray into the unknown.*

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