And Then the Dragons Came: Purewater

The Games Master's Guide

A scenario for Classic Fantasy Imperative

Fourth Wall Gaming

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Introduction

And Then the Dragons Came

Three days before the Lake Lady's Tourney, a baron rides into Purewater with twenty-five mercenaries, a great deal of borrowed money and a covered litter that nobody is allowed to walk beside. In the litter is his champion, whom nobody outside his household has ever seen. The city has already decided not to notice what his men do on its bridges. Four strangers arrive the same day without knowing about one another: a wild elf following a ten-year-old trail, an old woman following a dream about her own death, a thief who has just been called *my lord* by a terrified guard, and an investigator who has just been called *Randall* by a man who wanted an apology.

By the first night, one of them has watched a young man with a burnt hand run down the back stair of a pleasure house. By the second morning, two of them are tied to chairs in a cellar under the city, looking at each other's faces. By the fifth evening, the Crown's own nephew has walked into a small stone room behind the Governor's box, and whether something else walks out wearing him depends entirely on what the characters did in between.

And Then the Dragons Came is a scenario for *Classic Fantasy Imperative*, built for four characters and around five in-game days. It is an investigation that turns into a heist that turns into a siege, set in a city where everyone wants something, nobody can arrest a lord, and the most dangerous thing a character can do is be seen.

What Kind of Story This Is

Purewater is a living city. Every person in this book wants something this week and is working at it, whether or not the characters are watching. The Baron's plan runs on a timetable. So does his son's appetite, a madame's anger, a dockers' leader's patience and a canal-rat's grudge. If the characters spend a day drinking in the Lullwater, those things still happen, and the characters hear about them afterwards as rumours, bodies and shut doors. The scenario is not a corridor of encounters. It is a week, and the characters are the only thing in it that is not already decided.

That makes it a game about **leverage**, not combat. The characters cannot fight twenty-five armoured men, and nobody in Purewater has the authority to arrest a baron. What they can do is find the one person with the standing to act and give them a reason to, steal the one object the Baron cannot do without, and be standing in the right place when the city decides it has had enough. A party that thinks about water, paper and pride will beat a party that thinks about swords.

It is also, underneath, a story about family. Two brothers who have never met. A sister who has followed the men who took her brother for ten years. A father who does not know he has three sons, and would not love any of them if he did. Lean into that. The scenes players remember are the cellar where the twins first see each other, and the night Gardwen goes aboard the Baron's ship and hears her brother's voice say something that is not her brother.

How This Book Is Arranged

The book has three parts and two appendices.

Background tells you the secret first. It explains what the Baron is really doing, then the city, the occupation, the three sons and the law. Read it before anything else. Once you know what is in the litter, everything else in the book will make sense as you read it.

People and Places in Purewater is the city and everybody in it: each island and the buildings that matter, with maps, and then the people, grouped the way the city groups them, with how to play them and what each of them is doing this week.

Events and Story Structure is the week itself, day by day: what happens if nobody interferes, how to run it when the characters are in the room, where the story bends when they push on it, and the three ways it can end.

The Week at a Glance is the one-page timetable and the clocks, for the table. **Statistics** holds a full *Mythras* stat block for every person in the book.

A separate **Players' Guide** holds everything the players should see: the city as its people know it, the four characters with their sheets, and a primer for players new to *Mythras*. Point your players at it before the first session. Nothing in it spoils anything.

What You Need

The *Classic Fantasy Imperative* rules, which are free; this book; and four players, or fewer. The scenario is written for the four pregenerated characters described in *The Four Strangers*, because each of them is wired into the plot by somebody else's mistake. Players who roll their own characters can still play it. Advice on bringing them in is in the same chapter. Any of the four the players do not choose stays in the world as a Non-Player Character, and the party meets them in the cellar on the second morning.

A Word on Tone

Purewater is a beautiful city that has quietly agreed to look the other way, and the horror in this scenario comes from how ordinary that is. Nobody is dead when the characters arrive. Everybody expects somebody to be. Play the Dragon Knights as weather, not monsters: three men eating in the middle of a bridge while a whole morning's traffic edges round them against the parapet, and a watchman at the far end doing nothing. Play the Baron as the nicest man in any room. Play the city's powerful people as decent, frightened, bought or wrong, and rarely as wicked. Then let the characters be the first people in nine days to do something about it, and let that feel enormous, because it is.

There is a seventeen-year-old boy at the heart of this, who has been somewhere nobody should be for ten years. Let him matter.

PART

Background

What Is Really Going On

Here is the whole secret, in the order it was built.

A Knight Who Was Buried Wrong

A thousand years ago the Dragon Kings ruled Thornmere, and their armies were led by dragon-knights: warriors bound in fire, who rode beside the great beasts and fought like nothing living. One of them was Thuban Eta, a knight of the Sixth Wing. When his company was ordered to burn a valley with the people still in it, he refused. His own comrades drowned him for it, in his mail, with his hands tied, and buried him without the rites a knight of his order was owed.

The Dragon Kings fell soon afterwards in the great uprising. Their heraldry has been an unwelcome thing to see on a lord's banner ever since. But Thuban was not given the rites, and so he never went anywhere. He has been awake, somewhere near his bones, for the whole of it. He does not think of what was done to him as cruelty. He thinks of it as a breach of law, which is worse, because law can be argued.

A Family That Wanted Him

The di Teufels are a border family, and for four generations they have pursued one forbidden ambition: to become what the Dragon Kings were. The first of them found the texts. The second found Thuban's bones and carried them home to a tower on their border estate. The third worked out the school of binding, the old art of holding a spirit in a living body. The fourth is **Baron Hanzo di Teufel**, a warm, unhurried man in his fifties who has never once been refused anything he asked for pleasantly, and he is the one who did it.

Ten years ago, his Dragon Knights burned a steading on the border at night and took a seven-year-old boy named Gabriel. His sister Gardwen, who was small enough for the woods to hide, survived. The Baron opened the boy and seated Thuban Eta inside him, and Thuban has been there ever since. The boy is seventeen now. He is called Cailan. Dragon-scale grows out of the skin of his throat and jaw with no strap or edge, the flesh around it raised and weeping. He fights like a knight of the dragon wars because one does the fighting for him. Gabriel is still in there, intermittently and briefly, at enormous cost.

Behind the Baron stands the **Awake the Dragon Movement**: a patient, distant circle of men who believe the age of the Dragon Kings can be restarted, in a body of their choosing. They are not his masters, exactly. He is their most promising experiment, and they are paying for it.

What Holds Thuban

Three things hold Thuban in the boy, and each is a separate point of failure.

The bones lie in a box in a tower on the Baron's border estate, four days' hard riding from Purewater. They hold Thuban in the world. Nothing in this scenario can reach them, and the scenario ends by pointing at them.

The locket hangs on a chain round the Baron's neck. It ties Thuban to *Hanzo*: it is the leash. With it in his hand, the Baron can command Thuban, draw him out of the boy, and seat him somewhere else. Without it he can do none of those things, and the spirit he has held for ten years is a dragon-knight who owes him nothing but a reckoning. The locket is a robust working; only a powerful Dispel Magic would break it. And, crucially, holding it gives nobody else any power over Thuban. It only takes him away from the Baron.

The nightly rite renews the seat. Every night, behind sealed doors on his ship, the Baron makes a cut, fills a bowl and speaks for an hour with the locket in his hand. Then he takes the chain off, lays the locket on the table beside his bed, and goes to sleep. That is the only time the locket is ever off his neck, and it is the most important thing in this book.

The Room

The boy was never the point. Cailan is the jar: ten years of proof that a dragon-knight's spirit can be kept in a living body without destroying it. The destination is somebody else.

The Lake Lady's Tourney is older than Purewater's government, and by its oldest form, the champion of the Single Combat is presented **alone and unarmed** to the Crown's representative, behind a closed door, in a small stone room behind the Governor's box. It is a rite, not a favour, which is exactly why nobody has ever thought to guard it. The Crown's representative in Purewater is **Prince Emeric**, the King's nephew: two-and-twenty, decent, earnest and badly advised.

In that room, the Baron means to draw Thuban out of the worn-out boy and seat him in the Prince. A baron with the King's nephew wearing his leash does not need a barony. He has the court.

So the champion must win the Single Combat, and must not be recognised before he does. The Baron arranges everything else around those two facts: the curtained litter, the ship he never leaves at night, the champion nobody is allowed to speak to.

The Son Who Ruined It

The Baron has a legitimate heir, **Santo**, who is nineteen and has never been told no by anybody who mattered. Santo is no part of his father's plan and has no idea what it is. He knows only that his father can put a spirit in a living body and be obeyed by it, and he has watched it done for ten years.

Santo wants a girl: **Emmeralda**, the finest dancer on the Pearl. He wants her kept on his father's barge and glad to be there. So he has stolen one scroll of Seat the Bound from his father's locked case, and a barbed ritual knife, and on the first night of the scenario he tries to put a small, hungry spirit into her to make her want what he wants. He has no training. The dice decide whether it works. Either way, the scroll he burns out is written in his father's own hand, and the squalid little crime he commits on the Pearl is the door that opens on the real one.

Two More Sons

The Baron does not know he has three sons. Long before his open descent he seduced and broke a young elven mage, who fled to Purewater and died there when her children were small. She bore twins. **Randall** was raised by the women of a pleasure house on the Pearl and became a thief. **Conall** was taken to Ashwick, pulled out of a ditch at nineteen by a knight of the Swords of the Lake, and trained by the King's Assay as an arcane investigator. Both of them wear the di Teufel face. It is Santo's face, too.

On the night Santo goes upstairs with Emmeralda, nobody on the Pearl knows the heir's face, because he has never needed to show it. So when the city goes looking for the man who did it, all it has is the face. Three men in Purewater wear it.

What the Characters Can Do

Nobody can arrest a baron, and the characters cannot fight twenty-five Knights. But the Baron's plan has exactly three weak points, and the characters can reach every one of them:

- **Stop the champion winning,** or have the match stopped on sacred ground.
- **Keep the Baron out of the room.**
- **Take the locket,** on the one night it lies on a table instead of round his neck, and keep it.

The third is the one the story leans toward, and the one that costs the most. A stolen locket turns a patient, smiling lord into a man who will burn a quarter of the city to get it back. What the characters do with that day decides how the scenario ends.

A City Built on Water

Purewater stands across the Mouth, the narrow strait where a great sacred lake drains south into the open sea. It is rich, strategic and rotten, and its own people call it Pisswater, for the smell of the canals and the smell of its politics alike.

There is no ground. Houses come straight up out of the channels with no bank, their doors opening onto steps that go down under the surface and keep going. Everything that matters moves by boat, poled, rowed and shouted about; the rest goes over a bridge or along a ledge a body or two wide with no rail, and every journey costs a fare. Anybody raised here can handle a boat the way they can walk. Nobody ever says the other half out loud: outsiders cannot. A stranger in Purewater cannot move a sack of flour across it without hiring somebody born here, and there are no horses at all. The land stops at Caravan Square on the western shore and does not resume.

The heart of the city is High Isle, which is really four islands cut apart by water: the North Quarter of fine houses, the Governor's Palazzo and the Tournament Ground; the Merchant's Quarter of guilds and counting-houses; the Forges, all smoke and foundries; and the Seaward docks. North of them, among the scattered Northern Isles, lies the Pearl, the pleasure island. North-east, across open water and reached by no bridge at all, lies the Lullwater, where the thieves and the working poor live together in a drowned maze. The Shoals guard the seaward side with their fish-markets and smugglers' jetties. And just north of the Tournament Ground, alone, unbridged and holy, sits Temple Isle. *People and Places in Purewater* walks every one of them.

The Water Is the Goddess

The priestesses of the Lake Lady say the water *is* the goddess, and they mean it plainly. Her holy water wells up in the Sacred Confluence on Temple Isle and runs out through the temple into the city's channels, and by ancient writ the Order of the Lake Lady owns every channel and pool. The city council owns the isles. The most sacred ground in Purewater is also its traffic system, and that gives the Order a standing no council can overrule and no baron can buy.

Two houses serve the goddess, and neither can give the other an order. **The Order of the Lake Lady** is the priesthood: temples, pools, rites, tithes, the calendar and the Tourney. It is a civic power, and it is bound by temple law, which forbids the clergy to intervene in the city's affairs unless the sacred sites themselves are threatened. **The Swords of the Lake** are a knightly order sworn to the goddess, not to her clergy: austere, propertyless, realm-wide, holding the oldest battle honours from the uprising against the Dragon Kings. They take no tithes, keep no temples, and do not answer to the Governor's council. The two houses love each other like two branches of one family that cannot spend a week under the same roof, and in four hundred years neither has developed a polite way to ask the other a favour.

The water is going wrong. Since Candlemas the pools have been fouling, worst in the eastern yards near the Forges and creeping north toward the lake. It comes from the Baron's ship, whose hull steams wherever it meets the water: fire magic warring with the holy channel. The Order raised its alarm, and the alarm was signed off six weeks ago as a *false reading* by the Watercrafters' Tide Master, Ivo Calder, at one polite request from a man he respected. An instruction over the Prince's signature then silenced it. High Priestess Nerissa knows the reading was right. She can feel the fouling in her own body, and she drinks the water anyway. But a corrupted channel is not yet, technically, a threatened site, and so temple law ties her hands.

There is a worse secret in the Lady's house, and only one person knows it. **Lilura Deepcurrent**, who has been the Lady's voice for thirty years, has heard nothing from the goddess for fourteen months. She has told nobody, because a faith whose goddess has gone silent has no civic power at all. Whether the silence is the fouling, the bound dragon-knight in the harbour, or something older, nobody in this scenario will find out. But a Games Master who wants the Lady to stir at the end of the week, when the Lullwater burns or the Baron is named on her steps, has a reason ready.

The Rule of the Pearl

Every child on the Pearl can tell the story of the Widow. Two hundred years ago a merchant prince bought a fifteen-year-old girl outright, with a bill of sale witnessed by two councillors, and kept her behind a wall on a little islet. After eleven years of lighting a lamp in her window every dusk and talking to the water, she asked the basin for her husband, and one calm night it took him. She bought the biggest house on the Pearl's quay with his money, opened its doors to women who had been sold as she had been, and laid down the rule every house on the island still keeps: **a night is for sale; a person is not.** No bill of sale for a woman is honoured on the Pearl, and no man who brings one is let in anywhere on the island again.

At dusk every evening the doorman of her old house, the Mother of Pearl, lights a taper from a lamp that has supposedly not gone out in two hundred years. Every house on the quay lights its own lamps from that taper, and so do the posts of the Lantern Bridge. The Pearl's women believe that no one under that flame can be owned: a bill of sale signed under the Pearl's lamps fades off the page by morning, and a binding of any kind fails.

None of that is confirmed, and nothing in the scenario depends on it. But Santo di Teufel is about to try to *bind* something into a woman, under the Pearl's lamps, in a house that keeps the Widow's rule. If the dice say it goes wrong, every woman on the quay will have decided why by breakfast. Let them.

The Lake Lady's Tourney

The Tourney is the year's holy business: three days of contests in the goddess's honour, older than the Governor's office, drawing competitors from across the realm. For the week of it the city fills, everybody makes a year's money in six days, and the law goes quiet.

On the **eve of the Tourney**, every entrant in every event is presented to the Crown's representative by long form: names read, colours shown, and each competitor bare-headed for the space of a bow. It is ceremony, it is tedious, and it cannot be avoided without forfeiting the entry. It is also the only time before the sand that the Baron's champion must show his face in daylight.

The **first day** is the **Archery**, shot on the Long Butts beside the Lists: two hundred paces of grass, a crosswind off the lake that everybody complains about, and the Governor's box at the near end. It is the one open event. Anybody may shoot, with no colours and no fee, which makes it the only place all week where a person with no standing can stand in front of the Governor and be owed a hearing for as long as the crowd is watching.

The **second day** is the **Single Combat**, the only martial event: one-on-one bouts on the raked sand of the Lists, in front of four thousand people.

The **third day** is the **Run**, the only event that leaves the Tournament Ground. Competitors go out through the water-gate and race the whole city, on foot and by boat, by any route and with any help, and come back over open water to the temple steps. For two hours, Purewater has no crowd control at all. At dusk the Prince takes his place, and the **closing** begins: the prizes, the speeches and, behind a closed door, the champion's presentation.

Who Runs Purewater

Nobody runs all of it, and that is the trouble.

The **Prince** governs in the King's name, and he is two-and-twenty and has learned to sign things rather than to decide them. A **council of merchant princes** runs the city's daily business, and three of them got his signature onto the order that silenced the watch. **Marisette** rules every house on the Pearl, on nothing but the settled expectation that she will still be there afterwards. **Crowbill** owns the canals nobody maps, and keeps a code: no killing locals, no harming children, no touching the Lady's sites. **Marda Blackwater** speaks for three hundred dock labourers, and through them, for every boat on the water-stairs. The **Order** owns the water and may not act. The **Swords** may act and may not speak for the water. The **watch** has been ordered, in writing, to do nothing.

Each of them could stop the Baron, alone, if they were willing to spend themselves doing it. None of them will go first. That is the city the characters walk into.

A Week Under the Dragon

Nobody in Purewater calls it an occupation. Everybody goes round.

Eight days before the Tourney, an advance detachment of a dozen Dragon Knights came into the city to open the Baron's camp and provision his ship. On the day the characters arrive, the column comes in behind them and doubles their number. The characters do not walk into a city bracing for an occupation. They walk into one that has been living with a small one for a week and is watching it treble in an afternoon.

What It Looks Like

The **Dragon Knights** are a mercenary company of twenty-five, borderland raiders who have terrorised the Baron's marches for thirty years. They wear dragon-blazoned harness, and many carry fire-touched blades. The city calls them *the dragonshits*, quietly. They camp on a councillor's water-meadow two miles east of the walls, but they are not kept there.

They walk the Merchant's Quarter and the Forges in threes and fours. They take the middle of a bridge and let the city go round them in single file against the parapet. They eat and drink on the promise that *the Baron will settle*, and he settles late and short, so the stallholders have started pricing it in and everybody else's bread has gone up. They take boats off the water-stairs with the boatmen still in them, rowed wherever they like and left wherever they finish. Two boatmen have not come back. Six days before the Tourney, a dockhand named **Emmit Rill** was slow moving a barrow and had his jaw broken by a mailed fist in front of forty people. He is still not working.

Nobody is dead yet. Everybody expects somebody to be, and that expectation is the mood of the whole city.

Play the Knights as weather. They are in most outdoor scenes, mostly not fighting, always making the city smaller. A party that never draws a blade on them still spends the week watching people step off the pavement.

The Standing Order

Seven days ago, the morning after the first complaints about the advance detachment reached the watch, the city watch received a written instruction from the Governor's council: the Baron's people are guests of the Crown's representative, and complaints against them are to be **recorded and referred, and not acted upon**, until the Tourney is over. It went out over Prince Emeric's signature, and three of his councillors got it there, none of them for the same reason.

- **Alderic Vantt** drafted it. He is warm, funny and the best host in the city, and two winters ago the Baron quietly covered four thousand of his debts and asked for nothing. The Dragon Knights are camped on his grass, and he would like the week to pass without an incident that has his name on it. He is bought, and he has not said so even to his wife.
- **Hesketh Pyle** seconded it. Two years ago the Baron's people made his son's killing of a man go away, and kept the deposition. He has agreed with everything ever since. He is frightened.
- **Maro Quist** carried the chamber for it, on the merits. He is seventy-one, incorruptible and formidable, and he was given true facts in exactly the right order. He is sincere, and he is wrong.

None of them is a cultist. None of them knows what the Baron is actually doing. That matters, because a party that comes at the council expecting a conspiracy will find three ordinary men and nothing to arrest.

The watch is not corrupt. It has been ordered, in writing, and every sergeant in the city knows exactly how that will read afterwards. **Sergeant Abel Weir** of the Isle post keeps the referral book: thirty-one entries and counting, four inches of complaints he has been ordered to record and not to act on. He can recite every one from memory. He is looking for somebody who can use the book without making him the man who disobeyed.

What It Does to the City

The occupation presses on everybody differently, and each of them is a fuse.

The Dredgers work the water-stairs the Knights keep commandeering, and their leader, **Marda Blackwater**, has three hundred dock labourers who are angrier than she is, and no lawful way to settle it. She wants Rill paid, the two boatmen accounted for, and one Knight made to answer for something in front of a magistrate. If nobody gives her any of that, she has one lever left. On the eve of the Tourney she can stop the water-stairs, and with them every boat, barrel and competitor's kit in the city.

Crowbill's code is *no killing locals, no harming children, no touching the Lady's sites*, and the Knights are breaking the spirit of all three. He cannot be seen to enforce a code against armoured men without starting a war he would lose, and it is costing him standing every day. His collections come up short on the bridges the Knights stand on, because if the Knights do not have to pay, why should anybody?

The Pearl takes the worst of the nights and is the least able to complain, because complaining is bad for trade.

The Swords of the Lake answer to their order and not to the council, which makes **Temerach Nebulo** the only armed person in the city who could act against the Baron's men without disobeying anybody. She knows it. She is also holding an Archery entry she has spent four years earning.

How It Ends, If Nobody Ends It

Left alone, the occupation tightens. Every unanswered incident teaches the city a little more about what it is now. Stallholders price in theft, and boatmen work the far stairs. Two Knights beat a man in front of a watch patrol that walks away. A woman is taken off the Pearl street, and the house that objects is burned. Then a local is killed in the open and nothing is done, and on that day Purewater stops being a city and starts being an occupied one, and the Dredgers move whether Marda wants them to or not.

What stops it is not force. It stops when an incident lands somewhere the standing order does not reach: the Prince in person, the Order, a Sword of the Lake, or the Tourney ground itself, where a di Teufel cannot afford a scene. The Baron does not want a riot two days before he walks into a room with the Crown's nephew. Push the city hard enough, in public, and the Baron himself has to rein in his own men. That is the characters' first real victory over him, and it does not require a single sword.

Three Sons

Baron Hanzo di Teufel has three sons, and he knows about one of them.

Santo

The one he knows about is his heir. **Santo di Teufel** is nineteen, dressed beautifully and always slightly too warm for it, with rings on his fingers and a good sword he cannot really use. He is loud, generous and enormous fun for about an hour. He spends money on people to watch their faces. He has never had to wait for anything, and so he experiences an ordinary refusal the way other people experience being robbed.

His father is the only person alive who can make him feel small, and does it without raising his voice. Everything Santo does too loudly, he does at that distance. The Baron has nothing but contempt for a son who is not enough, and Santo knows it. He has taught himself a little demonology by tracing his father's work out of a locked case: he can open a channel to the spirits and he can see them, and that is the whole of it. He cannot seat a binding. He has no idea his father is planning anything bigger than a tournament.

This week he wants one thing, Emmeralda, and he has one stolen scroll to get her with. When it goes wrong, Santo does not run. He takes hold of whoever is nearest, because that has always worked for him, and nobody has ever made it stop working.

The Twins

The two the Baron does not know about were born in Purewater a little over twenty years ago, to a young elven mage he seduced and broke long before his open descent. She fled to the city to have them and died there when they were small. Nobody claimed them as a pair.

Randall was raised on the Pearl by the women of the Promise of Heaven, who are still, collectively, his family. He grew up a thief of the practical sort: locks, pockets, other people's routes and a very good read of a room. He knows every roof, ledge and water-stair on that island, and he has never in his life been more than four minutes from somebody who would hide him. He does not discuss his mother. People have been telling him all his life that he has somebody's face, and he has never once asked whose.

Conall went to Ashwick, to a militiaman's family, and was pulled out of a ditch at nineteen by an elf knight of the Swords of the Lake, who taught him to read and then taught him a good deal more. An old Master Assayer of the King's Assay recognised what he was as a boy, healed him, trained him and handed him on to her. Now he carries the Assay's warrant, its silver thumb-ring and a steel punch with his own mark on it, and he investigates things other people would rather call bad luck.

They have never met. They are identical, and they both wear the di Teufel face, which is Santo's face. In a city where nobody knows the heir by sight, that turns into three men with one face the moment somebody needs to find one of them.

Who Knows

Temerach Nebulo knows. She has known whose son Conall is since before she recruited him, and she brought him to Purewater on purpose. She has not told him, because the truth has been more useful to her kept than told. Before this week is out, that changes.

The Baron does not know, and he must not find out lightly. A living bastard of his blood is two things at once: a tool, and a claim on his name. He wants the tool, and he wants the claim extinguished, in that order. The moment anybody in his service sees two of that face together, or is *sold* the fact, he begins to hunt them. Quietly at first, with a name and a purse. Then Blau. Then the Knights. He will not announce a bastard to the city; he will take one off a street at night. And once he knows, he never stops.

This is the most dangerous thing the characters can set off, and it is set off by being seen. That makes every public scene the twins share a real decision. A guard who sees Randall in the wrong place sees Santo slipping his leash, and thinks nothing more of it. A guard who sees Randall and Conall side by side sees the end of the Baron's line, and runs to tell somebody. In the natural course of the week, the person who sells the secret is a canal-rat with a grudge called Sinnit, and he sells it on the eve of the Tourney unless somebody has made peace with him first.

If Santo dies, everything above happens at once. With the heir gone, the twins are the only di Teufel blood walking, and that is a dagger at the Baron's name.

Why Nobody Can Arrest a Baron

At some point in the first two days, a player will say, reasonably, "We have the scroll in his handwriting. We take it to the watch." This chapter is what happens next, and it is the backbone of the scenario's middle.

Justice Is a Person

Nobody in this story is going to arrest Baron Hanzo di Teufel. There is no prosecutor, no impartial bench that binds a lord, and no body of officers who may lay hands on one. Justice in Thornmere flows from **King Ostmar** at Caldreth, and nowhere else. In Purewater it flows through his representative, **Prince Emeric**, who may act in the King's name today, in this city, on his own word.

Everything else is administration: the watch, the guilds, the port and the Assay. Administration can record, refuse, impound, close a workshop and turn a man away from a berth. It cannot touch a baron.

Standing

Not just anybody may accuse a lord. A dockhand's word against a baron is not a small case; it is no case at all. To call a lord to answer, a person must have **standing**:

- **another lord,** or the Crown's own representative;
- **a knight of a recognised order,** sworn and in good standing, which is precisely what Temerach Nebulo is;
- **a Crown officer under warrant,** within their charter, as Conall is as an assayer of the King's Assay;
- **a priest of a recognised faith,** within hers: the Lady's clergy may speak to what is done to the water;
- **a guild master,** within his guild and no further.

So the characters' real problem is never *finding proof*. They will find proof by the second afternoon. The problem is **finding somebody with standing who is willing to spend themselves**, and giving them enough that they will.

Accusation Is a Wager

To accuse a great lord and fail is to answer for it yourself, with ruin, exile or the rope. Abel Weir knows that, which is why a sergeant keeps a book instead of acting. Alderic Vantt knows it, which is why a bought man stays bought. Maro Quist knows it and would make the accusation anyway if he were shown enough, and would be destroyed if he were wrong.

Nobody makes that wager on a rumour, and that is what all the documents in this scenario are actually for. The referral book, the spent scroll, the Tide Master's original notes and the Assay's written finding: none of them convicts anybody. Each is a thing you put in front of a person with standing so that they will risk their name.

There is a sting in it, too. A lord who is called to answer may refuse the matter and offer **trial by arms**, or by his champion's arms. The Baron has a champion nobody has ever seen fight. That is why Temerach has carried her right to accuse him for four years and never once used it: she is too good a soldier to open with a move whose answer she cannot predict.

Three Courts the Standing Order Cannot Reach

The standing order shields the Baron's men from the city's own law and touches nothing else. Three jurisdictions lie beyond it, and finding the one that fits is the game of the middle of the week.

The King's Assay. Seating a spirit in an unwilling person is a hanging matter under the Assay's charter, and nine lines of binding in an unregistered hand are an offence before anybody asks whose hand it is. An assayer under warrant may lay a written finding before the Crown with his own name and punch on it. The Assay's doctrine is *establish, record, refer*: it investigates and writes things down, and it does not act. And its Table sits at Caldreth, days

away, so its answer arrives after everything has happened. Conall carries the warrant, and he will have to decide more than once whether he is an investigator or a man with a brother.

Maritime law. Every hull on Purewater's water is written down by the Harbor Masters, including the Baron's ship, and commandeering a working boat with its boatman still in it is a matter for the port, not the council. Harbormaster Velen Deepkeel can recite the rule being broken all the way to the end. Nobody has ever asked him for the page.

The Order's sacred ground. The water is the goddess's, and so are the Tournament Ground's rites. Temple law binds the clergy until a sacred site is threatened, and a demon-marked blade laid on the altar in front of witnesses is a threat nobody can argue with. A Sword of the Lake may act on desecration without asking anybody: the moment Temerach knows that the champion is a bound spirit in a stolen boy, the calculation inverts, because that is the goddess's own business.

A Party-Shaped Hole

The Order knows the water is fouling and cannot act. The Swords can act and cannot declare anything about the water. Each could solve the other's problem in an afternoon, and neither will ask, because the forms give them no way to ask that does not read as one house claiming precedence over the other.

Somebody who belongs to neither house can carry the words between them, and it costs nothing but the walk. It is one of the cheapest and largest wins in the scenario, and it is invisible until a player looks at Nerissa and Temerach and asks why they are not already working together. Reward that question generously.

PART

People and Places in Purewater

The City, Island by Island

The map below is canon: where a description and the map disagree, the map wins. Each district sheet that follows enlarges part of it, with a numbered key. Crosses mark places, discs mark taverns and amenities, and squares mark posts of the city watch. **Nothing secret is lettered on any district sheet,** so you can put them on the table, and you should. "How do we get there?" is a real question in Purewater, and the answer is always a bridge, a stair, a ferry or a fare.



Figure 1: Purewater Map

Getting About

Three facts shape every journey, and players learn them fastest by running into them.

No bridge crosses the Grand Canal. The North Quarter and the Merchant's Quarter meet only by ferry: the Palazzo Ferry and the Guild Ferry.

No bridge reaches the Lullwater or Temple Isle. The first is reached by boat from Shilling Stairs, at a shilling a crossing, and somebody always sees who paid. The second is reached only by the temple's own ferries, deliberately, so that the profane city cannot simply walk onto holy ground.

The Triumph Bridge is the only way in by land. Everything else comes by water.

A character who needs to cross water hires a boatman, finds a ferry, steals a punt, or swims. Make the choice matter. A boatman is a witness; a stolen punt is a crime in a city where everybody knows whose boat that is; a swimmer arrives wet, and in the eastern yards near the Baron's ship the water is warm in a way it should not be. Every local can swim. Almost no Dragon Knight can.

The Pearl

The pleasure island lies off the North Quarter, lamplit and lovely over dark water: a long island with a lobe at each end, its sheltered south shore one long waterfront called **Pearl Quay**. The houses string their lamps along it like pearls. The **Siren's Call**, grandest of them, stands at the foot of the **Lantern Bridge**, the island's front door. The **Sylph's Embrace** is next along, then **Marisette's** house, the **Mother of Pearl**, plain and signless in the middle of the quay. The poorer **Promise of Heaven**, where Randall was raised, sits at the south-western end by the Old Span and the Hush Bridge, and the **Lily Garden** stands among the trees of the western lobe. To the east, the **Widow's Bridge** crosses to a walled islet and a house that has been shuttered for two hundred years.

At dusk the doorman of the Mother of Pearl carries a flame from the Widow's lamp down the quay, every house lights its lamps from it, and then the Lantern Bridge is lit, post by post, and must not go dark before dawn. Old Nan sells eel pies on the quay and knows the name of everybody who passes and says all of them. The watch box at the North Quarter end of the Lantern Bridge is unmanned after dark: the Pearl keeps its own order.

This week, the scenario opens here. Santo buys Emmeralda's evening at the Sylph's Embrace on the first night. On the second day he comes back for her by boat if the working took, Sinnit spreads his poison from stair to wine-shop, and at dusk Santo loses his temper on the quay with fire. By that night, every door on the island is shut to the Dragon Knights.

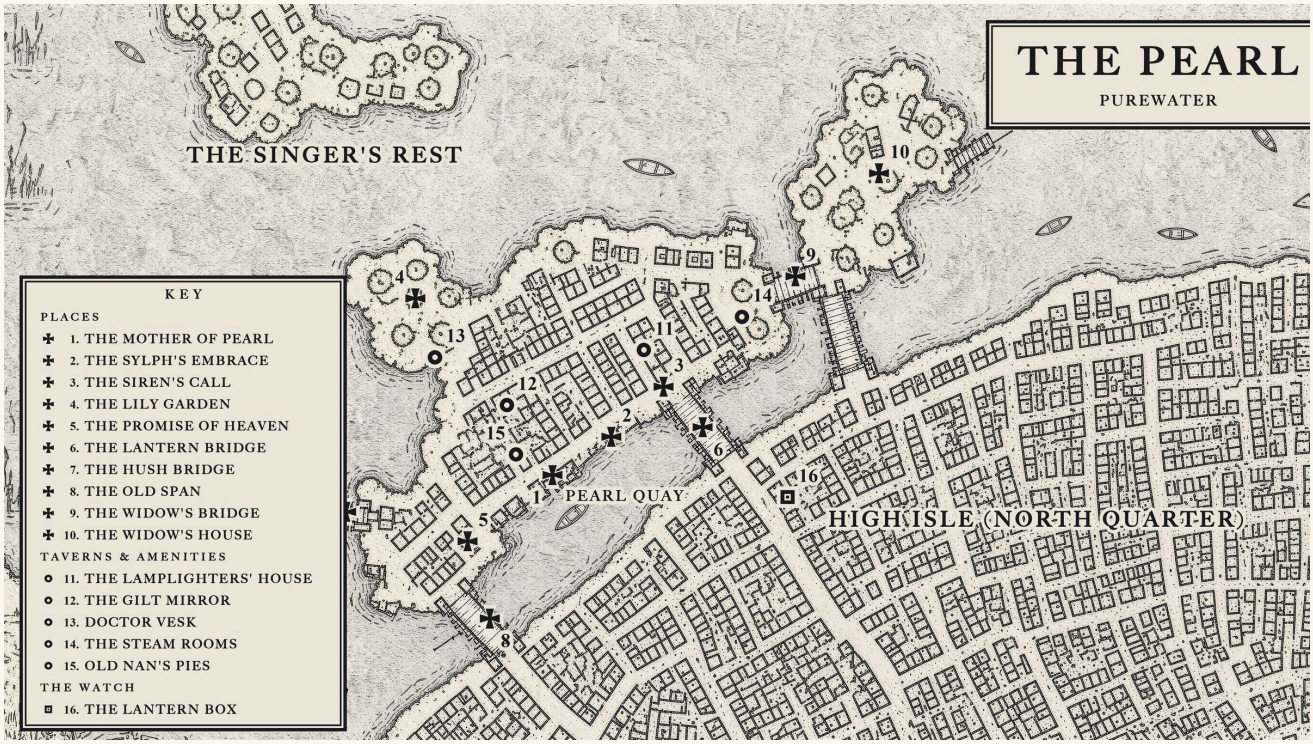


Figure 2: The Pearl

Table 1: The Pearl, Key

No.	Name	Kind	Note
1	The Mother of Pearl	Place	-
2	The Sylph's Embrace	Place	-
3	The Siren's Call	Place	-

No.	Name	Kind	Note
4	The Lily Garden	Place	-
5	The Promise of Heaven	Place	-
6	The Lantern Bridge	Place	-
7	The Hush Bridge	Place	-
8	The Old Span	Place	-
9	The Widow's Bridge	Place	-
10	The Widow's House	Place	-
11	The Lamplighters' House	Tavern or amenity	the men who carry the Widow's flame along the Quay and over the Lantern Bridge every dusk
12	The Gilt Mirror	Tavern or amenity	perfumer and wig-maker to the houses; the best gossip on the island, all of it second-hand
13	Doctor Vesk	Tavern or amenity	a discreet physician who treats the houses' women for free and their clients for a great deal
14	The Steam Rooms	Tavern or amenity	a bathhouse, mixed, where nobody uses their real name
15	Old Nan's Pies	Tavern or amenity	an eel-pie stall on the Quay; Nan knows the name of every person who passes and says all of them
16	The Lantern Box	Watch post	a watch box at the North Quarter end of the Lantern Bridge, unmanned after dark; the Pearl keeps its own order

The Lullwater

Off to the north-east, across open water from the Tournament Ground, reached by no bridge, lies the city's poor-and-criminal quarter: the narrowest, most crooked canals in Purewater, and tenements leaning over them until they almost touch overhead. Its name sounds gentle, a lull and a still water, and that is the joke of it. Thieves, dredgers, smugglers and dockhands all live crammed into the same drowned maze, and the quarter likes being hard to reach.

One straight canal, **the Gutter**, runs down the island's spine, crossed by a handful of plank bridges. It is the only water in the quarter wide enough for two boats. Just west of it, at the heart of the island, lies **the Still**, a small round pool of dead water ringed by tenements, with the **Moist Oyster** tavern on its north-western edge. Boats from High Isle put in at **Shilling Stairs** on the west shore, where the boatmen drink at the Lamprey while you do your business. The **Dredgers' Hall** stands on the south shore. **Crowbill** keeps no house: for thirty years he has sat on the flat lead roof over the cookshop ovens beside the Gutter, the warmest place in Purewater in October, eating out of a paper. The watch post here has its door nailed shut. The watch comes over only to fish out the dead.

It is easy to get lost here and dangerous to look lost, as Conall learns on his first evening. If the locket is stolen, this is where the Baron comes looking for it, and on the last day this is the quarter that fights back, and burns.

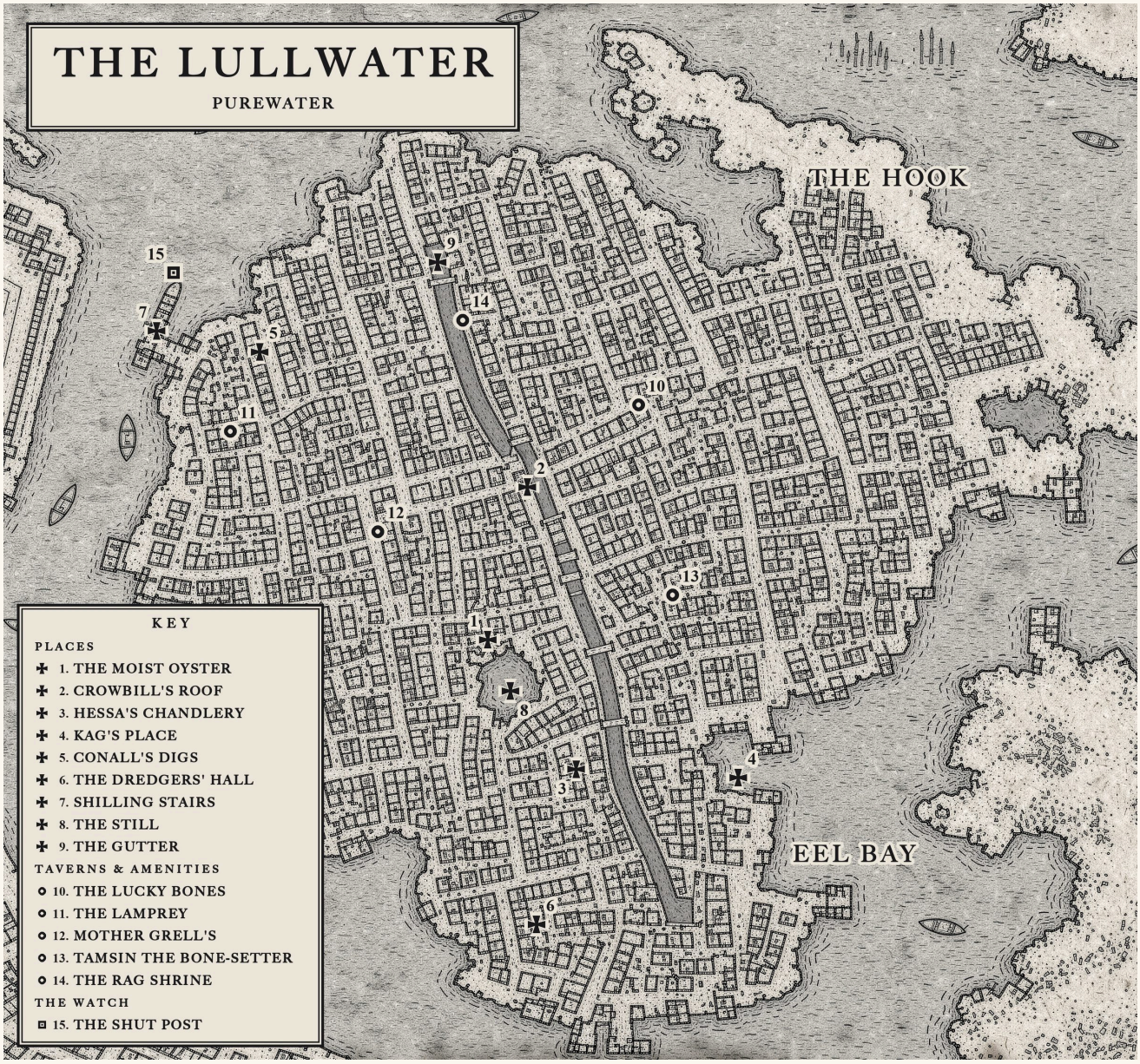


Figure 3: The Lullwater

Table 2: The Lullwater, Key

No.	Name	Kind	Note
1	The Moist Oyster	Place	-
2	Crowbill's Roof	Place	-
3	Hessa's Chandlery	Place	-
4	Kag's Place	Place	-
5	Conall's Digs	Place	-
6	The Dredgers' Hall	Place	-
7	Shilling Stairs	Place	-
8	The Still	Place	-
9	The Gutter	Place	-

No.	Name	Kind	Note
10	The Lucky Bones	Tavern or amenity	Crowbill's dice den, up a back stair; the house never cheats, because it never needs to
11	The Lamprey	Tavern or amenity	boatmen's alehouse at the head of Shilling Stairs; whoever rowed you over is drinking here by the time you leave
12	Mother Grell's	Tavern or amenity	pawnbroker; buys anything, asks nothing, remembers everything
13	Tamsin the Bone-Setter	Tavern or amenity	the only physician who will come to the Lullwater, and she lives in it
14	The Rag Shrine	Tavern or amenity	a Dredgers' shrine under the Gutter's north bridge, hung with strips of cloth for the drowned
15	The Shut Post	Watch post	a watch post with its door nailed shut; the watch comes over only to fish out the dead

The Shoals

The seaward jaw of the Mouth: a low, ragged island at the city's south-east corner, facing the open sea and taking its weather. The middle is the **Fishmarket**: stalls, fish-sheds, barrels and boats hauled up on the stones. At the foot of the **Fishmarket Bridge** from the Forges is the **Fishmarket Stair**, the busiest water-stair in the city. Along the south-western arm run the **Low Canals**, four thousand people living on plank walkways and stilt-houses, and at its tip, the smugglers' jetties. The net-lofts and ice-houses stand on the east side; Crowbill sits in the back of Marn's ice-house with a lamp at two in the morning. The Dredgers are strongest here, and the Harbor Masters' tower across the water can see the front jetties and not the back ones.

This week, the Knights' commandeered boats come off these stairs, and the boatmen who do not come back are Shoals men. If nobody answers the Dredgers' grievance, it is at the head of the Fishmarket Stair that Marda Blackwater stands at dawn on the eve of the Tourney, entirely reasonable, while not one boat moves in the city behind her.



Figure 4: The Shoals

Table 3: The Shoals, Key

No.	Name	Kind	Note
1	The Fishmarket Bridge	Place	-
2	The Fishmarket Stair	Place	-
3	Marn's Ice-House	Place	-
4	Deller's Net-Loft	Place	-
5	The Middle Jetty	Place	-
6	The Smugglers' Jetties	Place	-
7	The DragonBarge Pier	Place	-
8	The Causeway Bridge	Place	-
9	The Tideflats Bridge	Place	-
10	The Salt Herring	Tavern or amenity	dockside alehouse for the fish-porters and the dredge crews; the Fishmarket sergeant drinks here and writes nothing down
11	The Pie Stall	Tavern or amenity	eel pies off the market's first catch, hot from four in the morning
12	The Wave Shrine	Tavern or amenity	a Dredgers' shrine under the Fishmarket Bridge, chalked with the white wave
13	Tolliver Brothers	Tavern or amenity	rope and tar, and the same joke since spring; on Kag's round
14	The Stilt Chapel	Tavern or amenity	a chapel of the Lady on stilts in the Low Canals, reached by rope bridge
15	The Fishmarket Post	Watch post	the watch post on the market; it records, refers, and keeps its

No.	Name	Kind	Note
			shutters half-closed toward the bridge

The Lists and Temple Isle

At the east end of the North Quarter stands the walled **Tournament Ground**: a six-sided list of raked sand inside a rope, ringed by tiered timber stands for four thousand people, with the **Governor's box** built into the western stand and hung with lake-green cloth. Behind the box is a small stone room with one door from the box stair and one to the outside: the room where the champion is presented, alone and unarmed. The **Long Butts**, where the Archery is shot, run along the ground's north side. The **water-gate** in the east wall, with broad steps down into the lake, is where the Run goes out. The bookmakers outside the east wall have the Baron's champion odds-on, and nobody likes it.

Just north, across a narrow water and in plain sight of the stands, lies **Temple Isle**: one walled precinct around the **Sacred Confluence**, the great round pool where the purest lake-water wells up. The temple stands at the north end, cloisters run down both sides, and broad **water-steps** go down into the lake at the south, facing the Lists between two towers. The Lady's blessing and the Washing are held on those steps.

What makes this the right place for an ending is that **everything is visible from everywhere.** The steps, the box, the sand and the Lullwater's skyline across the water can all be seen from every seat. The presentation, the Archery, the Single Combat and the closing all happen here, in front of the whole city.

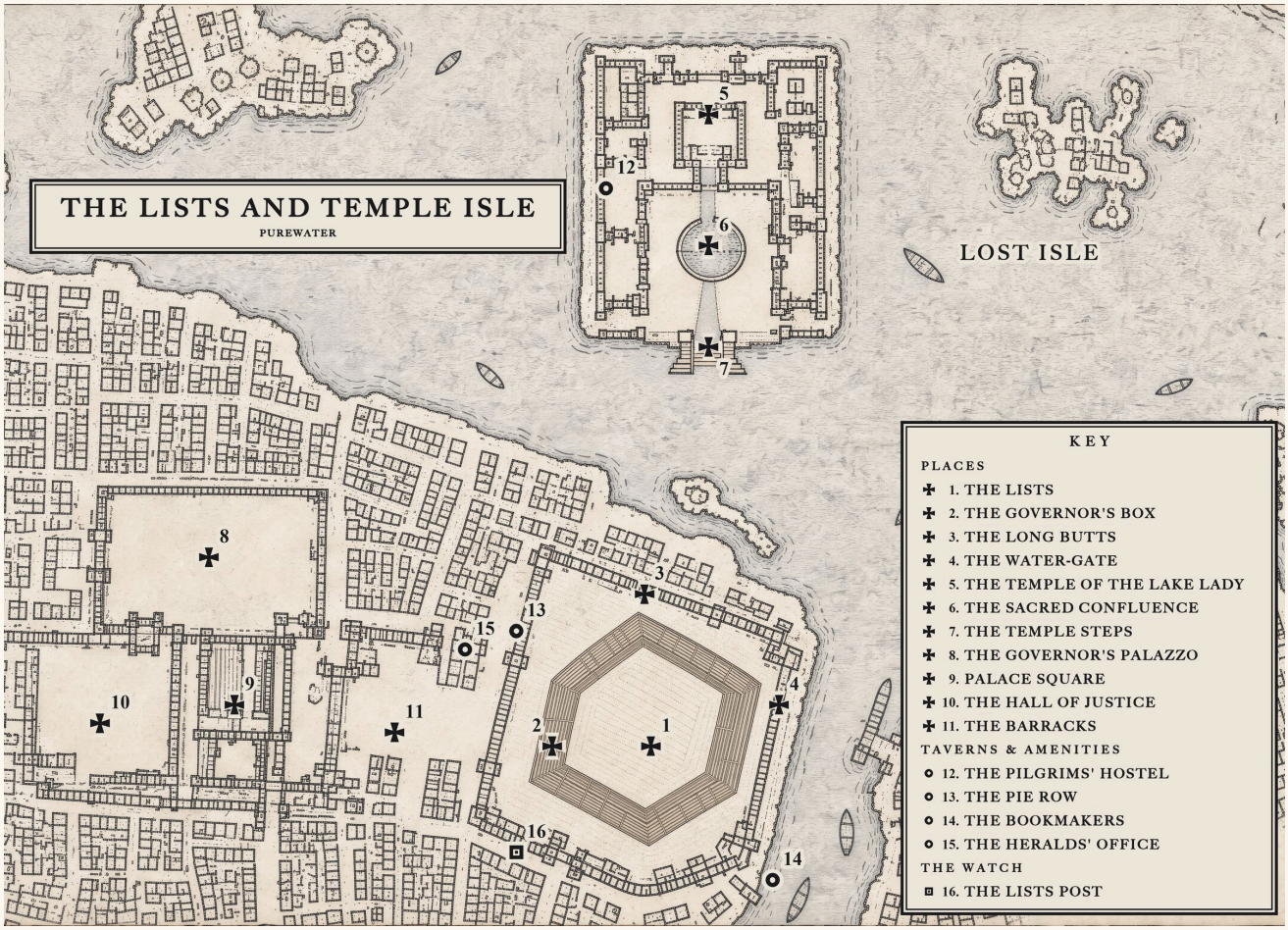


Figure 5: The Lists and Temple Isle

Table 4: The Lists and Temple Isle, Key

No.	Name	Kind	Note
1	The Lists	Place	-
2	The Governor's Box	Place	-
3	The Long Butts	Place	-
4	The Water-Gate	Place	-
5	The Temple of the Lake Lady	Place	-
6	The Sacred Confluence	Place	-
7	The Temple Steps	Place	-
8	The Governor's Palazzo	Place	-
9	Palace Square	Place	-
10	The Hall of Justice	Place	-
11	The Barracks	Place	-
12	The Pilgrims' Hostel	Tavern or amenity	cells in the temple's west cloister for pilgrims who have walked a long way
13	The Pie Row	Tavern or amenity	pie and ale stalls along the stands, packed on Tourney days
14	The Bookmakers	Tavern or amenity	odds chalked on boards outside the east wall; the champion is odds-on and nobody likes it
15	The Heralds' Office	Tavern or amenity	the entries, the colours and the order of precedence, argued over in whispers
16	The Lists Post	Watch post	the Tourney watch post, whose yard the Knights have taken for horse-lines; the watch now works from a hired room

Caravan Square

Purewater's only land approach, on the western shore: a walled waterfront of staging-yards and warehouses where the Caravan Road ends. Caravans unload in the **wagon park**, beasts stand in the **beast yard**, and everything is broken down into boats, in public, slowly, one crate at a time. The road ends at the **Gate of Triumph**, which everybody calls the Land Gate, and the **Triumph Bridge** crosses the landward channel to the customs house on the Merchant's Quarter shore. A **Ferry Stage** at the square's southern end serves everything that goes by water.

This week, the Baron's column comes through here on the first day, with the litter in the middle of it, and three Knights stand in the middle of the bridge eating while the city edges round them.

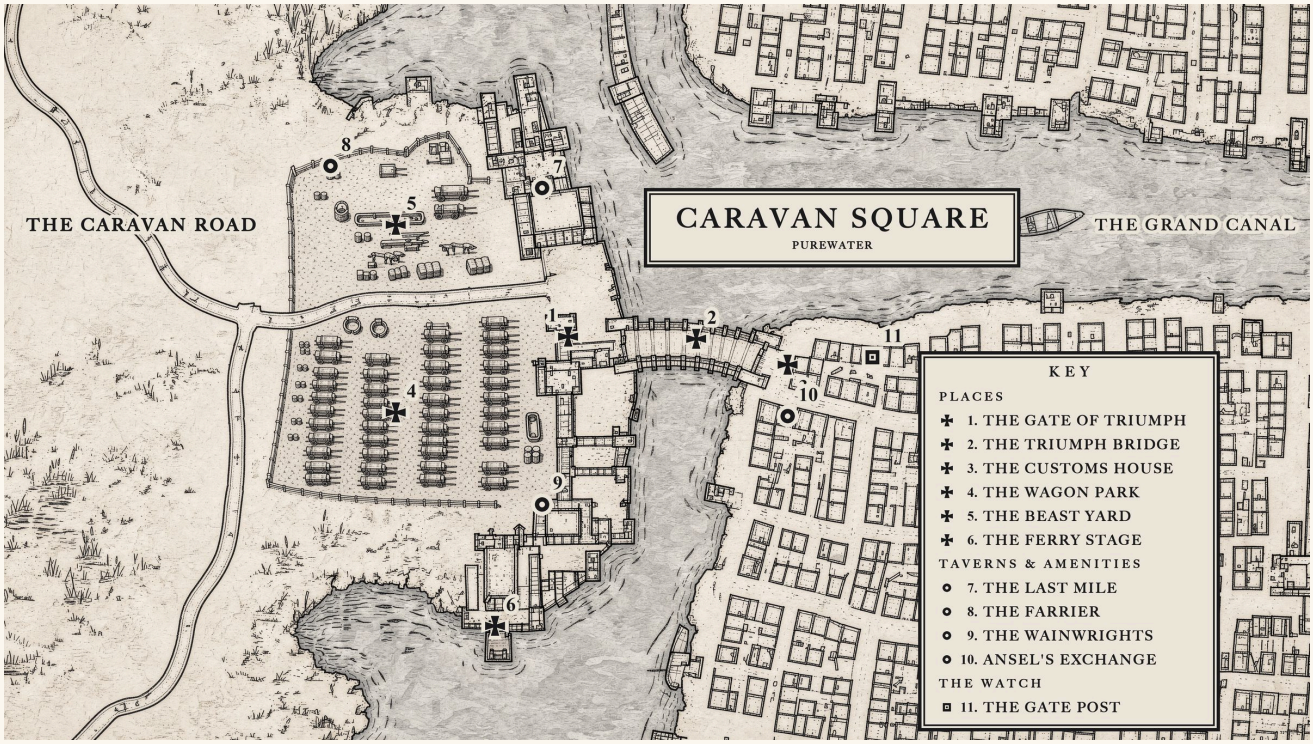


Figure 6: Caravan Square

Table 5: Caravan Square, Key

No.	Name	Kind	Note
1	The Gate of Triumph	Place	-
2	The Triumph Bridge	Place	-
3	The Customs House	Place	-
4	The Wagon Park	Place	-
5	The Beast Yard	Place	-
6	The Ferry Stage	Place	-
7	The Last Mile	Tavern or amenity	carters' inn on the waterfront, the first and last drink of every caravan
8	The Farrier	Tavern or amenity	shoes the caravan teams in the beast yard, and the Baron's horses too
9	The Wainwrights	Tavern or amenity	wagon repair, and a buyer for any wagon that will not be going home
10	Ansel's Exchange	Tavern or amenity	moneychanger by the customs house; every coin of the borderland at a rate that changes when he sees you
11	The Gate Post	Watch post	the watch post at the customs end of the Triumph Bridge, whose watchman does nothing about the three Knights in the middle of it

The Forges and the Docks

High Isle's industrial island: foundries and boatyards, many of them dwarf-run, coal and ore heaped in open yards, chimneys trailing smoke over the water day and night. The **Forge Tower** stands over the south shore, and below it, at a gated private pier, lies the **DragonBarge**, steaming where its hull meets the water. The corruption is worst here, and the heat is felt most in these eastern yards. A few streets west of the Foundries, **Orsk & Daughter**, goldsmiths, cut the mark on Santo's knife to a servant's drawing and kept the drawing, as they keep all of them. The Seaward Quarter's docks run along the south shore, a comb of piers with the round **Harbour Master's Tower** at the tip of the longest mole. The watch's busiest post has quietly stopped sending patrols anywhere near the barge pier.

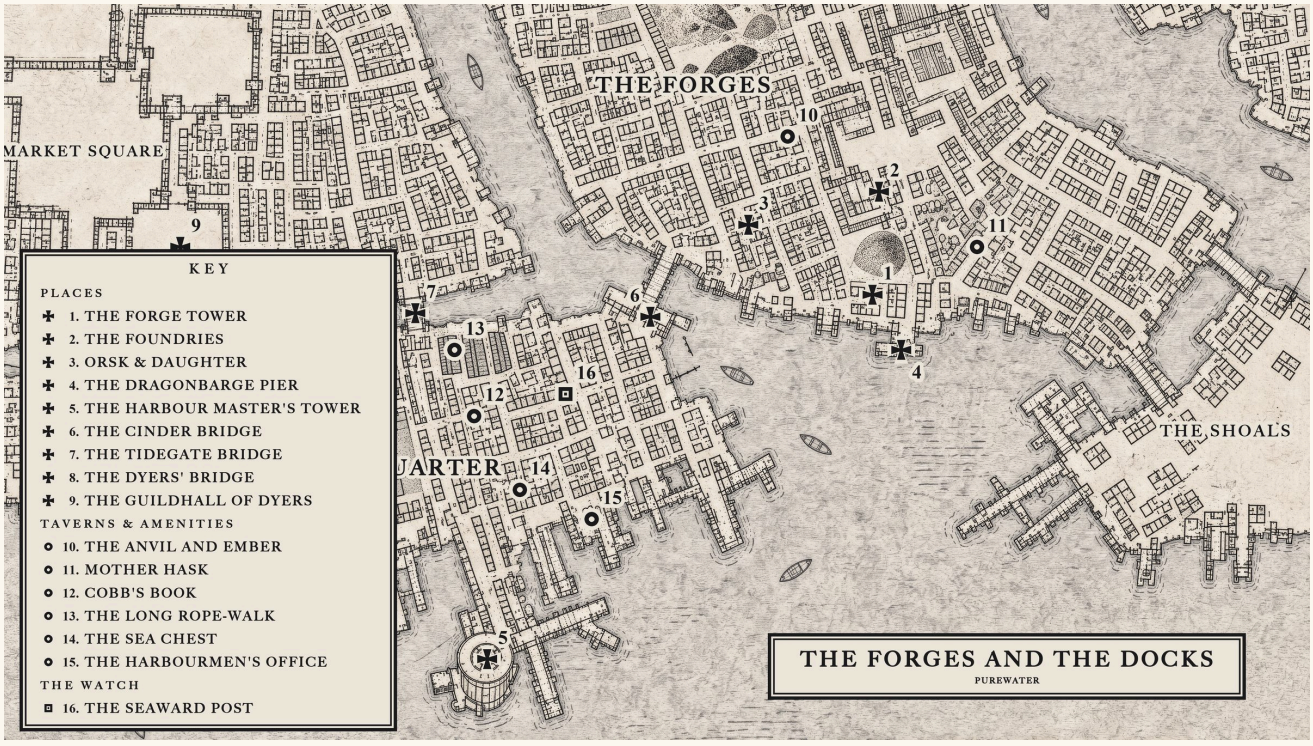


Figure 7: The Forges and the Docks

Table 6: The Forges and the Docks, Key

No.	Name	Kind	Note
1	The Forge Tower	Place	-
2	The Foundries	Place	-
3	Orsk & Daughter	Place	-
4	The DragonBarge Pier	Place	-
5	The Harbour Master's Tower	Place	-
6	The Cinder Bridge	Place	-
7	The Tidegate Bridge	Place	-
8	The Dyers' Bridge	Place	-
9	The Guildhall of Dyers	Place	-
10	The Anvil and Ember	Tavern or amenity	the smiths' tavern, where the Forge Quarter decides which work it will refuse
11	Mother Hask	Tavern or amenity	burns-healer to the yards, the nearest help for a burned apprentice
12	Cobb's Book	Tavern or amenity	bookmaker taking odds on the Tourney, very short on the

No.	Name	Kind	Note
			Baron's champion, and unhappy about it
13	The Long Rope-Walk	Tavern or amenity	the ropemakers' sheds, a quarter-mile of walking backwards
14	The Sea Chest	Tavern or amenity	sailors' lodging-house; the cheapest bed in the city with a lock on the door
15	The Harbourmen's Office	Tavern or amenity	the Harbor Masters' dockside office, where a berth registration is a public record
16	The Seaward Post	Watch post	the busiest post in the city, which has quietly stopped sending patrols anywhere near the barge pier

The North Quarter

The long northern island facing the open lake. Its western half is houses, rich toward the Pearl and middling eastward; its eastern half is the official quarter, with the **Governor's Palazzo**, the **Hall of Justice** and the **Barracks** around Palace Square. **The Processional**, a wide paved avenue lined with the bigger houses, sweeps down from the Pearl's bridges toward the Grand Canal. Competitors' families stay at the Gilded Swan. Two ferries cross the canal: the Palazzo Ferry and the Guild Ferry.

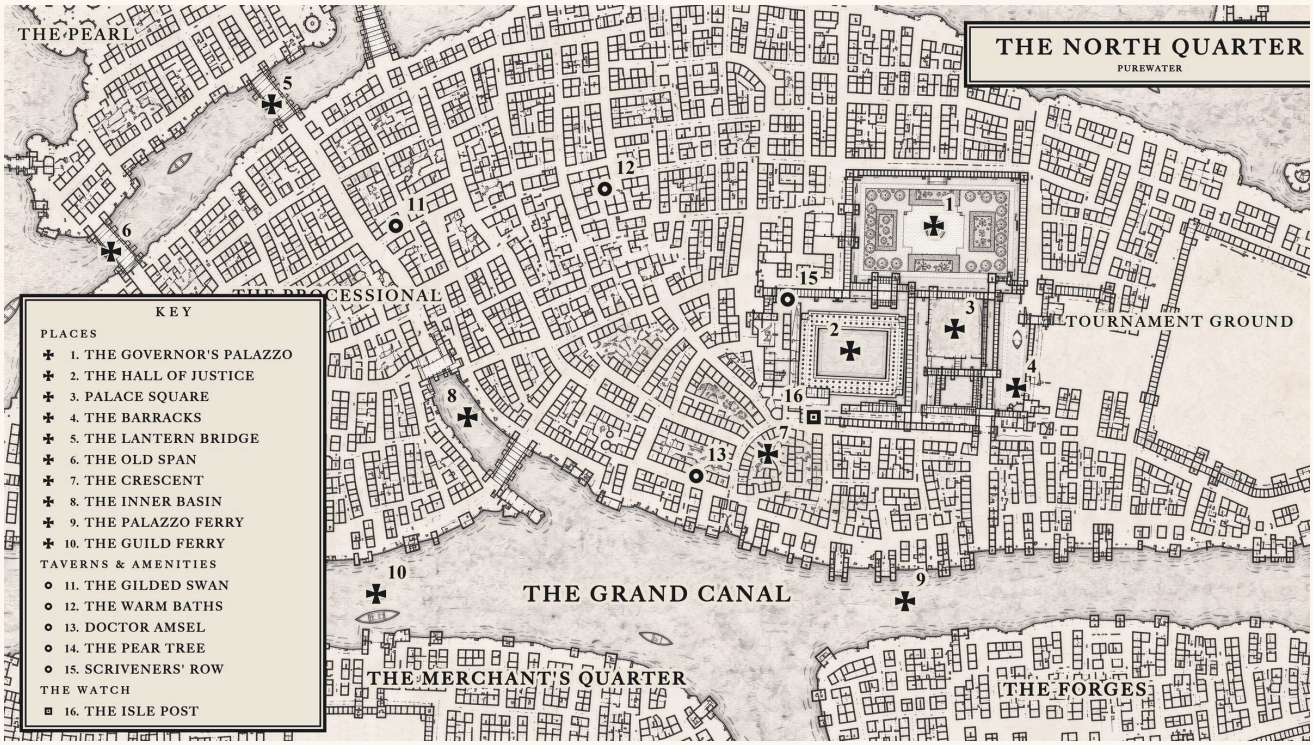


Figure 8: The North Quarter

Table 7: The North Quarter, Key

No.	Name	Kind	Note
1	The Governor's Palazzo	Place	-
2	The Hall of Justice	Place	-

No.	Name	Kind	Note
3	Palace Square	Place	-
4	The Barracks	Place	-
5	The Lantern Bridge	Place	-
6	The Old Span	Place	-
7	The Crescent	Place	-
8	The Inner Basin	Place	-
9	The Palazzo Ferry	Place	-
10	The Guild Ferry	Place	-
11	The Gilded Swan	Tavern or amenity	the respectable inn on the Processional, where competitors' families stay
12	The Warm Baths	Tavern or amenity	a public bathhouse, the warmest place on the island, and the most indiscreet
13	Doctor Amsel	Tavern or amenity	physician by the Crescent, sent for by minor lords for embarrassing things
14	The Pear Tree	Tavern or amenity	a wine house at the rich west end, where the off-duty watch drink where the dragonshits do not go
15	Scriveners' Row	Tavern or amenity	clerks, notaries and copyists under the Hall of Justice's walls
16	The Isle Post	Watch post	the watch-house of High Isle, where Captain Sarn commands and Sergeant Abel Weir keeps the four-inch referral book

The Merchant's Quarter

The South Quarter, where the Triumph Bridge brings the caravan trade ashore and the city's money is made, weighed and quietly steered. The walled **Market Square** fills the middle, ringed by the guildhalls of the Merchants, Coopers and Dyers. The **Watercrafters' Guild** stands on the west shore with its own slipway. The palazzi of the merchant princes line the Grand Canal, each with its own water-gate, and three of them belong to the councillors who carried the standing order: **Palazzo Vantt** and **Palazzo Pyle** at the west end, and **Palazzo Quist**, the oldest, further east. Under the arcade on the square, the moneychangers are refusing di Teufel credit notes, loudly.

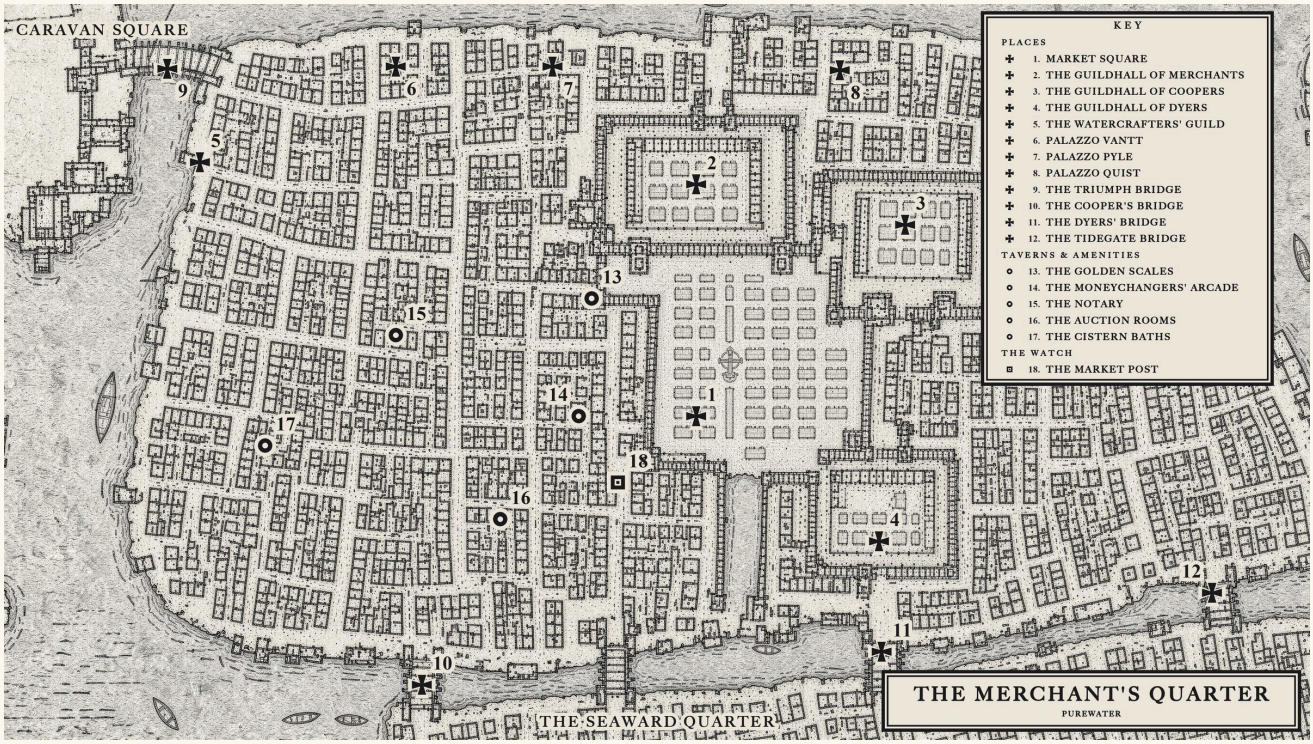


Figure 9: The Merchant's Quarter

Table 8: The Merchant's Quarter, Key

No.	Name	Kind	Note
1	Market Square	Place	-
2	The Guildhall of Merchants	Place	-
3	The Guildhall of Coopers	Place	-
4	The Guildhall of Dyers	Place	-
5	The Watercrafters' Guild	Place	-
6	Palazzo Vantt	Place	-
7	Palazzo Pyle	Place	-
8	Palazzo Quist	Place	-
9	The Triumph Bridge	Place	-
10	The Cooper's Bridge	Place	-
11	The Dyers' Bridge	Place	-
12	The Tidegate Bridge	Place	-
13	The Golden Scales	Tavern or amenity	the factors' wine house; more business is done at its tables than in the Guildhall
14	The Moneychangers' Arcade	Tavern or amenity	under the arcade on the square's west side; refusing di Teufel credit notes, loudly
15	The Notary	Tavern or amenity	contracts, deeds and public notices; the notice board outside draws a crowd
16	The Auction Rooms	Tavern or amenity	a dead man's stock sold every week, sometimes with his widow present
17	The Cistern Baths	Tavern or amenity	bathhouse for the clerks and apprentices

No.	Name	Kind	Note
18	The Market Post	Watch post	the watch post on the square, whose patrols now route round the quarter rather than be seen not acting

The Realm Beyond

Purewater is one city in a larger kingdom. King Ostmar rules from Caldreth, far away and content, surrounded by men who have been the Baron's friends for thirty years. The Baron's border estate, and the tower where Thuban's bones lie, is four days' hard riding from the city. Every ending of this scenario points there.



Figure 10: The Realm Of Thornmere

Houses, Ships and Cellars

The scenario keeps coming back to a handful of buildings. Each has a plan, and each plan is drawn so that the scenes set there can be played out on it: who is in which room, which stair is quiet, which door opens onto the water.

The Sylph's Embrace

Constantine's house on Pearl Quay: four storeys, narrow at the street and running deep back to the water, with walls thick enough to muffle the night's business. Its back rises straight out of the basin, with no path between the house and the water.

On the **ground floor**, the flagstoned front hall is where the doorkeeper sits and where a young man with no name buys Emmeralda's evening on the first night. Across the water side, the **salon** with its little dancing floor is where she dances. **Constantine's office** looks onto the street. In the water-side corner beside the salon is the **private water-stair**, a covered boat-slip open to the basin with a skiff kept in it. That is where Santo means to take her out, and where his covered skiff comes back for her the next day. The best rooms and Constantine's own chamber are on the **first floor**. **Emmeralda's room** is the big room at the back of the **second floor**, over the basin, with the armoire standing out from the wall in the corner and a big rug in the middle of the floor. In the **attic**, the younger girls sleep in a dormitory, and the cold top back room with the sticking shutter is where Magda and Gardwen lodge, with the wolf asleep by the door.

Two stairs run through the house. The grand stair goes from the hall to the second floor. The narrow **back stair** runs from the attic down past Emmeralda's floor to the water-stair. It is the quiet way through the whole house, and the one Santo runs down. Two women lodging at the top of it are bound to hear him.

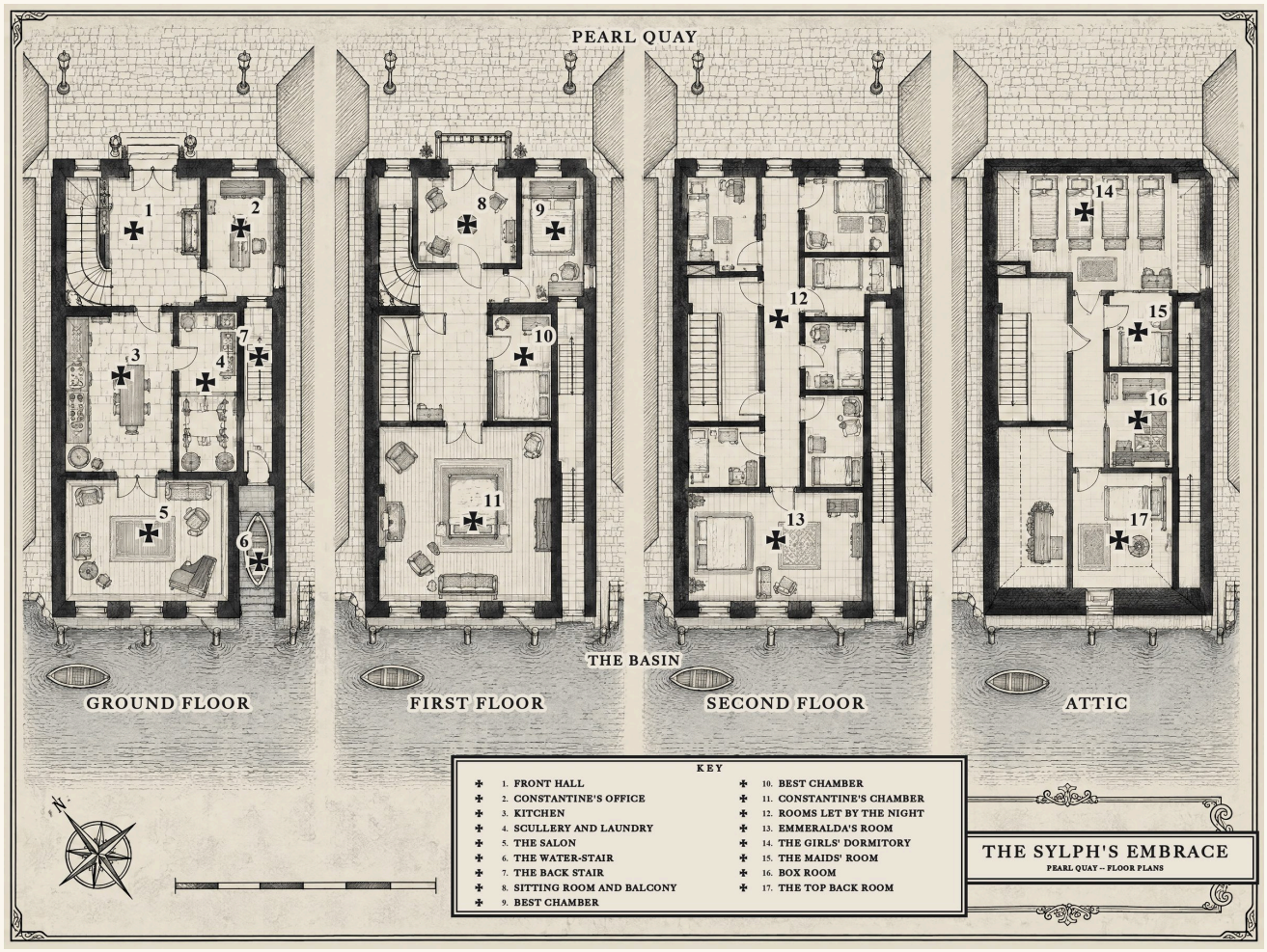


Figure 11: The Sylph's Embrace

Table 9: The Sylph's Embrace, Key

No.	Name	Kind	Note
1	Front hall	Place	-
2	Constantine's office	Place	-
3	Kitchen	Place	-
4	Scullery and laundry	Place	-
5	The salon	Place	-
6	The water-stair	Place	-
7	The back stair	Place	-
8	Sitting room and balcony	Place	-
9	Best chamber	Place	-
10	Best chamber	Place	-
11	Constantine's chamber	Place	-
12	Rooms let by the night	Place	-
13	Emmeralda's room	Place	-
14	The girls' dormitory	Place	-
15	The maids' room	Place	-
16	Box room	Place	-
17	The top back room	Place	-

The Mother of Pearl

Marisette's house, and through it the seat of her authority over the whole island: the oldest house on the quay and the only one that has never needed to advertise. It has a plain water-stair, a doorman who already knows who you are, and no sign of any kind. You do not go there until you are worth meeting. She receives; she does not travel.

The doorman's lodge beside the deep front arch keeps the Widow's lamp burning in a niche. On the **first floor**, Marisette's **audience room** is small and comfortable, with one good chair by the fire for her and the others set back against the walls. She sits; everybody else stands. Beside it are the **counting room**, where the ledgers of eleven houses are kept, and the small bare room of her enforcer, Hesper. In the **cellar**, among the vaulted storerooms, is a lock-up with a ring in the wall, where the house keeps somebody it has taken until it has decided what they are. At the far end, an old bricked arch holds a heavy door, and behind it a stair goes down into the old galleries under the city.

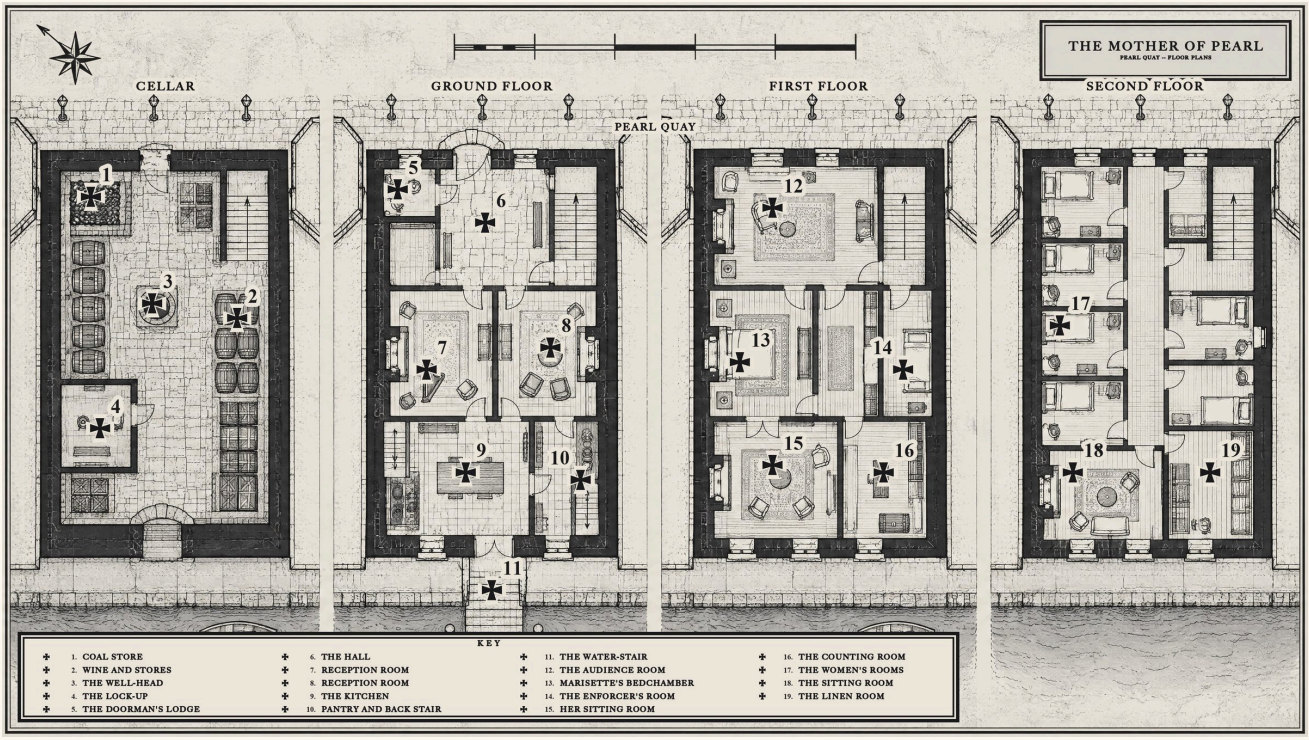


Figure 12: The Mother of Pearl

Table 10: The Mother of Pearl, Key

No.	Name	Kind	Note
1	Coal store	Place	-
2	Wine and stores	Place	-
3	The well-head	Place	-
4	The lock-up	Place	-
5	The doorman's lodge	Place	-
6	The hall	Place	-
7	Reception room	Place	-
8	Reception room	Place	-
9	The kitchen	Place	-
10	Pantry and back stair	Place	-
11	The water-stair	Place	-
12	The audience room	Place	-
13	Marisette's bedchamber	Place	-

No.	Name	Kind	Note
14	The enforcer's room	Place	-
15	Her sitting room	Place	-
16	The counting room	Place	-
17	The women's rooms	Place	-
18	The sitting room	Place	-
19	The linen room	Place	-

The Moist Oyster

A rough Lullwater tavern of four patched buildings around a yard on the north-western edge of the Still, its sign a half-open oyster shell. Cheap drink, loose tongues and the occasional knife fight. The big **taproom** on the street has a long bar and a hearth, and in the corner by the hearth, on a raised bench, the storyteller **Thorne** holds court most evenings. The **back room** is built out over the Still on piles, with shutters on every water side and a water-door onto a plank landing, and things go in and out of it by boat that never cross the bar. Upstairs, off a gallery round the yard, are cheap rooms for people who do not want to be found.

Conall comes here on his first evening with a note from Temerach and never arrives. On the last day, if the Lullwater burns, the Oyster is one of the places the players should watch go.

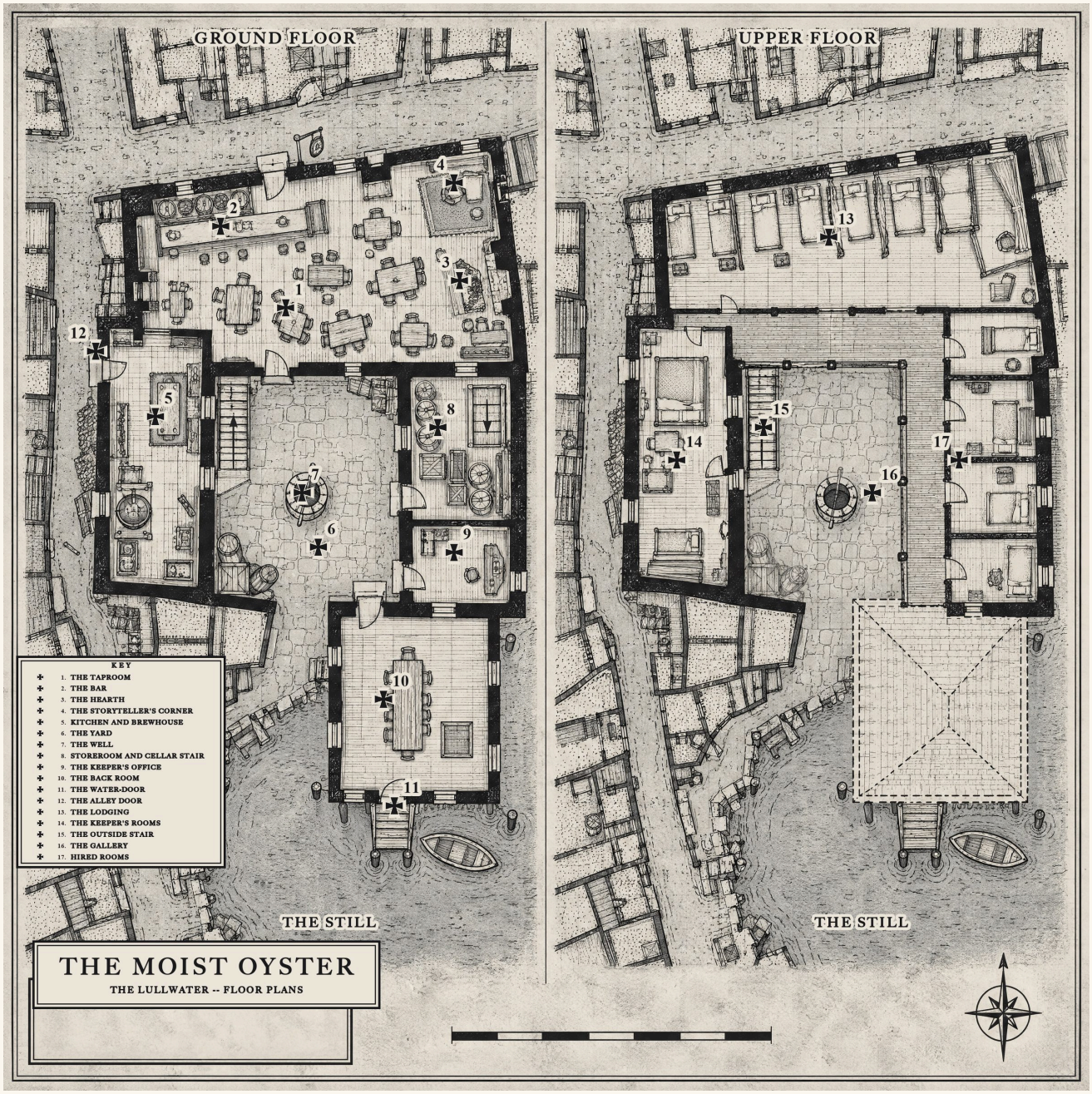


Figure 13: The Moist Oyster

Table 11: The Moist Oyster, Key

No.	Name	Kind	Note
1	The taproom	Place	-
2	The bar	Place	-
3	The hearth	Place	-
4	The storyteller's corner	Place	-
5	Kitchen and brewhouse	Place	-
6	The yard	Place	-
7	The well	Place	-
8	Storeroom and cellar stair	Place	-

No.	Name	Kind	Note
9	The keeper's office	Place	-
10	The back room	Place	-
11	The water-door	Place	-
12	The alley door	Place	-
13	The lodging	Place	-
14	The keeper's rooms	Place	-
15	The outside stair	Place	-
16	The gallery	Place	-
17	Hired rooms	Place	-

The Lists

The Tournament Ground in plan: the six-sided sand and its rope, the stands on all six sides with gated gaps for the combatants east and west, the Governor's box in the western stand and the small stone presentation room behind it, the competitors' pavilions in the south-west, the horse-lines, the heralds' house, the infirmary, the Long Butts along the north wall, and the water-gate with its broad steps into the lake. Note the presentation room's two doors, one from the box stair and one to the outside. Characters trying to keep the Baron out of that room, or get into it, will want to know both.

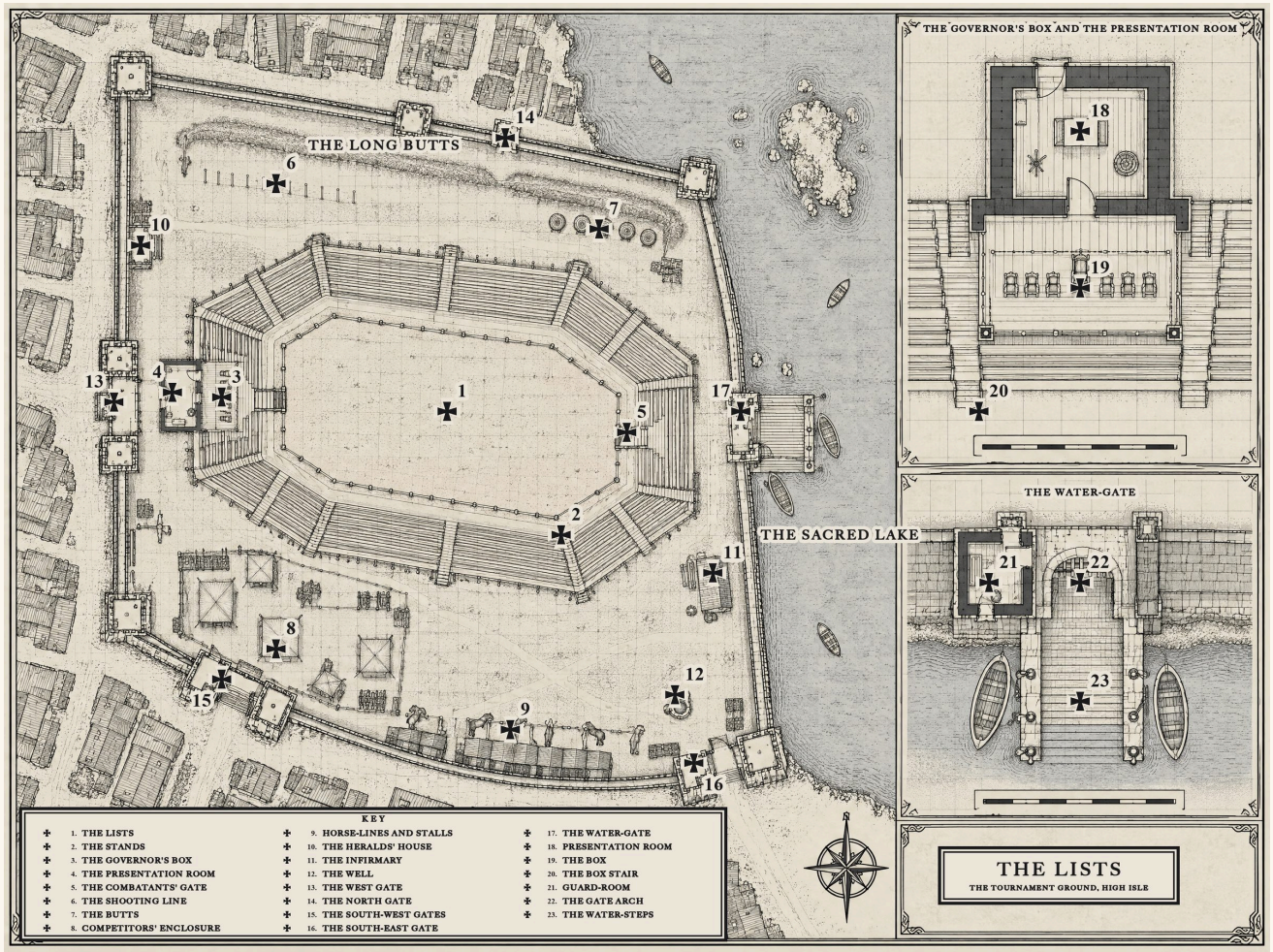


Figure 14: The Lists

Table 12: The Lists, Key

No.	Name	Kind	Note
1	The lists	Place	-
2	The stands	Place	-
3	The Governor's box	Place	-
4	The presentation room	Place	-
5	The combatants' gate	Place	-
6	The shooting line	Place	-
7	The butts	Place	-
8	Competitors' enclosure	Place	-
9	Horse-lines and stalls	Place	-
10	The heralds' house	Place	-
11	The infirmary	Place	-
12	The well	Place	-
13	The west gate	Place	-
14	The north gate	Place	-
15	The south-west gates	Place	-
16	The south-east gate	Place	-
17	The water-gate	Place	-
18	Presentation room	Place	-
19	The box	Place	-
20	The box stair	Place	-
21	Guard-room	Place	-
22	The gate arch	Place	-
23	The water-steps	Place	-

Temple Isle

The precinct of the Lake Lady in plan: the temple at the north end with its colonnade, altar dais and channel running down the length of the floor; the cloisters, with the pilgrims' cells to the west and the High Priestess's rooms, the chapter house, library and infirmary to the east; the ring of shrines around the Sacred Confluence; and the water-steps facing the Lists between two towers. The temple's ferries tie up at the steps and at a small landing on the west shore, with a postern gate.

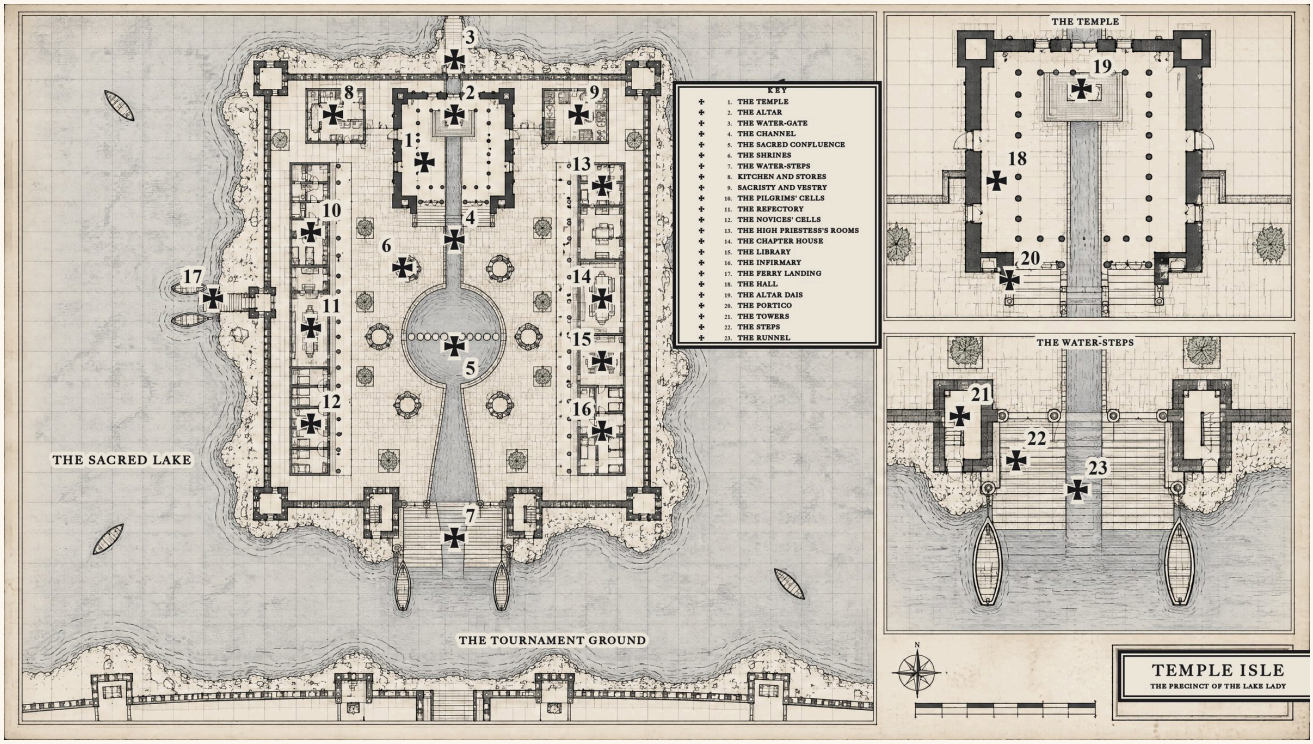


Figure 15: Temple Isle

Table 13: Temple Isle, Key

No.	Name	Kind	Note
1	The temple	Place	-
2	The altar	Place	-
3	The water-gate	Place	-
4	The channel	Place	-
5	The Sacred Confluence	Place	-
6	The shrines	Place	-
7	The water-steps	Place	-
8	Kitchen and stores	Place	-
9	Sacristy and vestry	Place	-
10	The pilgrims' cells	Place	-
11	The refectory	Place	-
12	The novices' cells	Place	-
13	The High Priestess's rooms	Place	-
14	The chapter house	Place	-
15	The library	Place	-
16	The infirmary	Place	-
17	The ferry landing	Place	-
18	The hall	Place	-
19	The altar dais	Place	-
20	The portico	Place	-
21	The towers	Place	-
22	The steps	Place	-
23	The runnel	Place	-

The DragonBarge

The Baron's ship lies at its private pier below the Forge Tower, a large vessel worked all over with dragon motifs, steaming continuously where its hull meets the water. **Twenty people are aboard, and that is the whole of it.** The Baron's quarters and his working cabin are aft, with the locked case behind the border rolls. Santo has the good cabins forward, with too much money and no duties. Blau is wherever the Baron is. Below the waterline aft, by a lamp that is never put out, live the champion and his keeper, Orrin Sculle, who sleeps across the door. Six of the Dragon Circle, the Baron's inner guard, stand watch-and-watch, and the shipmaster, four crew and four household make up the rest: a cook, a body servant, a secretary, and a laundress who cannot get a grey residue out of the same linen every morning and has stopped mentioning it.

A stranger on this deck is noticed inside a minute. There is nowhere to be lost in a crowd, everybody aboard knows every face, and the ship is quiet enough at night to hear a man walk. Getting aboard by day is an invitation problem, not a stealth problem. Provisioning comes out daily and is taken at the forward gangway by the cook, who lets no carrier past. A tailor, a petitioner or a woman brought out for an evening comes aboard escorted, and none of them goes aft. Getting aboard by night means the water: under the pier, up the side, or through the stern windows over steaming water. Gardwen does it on the first night of the Tourney, and Nus and Randall on the second.

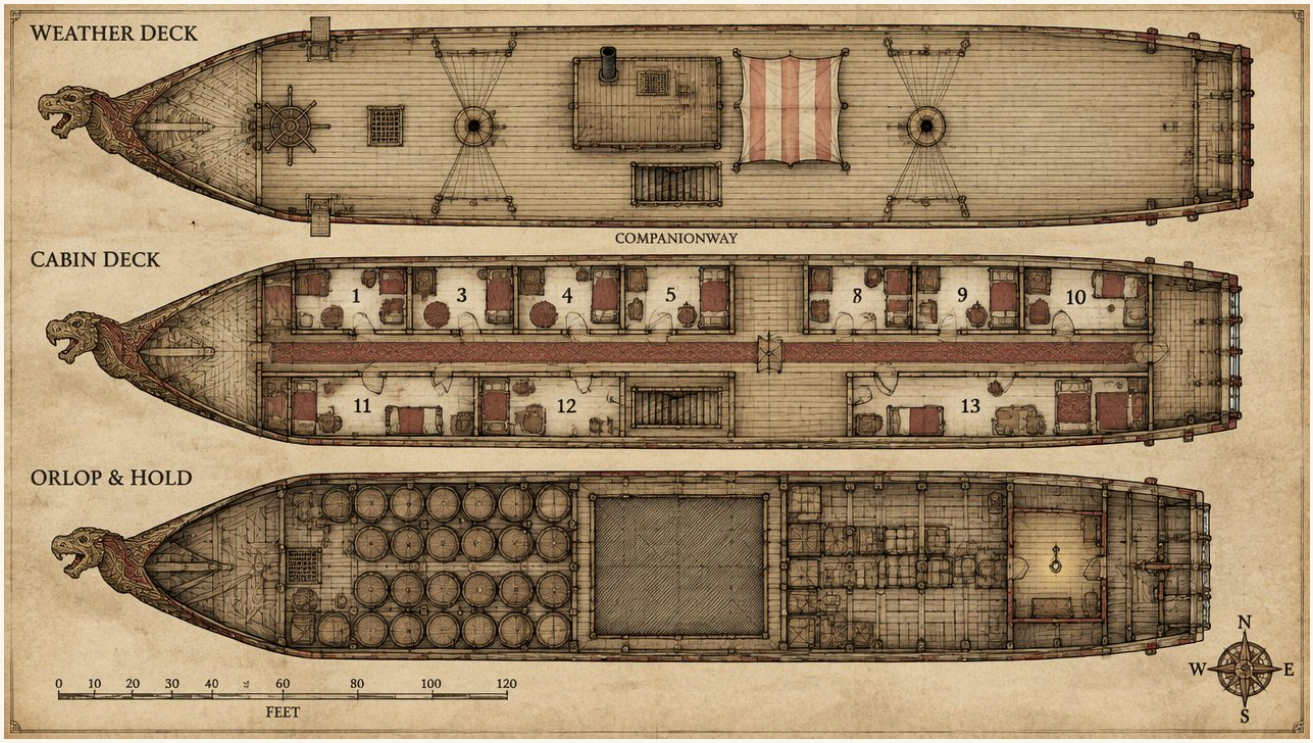


Figure 16: Dragonbarge Map

The Vantt Estate

Two miles east of the walls by the Causeway road, where the ground rises out of the marsh, stand Councillor Alderic Vantt's good stone house, his orchards, stables for forty, and eight acres of water-meadow running down to the channel. **The Dragon Knights are camped in the meadow**: twenty-five men, their horses, farriers and armourers, the pavilions and the tourney gear. Tat Atarer runs the camp. The Baron sleeps aboard his ship and comes out perhaps once a day, and dines in the house on the eve of the Tourney.

It is a rich man's farm with tents on it, not a fortress. It has no walls, four gates, a lane, a river frontage and a great deal of dark. Local labour is in and out all day with bread, beer, fodder and laundry, and a farrier's boy from the village is in the horse lines constantly without anybody searching him. Twenty-five bored mercenaries three days from a tournament, drinking Vantt's beer, are far looser than the six aboard the ship. The champion's spare kit is

here, and so is the litter that carried something covered from the borderlands. Vantt's household did not ask for any of this and are frightened of it. It is the soft target, and a clever party works that out.

There is no sheet for the estate; describe it from this paragraph.

Beneath the City

Under the Hill quarter, and under a great deal more of the city than anybody official would like to know, run old burial galleries and older water-pools, dry, cold and chalk-white, with three centuries of the respectable dead stacked in them. Smugglers use them as hidden roads, and the houses of the Pearl use them for questions, because nobody official goes down there and sound does not carry up. To be *taken to the catacombs* is to be in serious trouble. The untouched pools at the bottom have developed strange properties, and some believe they connect to waters older than the city.

Marisette's people bring the twins here on the second morning. **These sheets are for the Games Master only,** and nothing on them is known to the city above.



Figure 17: Catacombs Overlay

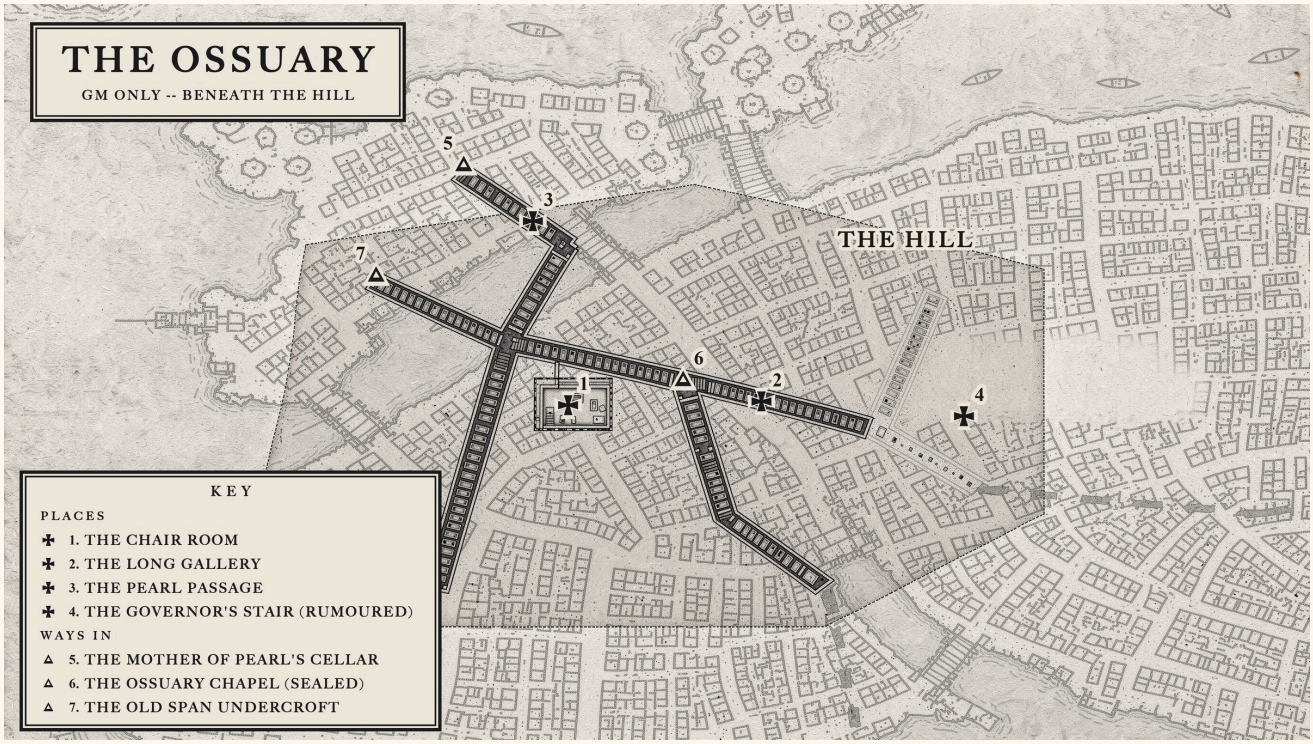


Figure 18: The Ossuary

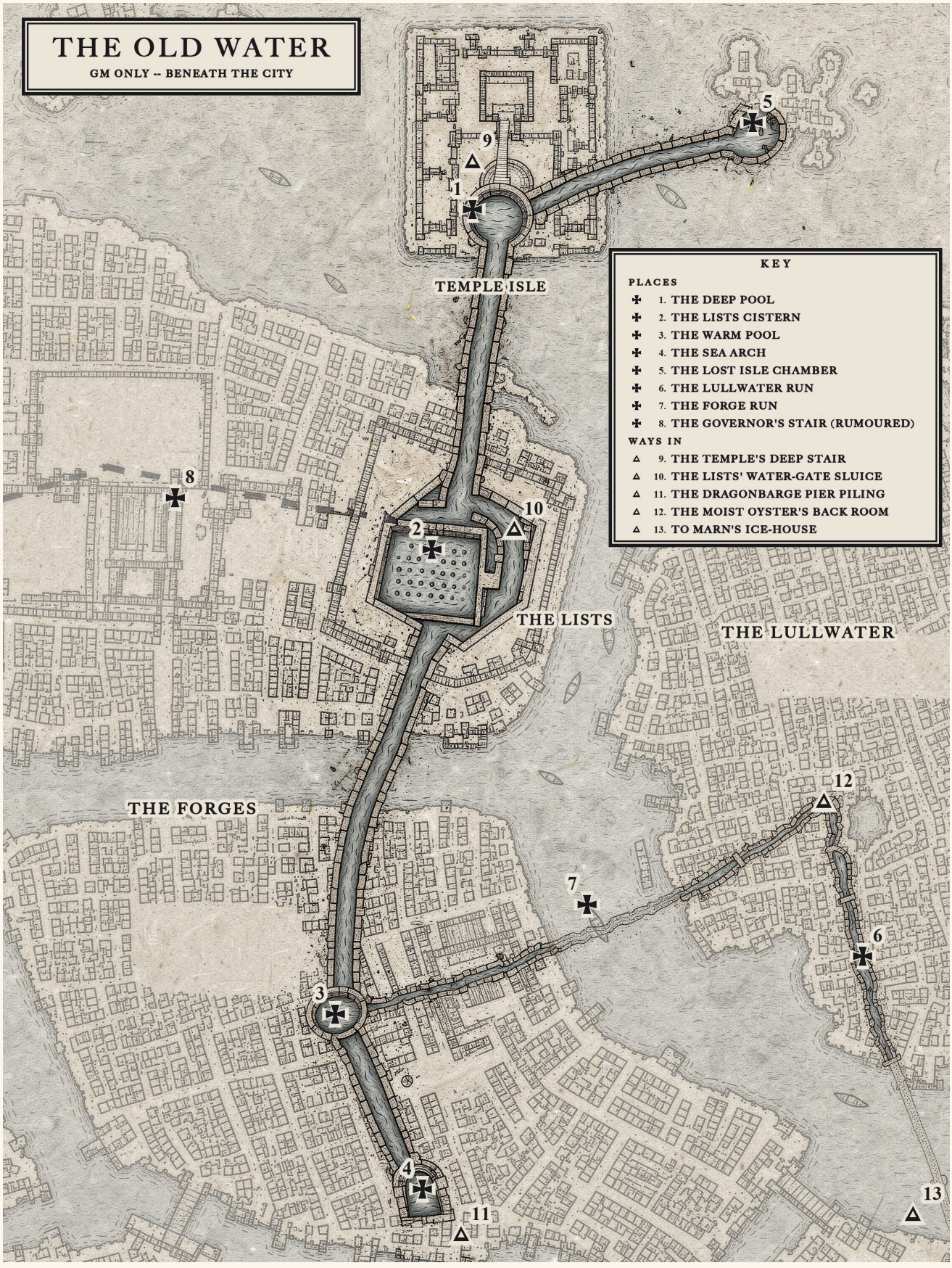

THE OLD WATER
GM ONLY -- BENEATH THE CITY
KEY
PLACES
1. THE DEEP POOL
2. THE LISTS CISTERN
3. THE WARM POOL
4. THE SEA ARCH
5. THE LOST ISLE CHAMBER
6. THE LULLWATER RUN
7. THE FORGE RUN
8. THE GOVERNOR'S STAIR (RUMOURED)
WAYS IN
9. THE TEMPLE'S DEEP STAIR
10. THE LISTS' WATER-GATE SLUICE
11. THE DRAGONBARGE PIER PILING
12. THE MOIST OYSTER'S BACK ROOM
13. TO MARN'S ICE-HOUSE
TEMPLE ISLE
THE LISTS
THE LULLWATER
THE FORGES

Figure 19: The Oldwater

The House of di Teufel

The Baron's household is small, and everybody in it is afraid of something different. Full statistics for every person in this chapter are in *Statistics*.

Baron Hanzo di Teufel

Fifties, well made, silver at the temples, black cloth that cost more than a fishing boat. Nothing about him is ornamented.

The horror of Hanzo di Teufel is that he is genuinely nice. He is warm, and not faking it. He is interested in people, good company, and delighted when somebody says something clever. He remembers what your mother was ill with and asks after her a year later, and he means it. He was a younger son of nothing, and he learned very early that the world opens for men who are loved. He has been loved by thousands of people, none of whom has ever known what he is, and he wants to be liked by everybody in the room, because nobody searches a man they are fond of.

Play him as the nicest man the characters meet all week. He never raises his voice and never threatens. He does not experience being cornered as fear; he experiences it as a failure of hospitality, and corrects it by becoming more generous. When he offers a character a chair, a drink, an introduction, a purse, their position is getting worse, and the kinder he is, the worse it gets. He has a hundred years of patience behind him, three generations of it inherited, and never once in his life has he been seen doing anything he would need to explain.

> *"You must forgive my son. He was born after I had stopped being poor, and it shows."*

This week he wants the champion to win and the room to be his, and he wants nobody close enough to Cailan to notice that the boy does not answer to his own name. He keeps his champion aboard his ship, in a laced litter, behind six inner guards, and renews the binding every night. He leaves the street to Blau and Tat Atarer. He is not deterred by cost or by scandal; both are survivable. If anybody comes close, he would rather move the boy somewhere worse than let the questions continue. If the Pearl shuts its doors on his men, he leans on the Prince's councillors rather than on Marisette.

What changes him is the locket. Lose it, and the patient, smiling lord the city has watched all week simply vanishes, and what comes out instead is a demonologist and a fire-mage who will burn a quarter of the city by noon to get it back. That is the only time anybody in Purewater sees the real man, and it should frighten the table.

He is a magic-user of a forbidden school, with Charm Person, Hold Person and Sleep among his ordinary spells and the whole binding art besides: Open the Channel, Seat the Bound, Anchor, Reinforce the Seat and Draw Forth. He has never personally fought anybody, and in a straight fight he is a nobleman with a broadsword. He never has to be in a straight fight.

Santo di Teufel

Nineteen, dressed beautifully and always slightly too warm for it. Rings. A good sword he cannot really use.

The heir is enormous fun for about an hour. He is loud, generous and funny when things are going his way, and spends money on people to watch their faces. He is not wicked in his own account of himself; he is wronged, constantly, by everybody. When he is refused, the vagueness burns off him and he becomes horribly precise: an itemised account of exactly what will happen to your house, your girls and your boat, the details getting smaller as the panic gets bigger.

> *"Do you know, I have never once had to ask for anything twice. Not once. It is a very strange feeling."*

This week he wants Emmeralda, kept on the barge and glad of it, and he goes about getting her in the order a spoiled young man does these things. First he buys her evening, with no name. Then he tries to make her willing with his stolen scroll. If the working takes, he tries to walk her out of the house that night, and if he is stopped, he comes back for her by boat the next day. If anything stops him, he loses his temper in the street. Fear works on him: exposure, a blade at his own throat, or his father learning what he has done before he can dress it up as a success. Taking the knife away from him does not make him give up the girl. It makes him frantic, which is far more dangerous.

He has a few cantrips of fire, Burning Hands and Magic Missile among them, and his rapier. When he panics, he does not run; he takes hold of whoever is nearest.

Blau

Thin, white-skinned, red-eyed, old burn-scarring down one side. Plain harness, kept well, no colours.

The ranks call him **Commander Vask**; everybody else calls him Blau. He runs the Dragon Knights day to day and handles the Baron's dirty work, and his real job is keeping the heir's appetites from costing the family anything. He is unhurried to a degree other people find physically uncomfortable. He does not drink, boast, complain, or take pleasure in winning. He is patient the way stone is patient, and he is never bored. He notices lies. He is not easily fooled by a disguise, and he does not panic. He pays people off, hauls Santo home by the collar, and when containment fails, he escalates fast and brings Knights.

> *"Come away now, my lord. You are being watched by people who can count."*

Play him as a man with no breaking point, and let the table find out what that costs them. Nothing has ever been observed to corner him. Whatever put the burns on him also took away his belief that noise achieves anything. He is not loyal to the Baron; he is loyal to finishing things. Secretly, he has been studying his employer's work for years with the settled intention of walking away with it, and he has told nobody, because telling is how people lose things.

This week, he cleans up after Santo. He watches the crowd at the presentation, where he sees a woman in it stop breathing, and he doubles the watch on the ship. He buys a canal-rat's secret on the eve of the Tourney, and when the locket goes, he is the one who gets it back. He is good at all of it and enjoys none of it. **What turns him** is evidence that the mess is bigger than Santo: show him that the young master has been dealing with Hell in a way that endangers the Baron's own plans, and his loyalty tilts toward the father and away from the son. **If Santo dies,** his job becomes vengeance, and he becomes the characters' most persistent pursuer.

Tat Atarer

Hard-faced professional in harness that fits properly. Fifties. Unhurried.

The captain of the Dragon Knights is a mercenary of thirty years' standing whose whole reputation rests on bringing companies home. He fights for pay, not for the Baron: *the Baron pays for our swords, not our opinions.* He is flat, courteous and entirely without theatre. He deals with his own men in front of you and does not apologise for the interruption. He tells you at once which part of what you want is not his to give, which people mistake for hostility and is actually efficiency. He has lost two companies in his life, and neither to a battle; both to a bad month in a town exactly like this one. He can see the standing order rotting the discipline he has spent his life building, and he has said so, once, to the wrong person.

> *"I have never lost a company to a battle. I have lost two to a bad month in a town."*

He is the crack in the Baron's wall, and the players will not notice him unless you let his reluctance show. Show him that the contract is going to cost him men or reputation, or that he is guarding something that will get the

company hanged, and he becomes negotiable in a way no other Dragon Knight is. He will not fight the Baron. He will march his company home and leave the Baron with six men on a ship, and on the last day, a captain who does not pursue is worth a great deal to people on the road out of the city.

Cailan, Who Is Gabriel

Seventeen and far too thin for the harness. Dragon-scale growing out of the skin of his throat and jaw with no strap or edge, the flesh around it raised and weeping. A fresh dressing inside the right elbow, over years of older scarring.

He was seven when he was taken, and he has been a room somebody else lives in ever since. What you mostly meet is an absence wearing his face and doing what it is told. But what is left of Gabriel is stubborn and funny and fond of his sister, whom he used to call Bird, and none of those things has had anywhere to go in ten years. Exhaustion surfaces him, or his own name: he comes up the way a swimmer comes up under ice, for a second or two, with no time to do anything with it, and is pulled back down.

> *"I'm still —"*

That is all he gets out, and it is the most valuable line in any scene he is in. Never give him a whole sentence until the end.

Thuban Eta

Not a body. A weight behind a boy's eyes, and a fighting style a thousand years out of date, executed perfectly by arms too thin to do it.

A knight of the Sixth Wing of a court that no longer exists, drowned by his own company and buried without his rites, and awake for the whole of it. He is courtly, formal, unhurried and profoundly tired. Ten years of having nothing to do but listen have made him the best listener alive. He is not evil and he is not friendly. He is ancient, and he is owed something. He considers what has been done to him and to the boy a breach of law rather than a cruelty, which is worse, because law can be argued and cruelty can only be resisted. He holds a cup right-handed.

> *"You will want to sit. What I have to tell you is long and I have had some time to arrange it."*

Play his manners getting better under pressure. When things are worst, his courtesy becomes older and more elaborate, a vanished court speaking through a seventeen-year-old, and it is unbearable to be in the room for. He wants to be heard by somebody who knows what a burial rite is for. He cannot leave while the bones hold him, and he cannot disobey while the Baron holds the locket. If the leash ever comes off, he will not serve the people who took it, either. He serves the old codes, and the first of them is that he is owed a proper death.

Orrin Sculle

Fifties, heavy in the forearms, sleeves permanently rolled. Smells of liniment and lamp oil. Moves around a small dark space without needing to look at it.

The champion's keeper has fed, dressed, washed and walked the boy for ten years, and talked to him every single night while he did it, quietly and continuously, the way you talk to a horse or to somebody very ill. He worked out long ago that the boy is still in there. He has never said so to a living soul, because the man who says that out loud gets replaced by a man who does not care. He knows which hand Gabriel reaches with. He is not stupid, not cruel and not remotely brave, and he knows perfectly well that ten years of kindness in that hold make him complicit rather than kind.

> *"I have had him since he was seven. Whatever you think I am, I am the one who knows how he takes his water."*

He is the door to the boy. The first character who gets aboard the ship, or near the champion by any other route, meets him, and what happens next is decided by his own heart, not theirs. See *Arrows and the Ship*.

The Dragon Knights

Twenty-five borderland raiders who have terrorised the Baron's marches for thirty years, in dragon-blazoned harness, many with fire-touched blades. They keep the order's own ranks: Ember Recruits, Flame Soldiers, Smoke Lieutenants, Charred Captains, the **Ash Lords** who have undergone partial fire-binding, and the **Dragon Circle**, the Baron's six-man inner guard, who serve aboard the ship and are never seen in the streets. They are disciplined and thoroughly violent, and they have been told the watch will not touch them. Their worst enemies are the survivors of their old raids, and one of those is Gardwen.

Run them in threes and fours, as weather. They take bridges, bottles and boats, and they mostly do not fight, because nobody makes them. Every Knight in Purewater can fight, and almost none of them can swim. Use the Dragon Knight Soldier statistics for the rank and file, and the Ash Lord for anybody the Baron trusts.

The People of the Pearl

The Pearl is where the city's powerful come to be indiscreet, which makes it the richest seam of secrets in Purewater. It is also where the scenario opens, with a crime committed under one of its roofs. Eleven houses answer to one woman, and every one of them keeps the Widow's rule.

Marisette

Immaculate, ageless in the way money buys, never dressed louder than the room. Sits while others stand.

Marisette governs eleven houses on nothing but the belief that she is inevitable, and she knows exactly how thin that is. Her authority is not force. It is the settled expectation, held by everybody including her rivals, that she will still be there afterwards. She came up through the same rooms her girls work in now, and she does not discuss it, not from shame but because surviving them is the one thing she has never been able to make useful. She is gracious, unhurried and privately amused by most things, and she forgives almost anything in somebody who is competent.

> *"Sit down. You have been standing since you came in and it is making my girls nervous."*

Play her hospitality as the danger signal. When she offers a chair, a drink, another hour of her time, the warmer the room goes, the worse your position has become.

This week, a woman has been wronged with demon-craft under a roof Marisette is responsible for, and she wants a name and then a reckoning every house in the city hears about. She does not wait for the watch. She has Hesper, and the only intelligence network in Purewater that hears what men say when they are not being careful, and she grabs first and asks afterwards. That is exactly how two strangers with the wrong face end up tied to chairs in the catacombs on the second morning. She is fair in her way: shown the truth, she acts on it, even against a baron. Her real weapon is not violence but withdrawal. On Constantine's complaint she closes every house on the Pearl to the di Teufel retinue, and only to them, so that the whole city reads it as the Pearl taking a side.

Hesper

Plain dark clothes, good boots, empty hands, a face you would lose in a crowd of four. Hesper is neither man nor woman: they/them, a fact and not a secret.

To Purewater, Hesper is Marisette's mage-enforcer: cold, quiet, dangerous, able to drop a strong man with a single spoken word. The menace is a costume they put on in the morning. Underneath is an intelligencer for **the Quiet Hand**, a hidden fellowship centuries old that steers the world toward the good by knowing first and acting unseen, and has kept its power by never once being described. Hesper is extremely calm, extremely quick and quietly entertained by the world. They enjoy precision the way other people enjoy music. They are far kinder than the work requires, and they regard that kindness as their single professional weakness, because gratitude produces descriptions, and a described intelligencer is a dead one.

> *"I am going to help you, and you are not going to tell anyone that I did."*

This week, Hesper takes both men with the face before dawn on the second day, as Marisette orders, without a fight worth the name. They are also quietly working against the Awake the Dragon Movement, and are the best hidden patron the characters could find, if the characters ever see past the costume. They will never take credit and never seize power, and they will spare whoever they can. Under pressure, the warmth goes and pure economy is left: shorter sentences, exact numbers, no adjectives at all. Then they will tell you the true and unpleasant thing rather than let you walk off comfortable.

Constantine

Forties, strong forearms, sleeves shoved past the elbow. Good cloth worn like working clothes.

The proprietor of the Sylph's Embrace has run a house of other people's daughters for twenty years and has concluded that everybody in this trade is eventually sold by somebody. She has decided, absolutely, that it will not be her who does the selling. She is exact, dry, and not at all cold once you are inside her door. She likes competence and dislikes charm. She feeds people without being asked, and swears like the dock she grew up on, and does not moderate it for priests.

> *"I have buried four girls out of this house. I did the books for every one of them."*

This week, she took a young man's money for Emmeralda's evening and thought nothing of it, and she will spend the rest of the week wishing she had looked harder. When something goes wrong in her house she becomes precise about the record: what was actually said, on what day, in whose hearing, because the record is the one thing that has never failed her. She is the one who carries the complaint to Marisette. She wants justice, she is hiring protection, and she will want to know what you are going to cost her before she lets you any further in.

Emmeralda

Elven, poised, the finest performer on the Pearl, and vain about her hair.

For fifteen years Emmeralda has been wanted by everybody and asked what she wants by almost nobody, and she has quietly been counting down to the year she gets to stop. She is light, quick and charming as a profession, and warmer than the profession requires. She is kind to the younger girls and feeds every cat on the street. She cannot add up. She answers the thing you actually came for rather than the thing you said, and she does it gently. When she stops performing, what is underneath is plain, flat and considerably younger.

> *"Everyone in this room wants something off me. You are the first one all week who hasn't decided what yet."*

What she is depends on the dice on the first night. If Santo's working failed, she is cut open the length of her body and tainted with whatever came for the invitation, and without help she dies before dawn; with it, she lives, frightened of a face three men wear. If the working took, she is bright and pliant and wrong, she wants to go to the Baron's barge, and the thing inside her is patient and charming and keeps asking for the window to be opened. Either way, her read on Santo, if anybody asks her before the night, is that he is not dangerous the way the dockers are dangerous; he is dangerous the way a boy with a lit lamp in a stable is dangerous. Check which telling you are in before you play her.

Ila

Thirteen, elven, thin. Sits where she can see the front door.

A child at the Sylph's Embrace, devoted to Emmeralda, who has been told to be somewhere else for four days by adults who are managing their own grief badly, and who has decided entirely alone to do something about it. She has no social reflexes at all. She does not move aside, does not soften things, and does not pretend to be all right. She was the one who found Emmeralda, and nobody has asked her a single question about it.

> *"You're all talking about who did it. I know which stair he went down."*

Ila is a witness nobody thinks to ask, and a hostage waiting to happen: when Santo panics, he takes hold of whoever is nearest, and a thirteen-year-old who will not stay out of the way is the nearest thing in the house. Give her a job, however small, and she will be loyal to whoever did.

Ravella

Half-merfolk to anybody who looks properly: faint scales at the hairline, slightly webbed fingers, eyes that catch the water-light.

The proprietor of the Siren's Call runs a pleasure house and an information market in one, and upstairs, a house full of hidden waterfolk whose existence is illegal. She has decided that the safest cover in the world is to be the most visible, sociable and harmless creature in the district. She is delighted, exhaustingly delighted, by gossip, new people, a good glass and the idea that you have come to see her. She is the most likeable person on the water, and roughly a third of it is armour.

> *"Oh, that is a good question. Let me get you a better chair before you ask me the next one."*

She wants to know everything before anybody else does, because knowing first is how her people stay ahead. Under pressure she becomes a better host: more wine, more attention, an introduction to somebody far more interesting. By then the subject you came in with has simply ceased to exist.

Asphodel and Mariarta

The **Promise of Heaven** is the poorest house on the quay and the one that raised Randall, and two of its women are his family in all but blood.

Asphodel is warm, quick, bossy about small things, always slightly underdressed for the weather, and enormous fun. She touches people while she talks to them and feeds them within a minute of their arrival. She loves Randall like a brother, knows exactly what he is, and has decided that knowing is not the same as being able to stop. She has already worked out how this ends and has not let herself say the sentence. When she is frightened, the bustling stops dead and she simply holds on to a sleeve, and there is nothing anybody can say that helps.

> *"Eat that. Then tell me the version you were going to tell me, and then the real one."*

Mariarta is older, composed, and entirely unremarkable in a room full of soldiers, which is the whole of her skill. The house sends her up to entertain the Baron's men, and she brings back the hard intelligence on his people: who guards what, who drinks, who talks. She repeats a question back before answering it, so that she is answering the one that was asked. What it has cost her to be in those rooms is not a secret, exactly; it is simply not on offer.

> *"He said it twice. The second time he was not talking to me, which is why I believed it."*

This week, the Promise of Heaven is Randall's safe house, and then, after Sinnit's lies on the second day, a house whose door opens to him a little more slowly. How these two treat him is the best measure of what the week has cost him.

The Lullwater and the Docks

The people who actually make Purewater work live across the water from the people who run it: the thieves, the dredgers, the boatmen and the men who know which canals are not on any map. They are the city's working underside, and by the end of the week, its army.

Crowbill

Wiry, entirely forgettable, middle years. A small crow inked on the back of the right hand, and no other mark anywhere on him.

The crime lord of Purewater keeps no house and no office. For thirty years he has sat on the flat lead roof over the cookshop ovens beside the Gutter, eating out of a paper and not looking up, or late at night in the back of an ice-house on the Shoals. He owns the canals nobody maps: smuggling, gambling, protection, and the street boys who see everything. He has learned that information is the only thing in a city that cannot be confiscated, and he can no longer stop collecting it, even about things he does not care about. He is quiet, dry, oddly restful company, never in a hurry, never filling a silence, curious about people the way a naturalist is curious.

> *"You've not asked me for anything yet. Most people manage it in under a minute."*

He does not help people. He trades, and his price is always the same: something he can use. That might be intelligence on the Baron, a route into a fortified camp, or control of a story the street is already telling. When he decides you are not worth it, he goes on being pleasant and simply stops trading. The conversation continues, nothing further comes out of it, and you are not told when that happened.

He keeps a code: no killing locals, no harming children, no touching the Lady's sites. The Knights are breaking the spirit of all three, and for the first time in thirty years he has no lever to answer them with. What he wants is a table that is level, a city that is predictable, and a profitable Tourney week. **Demon-craft worked on a helpless girl beside the Lady's water crosses his line.** That is not crime; it is a monster kicking the whole table over. Bring him proof rather than a grievance, and he opens canals, safe houses, men and the street's rumour machine. **And he knows about the locket**: his lamp-man on the Forge wharf watches the Baron's ship for a living. See *Arrows and the Ship*.

Kerrin

Dockside, unremarkable, brown coat, easy in a crowd.

One of Crowbill's watchers: eleven years of reading faces across a room. He follows; he does not close. He worked out long ago that a watcher who lies is a watcher who gets remembered, so he tells the truth all day long and gives nothing away. Being spotted does not embarrass him at all. A character who makes him finds him pleasant, patient and genuinely good company for the length of a drink, which is considerably more unsettling than a denial would be.

> *"You've made me. That's fine — I'd rather buy you a drink than follow you about in the rain."*

Kag

Half-orc, thirties, a head and a half taller than anybody in the room and built to match. Leather, worn. A club on the belt that is plainly the thing she reaches for.

Crowbill's muscle, and the only person in his outfit who can read a ledger. Kag runs his errands and his business on the streets: the collections round on the Shoals, cartage around the Knights' bridges, small disputes settled before

they become his problem, and a hustle or two of her own, such as buying up lamp oil before the stairs stop, or laying odds on the Archery against the city's prejudice about elves. She is dry, flat, unhurried and much funnier than she appears. She sits on floors, eats standing up and sleeps anywhere, and she listens all the way to the end of a sentence, which almost nobody does.

> *"That's not short because he's skimming. That's short because they took sixty feet of his line and there's nobody to bill."*

She has no part in the plot, and that is deliberate: she is the city's working underside seen up close, a door to Crowbill, and a number when the characters need one. **How the characters talk to her decides what she is.** Address the muscle, give her orders, talk past her to the man beside her or be surprised that she reads, and she is exactly as much use as they paid for. She does not sulk or sabotage; she simply never mentions the thing that would have saved them two days. Ask her what something *costs*, and she is the best analyst in Purewater, for nothing, permanently.

Nus

Young, quick-fingered, dressed rather better than he can account for.

A pickpocket with real talent and no judgement at all, and Randall's friend: lookout, fence and second pair of hands. He is grinning, restless, funny, and generous with money the moment he has any; something is always moving in his hands. He listens badly and brilliantly, missing half of what you say and catching the one detail that can be turned into a job. He has worked out that being thought the man for it is worth more to him than being alive, and he has not yet met the situation that tests that.

> *"I could get in there. I'm not saying I should. I'm saying nobody else could."*

This week, he wants one big score and a name: a theft big enough that Crowbill's people have to respect him. He takes the job nobody sensible takes. Warning him off only makes him keener. Cornered, he does not retreat; he raises the stakes out loud, and the size of the offer is the size of the fear. When Crowbill names the Baron's locket in his hearing, he is going to go after it, and if he gets it, the Baron will turn a quarter of the city inside out to find him. **Nus is the scenario's most expensive friend.** Whether he lives to the end of the week is the clearest single measure of how well the characters did.

Sinnit

Big, canal-rat, permanently aggrieved. Fills a doorway and knows it.

Seven years ago on Pearl Quay, in front of the Promise of Heaven, Randall lifted Sinnit's purse and handed it back to him with a bow while the house's girls laughed. Everybody who saw it has forgotten. Sinnit has built his whole sense of himself on that humiliation, and he needs it re-staged in front of witnesses before he can put it down. He is loud, aggressive and physically encroaching, and much less frightening than he needs to be. He is not clever and not actually cruel. He has a grievance, it is the only tool in his box, and so everything gets treated as a grievance. He announces exactly what he is going to do before he does it. That is the only mercy in him, and it is a real one.

> *"You'll remember it in a minute. Everyone does, once I've reminded them properly."*

This week he is the street's antagonist, and a real one, not because he is clever but because this is the one week Randall's face is worth money. He sees things, and for the first time in his life the things he sees are worth selling to people who can hurt Randall far worse than he ever could. On the first evening he corners the wrong man. On the second day he tells the whole Pearl that Randall carved the girl. On the eve of the Tourney he sells the secret of

the two faces to Blau. On the last day, with the Lullwater burning, he sells Nus's hiding place. Threats do not stop him. Beating him in public is a second humiliation and only makes him worse. Money buys a day, never more.

One thing stops him, and it is the cheapest thing in the scenario: an apology from Randall, out loud, in front of people who matter to Sinnit. When it comes, he stands there for a long moment, and then he is a loud, entirely unreliable and genuinely brave ally. The next time somebody in dragon colours comes for one of the Lullwater's own, Sinnit is in the doorway: *"Nobody does that to our people."*

Marda Blackwater

Forties, broad, dredge-boat hands, a black armband with a white wave on it.

The leader of the Dredgers, the labour guild and mutual-aid society of Purewater's working poor: canal-clearers, dockers and fishers, three hundred strong. She was pushed into speaking for them, she is better at it than she expected, and she is discovering that the distance between leading them and being carried by them is about four days wide. She is loud, plain, physically busy and without ceremony. She trusts numbers and distrusts sympathy, and she will hand you one end of whatever she is carrying in the middle of a sentence without thinking of it as rude. Somebody's boy went into that water and came out wrong, she was the one who had to tell his mother, and she has not slept properly since.

> *"Give me one man's wages and one name and I can hold them another day. Give me sympathy and I can't."*

She is the most reasonable person in this story, and the easiest to help, and she is dangerous for exactly that reason. She does not want a riot, and she will get one anyway. She wants Emmit Rill's wages paid, the two missing boatmen accounted for, and one Knight answering for something in front of a magistrate, done properly, in daylight, by somebody official, so that it counts. She petitions the Harbor Masters and gets a referral. She petitions the council in writing and is not answered. If nothing comes of it by the eve of the Tourney, she uses the only lever she has: she stops the water-stairs. **Watch her demands.** The smaller and more reasonable they get, the closer the thing is to going off, because what she is really doing is finding the least she can accept and still hold three hundred people. Get her any one of the three, and she holds them another day, every time. She is also the fastest way to three hundred bodies if the characters ever need a crowd.

Thorne

Old, wrapped up warm in every weather, a cane across his knees. Blue eyes much too vivid for the rest of him.

The storyteller of the Moist Oyster holds court by the hearth most evenings, collecting tales from new arrivals and paying for them with his own. He is sociable, performing, mildly vain about being good company, and funnier than he needs to be, and the funniness is deliberate. His cane hides a blade. Secretly, he was once an initiate of the Order of the Lake, and he survived a Dragon Knight raid forty years ago by doing something he has never described to anybody. The story he tells instead has been polished for four decades into something people enjoy hearing. He knows more about the Dragon Kings, and about the weak points of a possession ritual, than anybody else in the city.

> *"I have told that one four hundred times and nobody has ever asked me whether it was true."*

He wants to be listened to once as a witness rather than as entertainment. Ask him whether the story is true, and the performance falls off him entirely; what is underneath is plainer, much older, and considerably harder to sit with. Temerach sends Conall to him on the first evening with a sealed note. Conall never arrives, because a man called Sinnit gets to him first.

The Lady's House and Her Knights

Two houses serve the goddess. The Order keeps her water and may not act; the Swords keep her road and may not speak for the water. Between them stand the people with the most standing in Purewater and the least freedom to use it.

Lilura Deepcurrent

Elderly, piercing blue eyes, very still. Holds her breath unnaturally long without noticing she is doing it.

The head of the Order of the Lake Lady has been the goddess's voice for thirty years, and for the last fourteen months there has been nobody on the other end. She has told no living soul. A faith whose goddess has gone silent has no civic power at all, and civic power is currently the only thing protecting her people. She is spare and slow, with no performance left in her; she has stopped doing the things a High Priestess does for effect. She is kind in a remote way, like weather clearing, and when she speaks it is one sentence and the matter is closed. People say there is merfolk blood in her.

> *"I have been the Lady's voice for thirty years. I would like to be told what she is saying."*

Play her turning to water. Under pressure she talks about the cistern, the tide, which pool you drank from and what it tasted like. It is never small talk. It is always her looking for the answer somewhere other than the place she has stopped being able to look. She runs the practical half of the Order so that Nerissa can run the sacred half: the gate, the rota, the correspondence. She is the one who will decide whether the Order can ever be moved, and she will not be moved by anything less than the goddess, or something that sounds like her.

High Priestess Nerissa

Fifties. Blue-green robes worked so heavily with silver that the light does something strange on the cloth.

The High Priestess of the temple on Temple Isle has been right, alone, for two years, about something enormous, and has been kindly and patiently managed by every person she told. She is not bitter about it; she is worse than bitter, because she has become careful. She can feel what is happening to the water in her own body. The Order's answer was to have a younger priestess sit with her. She drinks the fouled water herself and has told nobody why. She is grave, dry and physically fearless, not warm in manner but unusually kind in practice: when somebody is in trouble in front of her, she simply deals with it, without commentary.

> *"I am permitted to be wrong about this. That is the whole of what I am permitted."*

This week she wants to hold the Tourney without the goddess's water being profaned, and she wants somebody with standing to say out loud the thing she is not permitted to say. Temple law binds her until a sacred site itself is threatened, and she cannot act on a rumour carried by strangers. She can act, decisively and in public, on evidence in the open: a demon-marked blade laid on her altar in front of witnesses, Ivo Calder's original notes, or an Assay finding with Conall's punch on it. Give her that, and she can deny the Baron the Lady's ground, refuse his champion the blessing, or stop a bout on sacred sand, and the city will watch her do it. When she stops being careful, the hedging falls away and she starts stating things flatly and publicly, and everybody who knows her goes very quiet, because this is what they have all been afraid of.

Her weight is the rites, and the rites need the temple, the pool, the Order and time. In her own house she is formidable. On a dredge-boat in the Lullwater she is an ordinary woman in her fifties. She has no possession magic of any kind, and neither has the Order, ever. That province belongs to the demonologists and the wild-elf druids.

Sana

Nineteen, dark red hair chopped ragged down one side, temple blue-green worn like a coat that belongs to somebody else.

Nerissa's niece, six weeks a novice on Temple Isle, and cleverer than the job she has been given. She is fast, funny, tactless and wildly curious. She interrupts, asks the question everybody else was too polite to ask, apologises, and asks it again. She was sent here rather than kept at home, and has never been told which of those it was, and she is terrified that the adults have already worked out she is not really one of them.

> *"Nobody tells me anything, which means I have to work it out, which means I am usually right and never believed."*

She notices what nobody else notices, including, at the presentation of the entrants, a boy too thin for the armour he is in. She wants one adult to take her seriously, once, out loud, in front of somebody else. Do that, and the characters have a friend inside the temple who will carry a message to the High Priestess that would never reach her through the front door. When Sana goes properly quiet, anybody who knows her reads it at once as an emergency, because it is the one thing she never does.

Temerach Nebulo

Elf. Plain full plate without a single ornament, kept perfectly. No colours, no house, no badge. Never seen arriving; already there.

A knight of the Swords of the Lake, called the Lakelady's Javelin for what she can do with a bow, admitted on merit to a human order thirty years ago and still the outsider in every room. She is also the order's spymaster in Purewater. For four years she has run a network around Baron Hanzo that nobody has ever seen whole: ostlers, temple acolytes, a lamp-man on the Forge wharf, two clerks on the Governor's council, a boatwoman at the Mouth, and men she has had swear over still water and keeps sworn. None of them knows the others. Most of them do not know whom they report to.

> *"You were followed from the catacombs by two of Blau's and one of mine. Mine is the only one who reported."*

In earlier tellings she was far too approachable, and it broke her. She is not a patron the characters can visit, confide in or win over. She is an implacable spymaster, and from the moment the catacombs make the four of them interesting, she is running them, whether they know it or not. Play her by these rules:

- **She cannot be found.** Nobody walks up to her. Her squire, Murgeroch, is the only door to her, and he opens it when she says. She arrives: on a stair, in the back of a boat, at the end of a table nobody saw her sit down at.
- **She always knows more.** Every scene with her opens with her telling the characters something about their own last day that they did not know she knew. Prepare it. She is never surprised in front of them.
- **She does not ask; she tasks.** A door watched, a man followed, a message carried to Nerissa. Precise, paid for exactly, and never explained. She does not owe and does not let herself be owed.
- **She gives them only what makes them useful,** never early and never the whole picture. She does not lie, because she is a King's officer and that matters to her, but she withholds as a profession, and a direct question gets a better question back.
- **She is not moved** by pleading, charm, anger, threats or being liked. Persuasion does not work on her. Proof does, and only proof she can verify through her own people.
- **Push her, and she cuts them loose.** If the characters try to force her accusation before she is ready, she simply stops using them, and they discover how much of the last two days she was quietly covering for them.

Why she has waited four years. She has the standing to call the Baron to answer, and she has carried it unused, because a lord called to answer may offer trial by his champion's sword, and she does not know what is under that helm. She is very probably the one blade in Thornmere who could beat the champion, and she cannot enter the Single Combat, because her Archery entry is what buys her a quarter of an hour in front of the Prince. She brought

Conall to Purewater knowing whose son he is, and she has handled him like a piece on a board for four years. She would do it again. That is the part she cannot forgive.

What changes her is danger to Conall, which overrides everything, including her own caution and her order's protocol; and learning what is actually inside the champion. The moment she knows it is a bound spirit in a stolen boy, the calculation inverts, because that is desecration and the goddess's own business, and a Sword may act on that without asking anybody. **The reward for the players** is not her friendship. It is the moment, late in the week, when she hands them a task with the *reason* attached, once, and they understand they have been promoted from asset to somebody she trusts.

Murgeroch

A steady young fighter, kit well kept, who stands slightly in front of whoever he is screening without making a production of it.

Temerach's squire and go-between carries her messages, screens her meetings and tends her gear, and he is usually the first of her people the characters deal with. He has decided that being reliable is a whole identity, and he is quietly right. He repeats a message back to confirm it and tells you when it will be delivered. He wants promotion more than he would ever say out loud, because wanting it out loud would be unprofessional. When he decides you are not worth his time, the warmth simply switches off, not cold but finished, and nothing said afterwards moves him an inch.

> *"I'll carry it word for word. I'd rather you said it twice than I guessed once."*

Corvin

Twenty-two, a Sword of the Lake in white, open honest face. Rows extremely well and would like that mentioned.

A young Sword who took his vows for entirely sincere reasons and is privately terrified that when the moment comes he will turn out not to be equal to it. Nothing has happened to him yet, and that is the wound: he has no evidence about himself, and he needs some. He is eager, warm, a bit too loud and genuinely good-hearted. He picks up the heavy end of things before anybody asks, and occasionally before anybody wants him to, and he agrees to things he has no authority to agree to. He believes the best of people, and is right more often than the cynical expect.

> *"I'll come. I should probably ask first. I'll come."*

He is the Sword the characters can actually recruit, which makes him precious and dangerous in equal measure. He acts first, steps in, takes the weight, gives away the thing he was told to keep, and you can watch him arrive, a beat late, at what he has just done.

Palazzi and Paper

The men who govern Purewater do it with signatures, and the Baron has spent two years collecting theirs. None of them is a villain. Every one of them is a door the characters can open, and most are doors the Baron has already walked through.

Prince Emeric

Two-and-twenty, fair, thin, extremely good clothes, in a chair slightly too large for him.

The King's nephew was sent to Purewater as Governor to learn to govern, and he has correctly worked out that he is being handled, though he cannot yet see the hands. He is earnest to a degree his council finds embarrassing. He takes people at face value, and he actually listens, which is so unusual in that chair that everybody reads it as weakness. He is delighted by competence in other people and says so, which costs him. He has signed a great many things and decided nothing, and he has started to notice the difference.

> *"My uncle sent me here to learn to govern. I have learned to sign things. They are not the same skill."*

He wants to do one thing properly, on his own judgement, without being managed into it. **That is what makes him the Baron's perfect target and the characters' best hope.** Under pressure, all the court language falls away and he asks the direct question nobody has prepared an answer for. A character who gets in front of him with something true, and asks him to decide rather than sign, may find that he decides well. He is also the man who, on the last day, will summon the Baron to answer to him in private, because it is the brave, decent and stupid thing to do.

Alderic Vantt

Fifty-two, warm-faced, well fed, beautifully turned out without being showy.

The best host in Purewater: generous, funny, remembers your name, remembers your wife's name. He moves a conversation the way a man closes a door, so smoothly you only notice afterwards that you are in the corridor. He is a man of real charm and no spine, who has spent his life making rooms comfortable, and has now been comfortable in the wrong room for two years. Two winters ago the Baron quietly covered four thousand of his debts and asked for nothing. He calls it friendship. The Dragon Knights are camped on his water-meadow, the Baron's money runs through his accounts, and he drafted the standing order. He has not said out loud, not to his council and not to his wife, how frightened he is.

> *"I have a very good cellar and no idea any more which of it I paid for."*

The tell is two self-deprecating jokes in a row. Self-deprecation is his whole defensive repertoire, and he uses it in bursts; two in a row means you have found the thing. He wants to reach the end of the week with the Vantt name unattached to any of it, and he loves his daughter Ilse, who has been sent to her aunt's in the city for the duration and is furious about it. Push at the seam and he will talk about his debts before he talks about anything else.

Hesketh Pyle

Fifty-eight, well dressed and slightly unkempt with it. There is always a glass, and it is always further on than anybody else's.

He was formidable once, by all accounts. Two years ago the Baron's people made his son's killing of a man go away, and kept the deposition, and Pyle has agreed with absolutely everything in the council chamber ever since,

because agreement is the only posture from which nobody asks you a question. What is left is amiable, absent and enormously easy to have on a committee. He is not stupid; he is a clever man who has decided not to be present. He drinks in a wine-shop where councillors do not go.

"I second that. I second most things. It has been a very restful two years."

He is the crack in the council. He wants all of this to end without his son's name appearing anywhere in it. If somebody could take that deposition out of the Baron's hands, or make it worthless, he would stop agreeing. And silence from the man who has agreed with everything for two years is the loudest thing that chamber has ever heard.

Maro Quist

Seventy-one, upright, his councillor's chain always worn, his hands entirely still.

The oldest councillor in the city has spent fifty years in public life and has never yet found an argument he would rather win than understand. He carried the chamber for the standing order on the merits, having been given true facts in exactly the right order. He is incorruptible, formidable and completely wrong. He reads everything put in front of him, properly, in front of you, at his own pace, and does not apologise for the wait. Then he repeats your position back to you more accurately than you put it, and tells you exactly why it is not his to act on.

"You have brought me a conclusion. Bring me the thing you concluded it from."

His danger is that he has no secret, and therefore no lever, and every other person in the chamber finds that unbearable. He is a member of a dining society, the Ember Society, that is a recruiting front for the Awake the Dragon Movement, and he thinks its members are antiquarians; he went to three dinners and thought the wine was poor. **A party that finds the Society's list will find his name near the top, next to the councillor who signed both of the Baron's instructions, and will be certain.** Accusing him in public is the most expensive mistake available in the political thread. What moves him is not the crime but the evidence: a scroll in the Baron's own hand, an Assay finding with a punch on it, Ivo Calder's original notes. **If he reads a document twice, he has changed his mind,** and the room should know it. Quist turned is the best ally in the city government. He cannot touch the Baron, but he can withdraw the standing order, and that changes every street in Purewater.

Cassian Bree and the Ember Society

Forty-four, courteous, immaculate cuffs, a faintly damp handshake. Utterly unmemorable, and working at it.

The Ember Society meets eleven times a year in a hired upper room off the Merchant's Quarter: dinner at eight, an address at ten, port and argument until midnight, sixty names on the list. Its stated subject is the age before the lake, and its addresses are printed and bound and extremely boring. It was real once, thirty-one years ago. Eight years ago it acquired a new secretary and became a funnel for the Movement, without anybody noticing. No address ever mentions dragons or magic. Every one of them argues, in careful and rather beautiful prose, that the age is smaller than the one it replaced, and that the men who broke the Dragon Kings broke something else at the same time. By the time anybody is asked for anything, they have spent two years agreeing over port that the world has got smaller.

The Society has three rings. The **Table** is the sixty, who are never asked for anything. The **Readings** are a dozen who are invited, flatteringly, to private evenings with genuine old texts. The **Four** are each asked, once, for one specific thing only they can give, and are never told why.

Cassian Bree is the secretary, and the only real member of the Movement in Purewater. Everything he does is legal, and he will help you with all of it. He reports *on* the Baron to the Movement, not *to* him, and the Baron does not know. He has four letters in a locked file and no idea which of the two men he is caught between will kill him first for having them.

"Take the whole ledger. I have nothing in it I would not read aloud at dinner."

Under pressure he becomes more generous: more access, more names, more paper. The flood is the defence, and the one sheet you actually want is somewhere in the middle of it.

Ivo Calder

Fifty, distinguished, guild indigo, instruments kept beautifully. He has not slept properly in six weeks, and it has started to show in his hands.

The Watercrafters' Tide Master and the city's appointed assessor, and one of the Society's Four. Six weeks ago the Order's fouling alarm registered the corruption bleeding off the Baron's hull, the reading went to his guild, and he signed it off as a false reading, because a man he respects asked him to, at a private reading, without telling him why. On the strength of his signature, the alarm was silenced. He is a craftsman of real integrity who signed one reading he did not believe, for reasons that were almost good, and he has discovered that a man cannot hold one lie of that size without it taking up all the room. He has not destroyed his original notes. He has moved them twice, and he cannot explain to himself why he has not simply burned them.

"The instrument was at the edge of its range. I have said that sentence eleven times now."

There is no middle in him. He mounts a vigorous, well-argued defence right up until an independent reading appears, from Nerissa's people, from Gardwen's own senses at the water's edge or from the Assay, and then the whole thing comes out at once, in one breath, with something close to relief. What his confession buys is a name, not a conviction: who is actually paying the Baron, a man who is not in this city and will not die on the sand. And his notes reopen the alarm, which puts the Order officially onto the Baron.

Guildmaster Torval Bluehand

Middle-aged, indigo sash, hands stained permanently blue to the wrist.

The master of the Watercrafters is an engineer who loves the city's waterworks the way other men love their children, and whose curiosity is so strong it can be used on him. It already has been, once, through his own Tide Master, and he has not let himself finish thinking about that. He is delighted by mechanisms: he leans in, picks things up while discussing them and forgets to put them down. He is impatient with politics and lit up by detail.

"Nobody has built anything new on this water in ninety years, and then a man moors THAT at my door."

He wants to get aboard that steaming hull and find out what it is doing to his water. He offers the craft (a demonstration, a drawing, the run of his workshop) because generosity is how this man asks for help. A party that wants an honest reading of the water, or an excuse to look at the Baron's ship from up close, could do much worse.

Harbormaster Velen Deepkeel

Weathered, dark blue coat badged by rank, forty years of it. Formal even sitting down.

He believes, sincerely and after four decades, that a port which is written down correctly cannot be stolen, and he has arranged his working life so that he never has to find out what his Port Captains actually take. He squares the edges of paper while he talks. He will tell you which form your complaint should have arrived on, and he is not being obstructive; he means it helpfully. He knows. He has known for years. He has built an entire administrative life around never being told.

"Every hull on this water is written down. Including that one. Nobody has ever asked me for the page."

He is the door to maritime law, the second court the standing order cannot reach. A boat commandeered with its boatman still aboard is the port's business, not the council's, and so is a foreign lord's berth. Under pressure he recites the rule being broken, flat, from memory, all the way to the end, and the fact that he has it by heart is the whole of the feeling in the man.

Sergeant Abel Weir

Forty-one, heavy, tired, in a blue-grey watch coat, with a four-inch book under one arm that never leaves him.

A career watchman who was given an order he considers monstrous, has obeyed it every day since, and has kept a perfect record of his own obedience against a day that may never come. The book is the referral book: every complaint against the Baron's men, numbered, dated, with two witnesses, and not one of them answered. He is slow, thorough and unexcitable, and much gentler than his size suggests. He takes real pride in the craft of it, and he has no taste for violence or theatre. He is ashamed, every day, in a way he has no words for, and procedure is the only place he has found to put it.

> *"Thirty-one entries. I can tell you all of them from memory, and not one of them has been answered."*

He wants to hand the book to somebody who can use it without being the man who disobeyed. It is four inches of ammunition with no gun; the characters' problem is finding the gun. Put the book in front of somebody who outranks the council, such as the Prince, Quist turned, the Harbormaster or a Sword, and it becomes the most dangerous document in the city. Under pressure, his procedure gets more elaborate, not less, and the more correct he becomes, the closer he is to the thing he cannot say. If the council orders the watch to clear the water-stairs by force, Abel Weir will not do it.

The Four Strangers

Purewater is written for four pregenerated characters, and each of them is wired into the plot by somebody else's mistake. This chapter is the Games Master's view of them: what each brings, what each does not know, and how the first day pulls them into the same night without letting them meet. The players' view, with their sheets and their opening scenes, is in the *Players' Guide*. Any of the four the players do not choose stays in the world as a Non-Player Character, does exactly what this chapter says, and meets the party in the cellar on the second morning.

Gardwen

A feral-raised elf of the deep woods and a druid of the old quiet powers: healing, green things and pure water. A she-wolf called Ruhi walks at her heel, neither a pet nor tame. Ten years ago the Dragon Knights burned her family's steading at night and took her little brother, and his body was never among the dead. She has followed that colour across a great deal of country ever since, on the strength of one belief that nobody else shares. Three weeks ago she picked up the Baron's column on the north road.

What she does not know: that her brother is alive, that he is the champion in the litter, and that something else is wearing him. She learns the first two at the presentation of the entrants, when the helm comes off for four seconds, and the third on the first night of the Tourney, when she goes aboard the Baron's ship and hears her brother's voice speak with somebody else's manners.

What she brings: healing on the night it is needed most, and the scenario's emotional centre. She is the single most motivated person in Purewater. Every scene she is in should have that weight under it.

Magda

Sixty-odd, built like a gatepost, ringmail under a travelling cloak, a sworn servant of Hel the death-goddess, who does not let her age. She has outlived every single person she started with. For eleven nights Hel has sent her the same dream: a young woman with a wolf, a burning house, and a knight in dragon-scale who is already dead and does not know it. The dream said *lay the dragon warrior to rest*, which is not the same as kill, and she has been turning that over for three weeks of walking.

What she does not know: what the dream means. She will find out piece by piece, and the scenario ends by telling her where the dragon warrior's bones are. Magda knows Purewater a little from years ago, enough to know that Constantine at the Sylph's Embrace rents rooms to women travelling alone.

What she brings: the oldest, steadiest head in the party, the recognition of possession when she sees it (she has served Hel long enough to know a soul that is in the wrong body), and in a fight, terror out of all proportion to her age. Outside a fight, she is the most reliable adult in the story.

Randall

A Pearl thief, raised by the women of the Promise of Heaven, who knows every roof, ledge, water-stair and back door on that island and most of the city besides. He pays the Pearl back because the Pearl raised him, and he does not discuss his mother. Nus is his friend and second pair of hands. Sinnit has hated him for seven years over a purse handed back with a bow.

What he does not know: whose face he has. He is the Baron's son and Conall's twin, and people have been telling him all his life that he looks like somebody without his ever asking whom. He gets the first hint before noon on the first day, when a guard at the Baron's stirrup calls him *my lord*, and the answer in the catacombs at dawn on the second.

What he brings: the city itself, which is his character sheet, and favours nobody else can call in. He is the only one of the four who is home, which means he has the most to lose. On the second night of the Tourney he is the one thief in Purewater who can stand on the Baron's deck for three seconds without anybody shouting.

Conall Bjornlasch

A militiaman's son from Ashwick, pulled out of a ditch at nineteen by Temerach Nebulo, taught to read, and then taught a good deal more. The King's Assay trained him and gave him a warrant, a silver thumb-ring and a steel punch with his own mark. He is an arcane investigator (find-magic, illusion, a borrowed face when the work needs one) and a serious fighter, which surprises people who have decided he is a clerk. He rides into Purewater beside Temerach on an errand she has not explained.

What he does not know: almost everything that matters about himself. Temerach has known for years whose son he is. He gets the first hint at dusk on the first day, when a canal-rat in the Lullwater calls him *Randall*, and the truth from Temerach herself on the second night, once it has become more useful to her told than kept.

What he brings: standing. A warrant opens doors that stay shut for anybody else, and seating a spirit in an unwilling person is squarely within his charter, so when he hears what was done at the Sylph's Embrace, he goes to investigate it. He also brings the scenario's central dilemma: the Assay's doctrine is *establish, record, refer*, and his brother, whom he has had for about four hours, says do something now.

How the First Day Pulls Them Together

Each character starts in their own entry point, and the first day exists to put all four into the same night without their meeting.

- **Magda and Gardwen** meet in the queue at the ford, behind the Baron's column, and Magda takes Gardwen to the Sylph's Embrace for beds. They are in the house when Santo works his scroll, and they see the man on the stair.
- **Randall** is working the carts in Caravan Square when the column comes through, and a terrified guard calls him *my lord*.
- **Conall** rides in with Temerach, and at dusk she sends him into the Lullwater with a note, where Sinnit corners him and calls him *Randall*.

Before dawn on the second day, Marisette's enforcer takes both men who wear the attacker's face, and Magda and Gardwen are the witnesses who clear them. That cellar is where the party is made. Everything before it is a reason for the four of them to be in it.

Characters of the Players' Own

A player who would rather build somebody can, and it may be the better choice. Roll the characteristics first and decide who the character is afterwards: a CHA of 5 or a SIZ of 20 is a character concept arriving unbidden. Then ask the only question that matters: *why are you in Purewater this week, and who would notice if you left?* Put them in somebody's debt, or somebody in theirs: a guild boss short of answers, a madame short of law, a harbourmaster, a temple, a company of unpaid soldiers. Build a collision into their Passions on purpose, a loyalty that will one day disagree with an ambition.

Then find where they already are. Do not invent a new corner of the city; every corner is already in this book. Their way in is the place where their ordinary work breaks this week: a boatman whose boat is commandeered, a clerk who sees Vantt's accounts, a temple novice who notices the water, a fence who is offered a marked knife. Give them at least one scene each day that only they would notice, and aim it at a decision only they can make. If a player's character replaces one of the four, the four's scenes still happen. Give the replaced character's hook to whoever is nearest it.

PART

Events and Story Structure

How the Week Works

Purewater does not wait for the characters. Everybody in the previous part of this book wants something this week and is working at it, and the following chapters tell you what happens when they get it, day by day, if nobody interferes. The characters are the only thing in the city whose next move is not already written down. Your job is to keep everybody else's moves coming, and to let the characters' moves change them.

The Clock

The week runs for six days. Three are before the Tourney: the day the Baron arrives, the day the city closes, and the eve with its presentation of the entrants. Then come the three days of the Tourney itself: the Archery, the Single Combat, and the Run with the closing at dusk. Each day has four **watches**: dawn, day, dusk and night. This book writes a moment as the day and the watch: *d-3/night* is the night three days before the Tourney, *d0/day* is the Archery, and *d2/dusk* is the closing.

Move the clock between scenes, a watch at a time, when the characters have spent one. A long conversation, a crossing of the city or a careful search uses a watch. A fight does not. Then look at what was due in that watch and ask, for each thing, whether a character is there.

Onscreen and Offscreen

If a character is there, it is a scene: play it. If nobody is, it **happens anyway**, exactly as written, and the characters discover it afterwards as a rumour on a stair, a body, a shut door, or a girl who was already bleeding when they got there. The same event is a fight, an alibi or a piece of news depending only on where the players chose to go. That is the whole design, and it is why the players' choices feel heavy: going to the Lullwater tonight means not being on the Pearl.

A time in this book is the latest something happens, not an appointment. Events can come sooner when the characters earn it. If they work out who did it before the cellar, the cellar scene changes; if they work out the twins before Temerach tells them, Temerach's scene changes. Nothing waits forever, and nothing in this book should be withheld from players who have already worked it out. A Non-Player Character sitting on a fact the table already has is the worst thing in a scenario like this.

The Threads

Seven threads run through the week, and every scene in the following chapters belongs to one or more of them. Keep them in your head as people, not plots, and you can run the city from memory.

Santo's appetite. One girl, one stolen scroll, and a boy who has never been told no. It starts the scenario on the first night and runs until he gets her, is stopped, or loses his temper in public, which makes him known to the whole city. Fear works on him; exposure works on him.

Marisette's hunt. A woman was wronged under the Pearl's roofs, and the Pearl wants a name, then a reckoning. It sweeps up the twins on the second morning and, by the end of the second day, has shut every door on the island to the Baron's men.

Sinnit's grudge. Seven years of nursing one humiliation, and one week in which the thing he hates is worth money. Each step makes Randall's life worse and the Baron's information better, until one apology turns it.

The occupation and the docks. Every unanswered incident in the streets teaches the city a little more about what it is now, and moves the Dredgers a little closer to stopping the water-stairs. It ends when somebody with standing answers it, or when the Baron burns a quarter of the city.

The Baron's road to the room. The champion must be seen for four seconds at the presentation, must win on the sand, and must walk through a door at the closing. Every part of the Baron's week serves those three moments.

Temerach's game. Four years of patience, a network nobody has seen whole, a secret about Conall, and an Archery entry that buys her a quarter of an hour in front of the Prince. She acts when she knows what is under the helm, or when Conall is in danger.

Gardwen's brother. Ten years of following a colour, four seconds of a face, a night aboard the Baron's ship, and a question at the end that nobody should answer for her.

Keeping Track

You do not need the full machinery to run this, but a little bookkeeping helps. Keep one sheet for the week, with the six days down the side and the watches across, and mark the current watch. *The Week at a Glance* has every event in order: read down it each time the mark moves. Beside it, keep a small tally for the threads that can tip over on their own:

- **The occupation:** add a mark for each public incident the Knights get away with. The city gets worse with every mark: a man beaten in front of the watch, a woman taken off the Pearl street, a local killed in the open.
- **The Dredgers:** if nobody has helped Marda by dawn on the eve of the Tourney, the water-stairs stop.
- **Sinnit:** a mark for each step he takes toward selling Randall out. At three, he sells the faces to Blau, unless Randall has apologised.
- **The locket:** where it is at dawn on the last day decides which ending the day takes.

The same appendix lists every agenda and its clock, for Games Masters who want the full machinery.

The Shape of It

The week falls into five movements, and each one takes something from the characters that does not come back.

The Column (*the first day*) brings the four strangers in and puts them all into the same night. It takes Emmeralda, cut open or carried off with something inside her, and the assumption that the law applies to everyone.

The Cellar and the Name (*the second day*) arrests the face twice, makes the four into a party, gives the face a name and closes the Pearl. It takes the twins' anonymity, and the belief that knowing who did it is worth anything by itself.

The Eve (*the third day*) stops the docks, if nobody listened, sits the characters in front of the wall of the city's law, and takes the champion's helm off for four seconds. It takes Gardwen's ignorance.

Arrows and the Ship (*the first day of the Tourney*) gives the characters the truth: what the champion is, what holds him, and where that thing lies when the Baron sleeps. It takes the hope that her brother can simply be taken home.

Sand, Theft and the Last Day (*the last two days*) is the champion's victory, the theft, and the reckoning. It takes the characters' safety, the city's peace, and on the worst road, a friend.

The chapters that follow tell each movement as a story, with what happens if nobody interferes, how to run it when the characters are in the room, and where it bends when they push.

A Note on Pacing

At most tables a day of the scenario fills a session, and the first two days are the slowest, because four characters are meeting a city. Do not hurry them together. The cellar on the second morning will come; let the first day be four short stories that the players hear one another tell. From the eve onward, the week accelerates, and the last two days should feel like a fuse burning down. If you are short of time, the Archery morning and the eve's councillor can be folded into a single session, and the Run can be played as a montage. Never cut the cellar, Gardwen's night aboard the ship, or the theft.

The Column

Three days before the Tourney. Four strangers arrive in Purewater on the same day as the Baron, none of them knowing about the others, and before the night is out a man whose face three men in this city share has done something unforgivable on the Pearl.

Run the four openings separately and cut between them, a scene or two each, and do not hurry them together. The day exists to put all four characters into the same night without letting them meet. By the time the lamps are lit on the Pearl, Magda and Gardwen should be lodged at the Sylph's Embrace, Randall somewhere on the Pearl or in the city with a strange story to tell, and Conall in the Lullwater, wishing he had never accepted the note.

The Ford and the Road

The day begins a few miles outside the city, in two places at once.

At the gravel ford on the landward road, carts stand three deep in the heat, among horse-smell and crushed fennel, and everybody has been standing in the queue for an hour. At the front of it is the di Teufel column, and in the middle of the column is a covered litter with its curtains laced shut, which the outriders let nobody walk beside. Gardwen is in the queue behind it, watching the dragon-scale disappear toward the city gate. Three places back, an old woman in ringmail is looking straight at her and not pretending otherwise. That is Magda, who has dreamed Gardwen's face for eleven nights, and every dream ends in Magda's own death. She is not good at explaining, and she will not try twice.

The litter is the first fact of the scenario. Offer it as an image, and never explain it. Anybody who pushes for a look gets an outrider's arm across the chest and a very polite refusal. What matters is that the two women find each other, and that by evening Magda has taken Gardwen to the one madame she knows who rents beds to women travelling alone: Constantine, at the Sylph's Embrace. If either woman is a Non-Player Character, the other still meets her, and they still go to that house. Their being under that roof tonight is what the scenario needs.

An hour up the Ashwick road, a King's officer riding in plain harness with no device on her shield is stopped by four bored Dragon Knights, because she is an elf and because they can. Temerach Nebulo, with Conall riding beside her, is that officer. It is not a fight. It is the slow, public and entirely deniable humiliation of somebody who outranks them and cannot use it: they go through her saddlebags, and they ask her to say something in elvish, and it goes on far longer than is comfortable to play, which is the point. She takes it. Completely still, no answer, eyes front. She has told Conall not to intervene, and if he is a character, his roll is Willpower not to. **Do not let her win this scene.** Her not winning it here is what buys the Archery, and the shot at the end of the week.

The Gate

Caravan Square, mid-morning, and the crowd is thick enough to work. Randall has had a decent hour. Then the crowd turns, the way a crowd does, and the Dragon Knights come through the Land Gate: twenty-odd riders with their banners cased against the damp, the covered litter in the middle, and at their head a lord riding uncovered and unhurried, letting Purewater look at him. A character in the crowd who watches the litter can see how carefully it is screened, and with a successful Perception roll, that the guards face inward as much as out.

Every eye in the square goes to the litter, so every purse in the square stops being watched, and Randall is in the middle of robbing a cart when a guard at the Baron's stirrup turns his head and sees him. **The guard goes white.** He breaks step. He says *"My lord —"* in the voice of a servant who has just seen the heir standing in the street where the heir is not supposed to be, in a thief's clothes, with his hand in somebody's cargo, and who will be the one blamed for it. He offers Randall a hand down off the cart, because he cannot think of anything else to do. Then the column moves, and he has to move with it, and he looks back twice.

Let Randall play it. A Deceit roll to carry it off is worth more than the escape: on a success, a name and a piece of the household's business; on a critical, where his lordship is expected this evening. A failure puts Randall in front of somebody who has seen Santo close up. A Stealth roll to vanish costs nothing and teaches nothing, and that is a legitimate outcome that should be allowed to be dull. **The guard reports nothing.** He thinks he has seen Santo slipping his leash again, and telling the Baron about the young master's absences is how a guard stops being a guard. Nobody in that column has seen a second face, only the first one in the wrong place, so the Baron learns nothing today.

The column crosses the Triumph Bridge to the customs house, makes for the Forges, and carries the litter aboard the steaming ship at the private pier. The city talks about it for the rest of the day.

The bridge itself is the first thing Purewater teaches anybody who comes in by the gate. Three men in dragon-blazoned harness stand in the middle of it, doing nothing much but eating. It is the only way in from Caravan Square, and the whole morning's traffic (carters, a fish-cart, two temple girls, an old man with a goat) goes round them in single file against the parapet, and nobody says anything. A watchman in blue-grey stands at the far end, and he is not doing anything either. Play it as scenery and let it be noticed; do not point at it, because the information is entirely in what the locals do with their feet. If a character intervenes, and somebody usually will, the Knights are bored rather than spoiling for a fight. They give way sooner to a well-dressed stranger with a confident manner than to a carter, which is its own lesson. The watchman will not back them, but afterwards he wants their name, quietly, and does not write it down where anybody can see. These three are the advance men. By dusk there are twenty-five. If nobody interferes, mark one for the occupation.

A Rich Young Man with No Name

At the start of the evening trade, Emmeralda dances for the front hall of the Sylph's Embrace. A young man in a good coat with no device on it watches her the whole way through and does not drink. Then he goes to the desk and buys her evening, the way a hundred men a week do, with new silver and over the odds, and asks for a room on the second floor.

He does not say *di Teufel.* Nobody on the Pearl knows the heir's face, and Santo likes it that way, and that small fact is the engine of the next two days. When the house goes looking for the man who went upstairs with Emmeralda, all it will have is the face, and three men in the city wear it.

Magda and Gardwen are in the hall, taking their rooms. A player who is watching the room can notice him with a Perception roll: young, rich, a soft right hand, and the coat, which is better than anything else he has on and which he is going to leave behind. Constantine takes his money and thinks nothing of it. She will spend the next day wishing she had looked harder.

Randall, *There* You Are

At the same hour, on the other side of the city, Conall is about to be called by his brother's name for the first time.

Temerach sends him over to the Lullwater by Shilling Stairs with a sealed note for the storyteller at the Moist Oyster, which she does not explain, because she never does. He dresses down for it, which is the kind of thing that attracts no attention anywhere except the Lullwater. Within the hour he is lost in the narrow canals north of the Still, and within the same hour he is cornered in a wet passage between two tenements, with water at both ends, by three men. The one in front fills the passage: big, canal-rat, permanently aggrieved. He says the name with enormous satisfaction.

> *"Randall.* There *you are."*

This is Sinnit, and he thinks he has finally caught Randall off the Pearl, alone, on Sinnit's own ground. He does not notice the clothes, the accent or the King's Assay ring; he sees the face he has hated for seven years. And he

announces exactly what is going to happen, because that is the only mercy in him. It is not a beating, not at first. It is a reckoning:

"Pearl Quay. Seven years back. The purse. The bow. Say it. Say you're sorry, in front of my lads, and we're square."

Conall has no idea what he is talking about, and that is the whole scene. Every honest denial sounds like Randall being clever, which is exactly what Randall did last time, and Sinnit gets louder with each one. Every way out is fine. Conall can **fight**: Sinnit hits hard and fights dirty, and his two lads (use the Canal Cutpurse) are worse than he is, and three on one in a wet passage is still three on one. He can use **magic**, which works and leaves Sinnit very frightened and very sure that Randall has learned something new. He can simply **say it**, apologising for something he never did; it does not count, because the wrong man said it, but Sinnit does not know that and goes away shaken. Or the **Lullwater** can take a hand: a door opens, an old woman shouts from a window, a punt comes under the passage. The quarter looks after strangers who are being picked on, sometimes.

Conall leaves with something to turn over all night: a thief called Randall who, as far as the Lullwater is concerned, wears his face. It is the first thread of the twins on his side, and it arrives the same day Randall is called *my lord*. Sinnit leaves with a story, and tomorrow, when he sees the real Randall walking the Pearl free with no bruises, the beginning of an understanding that will be worth money.

The Night at the Sylph's Embrace

Santo has a room on the second floor, the girl's evening, and his father's scroll in his coat.

He thinks he is making her *willing*. He has watched his father seat a spirit in a living body and be obeyed by it for ten years, and he means to put something small and hungry into this girl, a lust spirit, so that she wants to come to the barge. He has one use of a stolen scroll and no training whatsoever, and he is nineteen and frightened. **The dice decide what kind of scenario this is**, so roll it at the table where the players can hear it, even if none of them is in the room.

First, the working. The scroll does most of the work and Santo does the rest badly: roll against a poor chance. Whatever the result, the scroll burns out in his hand and leaves a fresh burn across the palm and fingers of his right hand that will not heal by morning. That burn is the clue that clears the twins.

If it takes, the channel opens, the seat holds, and the thing settles into her. She stops being afraid of him. She wants what he wants, and she is bright and pliant and wrong in a way anybody who knew her would see in a minute. Now he has to get her out of the house: a Stealth roll down the back stair to the water-door and the skiff, made one grade easier because she is helping. If he succeeds, he keeps her, and she is aboard the Baron's ship by midnight. If he fails, somebody stops them on the stair; he lets go and runs, and the girl is left on the landing laughing at nothing, and he will try again by boat tomorrow.

If it fails, the channel opens and the seat does not hold. Whatever answered the invitation will not go where he tells it, and he finishes the working the only way panic knows, with the barbed knife: a long ritual cut that opens her the length of her body. She screams. He runs, and in running he kicks the knife behind the armoire. (If your table likes the Widow's legend, this is the night the women of the quay decide that a binding cannot hold under the Pearl's lamps.)

Magda and Gardwen lodge at the top of the back stair, and that is why Magda brought her here. If the working failed, they hear the screams and are first through the door. Gardwen's healing, or anybody's First Aid, saves Emmeralda's life; without it she dies before dawn. On the back stair they see the man going the other way: young, rich, bare-headed, cradling his right hand. If it took, they see a couple on the back stair in the small hours, and a girl who was frightened of him at dusk now hanging on his arm. Magda has served Hel long enough to know what she is looking at, and if they step in, Santo's getaway becomes an opposed roll against theirs.

What is left in the room is everything he did not take, which is everything, because he left in a panic either way. The barbed knife is behind the armoire if the working failed, with a mark on the pommel: a ring with a line through

it and three strokes off the line. The spent scroll is on the floor, burnt out but legible, in the Baron's own hand. A chalk seat is drawn on the boards under the rug, still live until somebody sweeps it. And his coat hangs over a chair, with a Purewater tailor's chit in the pocket and the di Teufel crest under the collar. Nobody in the house is going to search a room while a girl is bleeding in it, so all of it is still there in the morning, and so is the man who wants it back.

Either way, before midnight, Marisette has heard, and the hunt for a man with that face has begun.

The Cellar and the Name

Two days before the Tourney. The face is arrested twice before dawn, and two men who have never met wake up looking at each other. By noon the four characters are a party, and by nightfall the face has a name and every door on the Pearl is shut to the Baron's men. They also learn something they will spend the rest of the week relearning: in this city, knowing who did it is worth almost nothing.

Hesper Comes Before Dawn

Marisette does not wait for the watch. By midnight the house has given her a description, and by the small hours her people have found the face twice. A thief who answers to it is fencing a morning's take on the Pearl. A young man-at-arms who answers to it has a room at a plain inn near Shilling Stairs. She does not know which one did it, so she takes both.

Hesper walks up to each of them in turn before dawn and puts them down without a fight worth the name: a word, a Sleep, a hand on the shoulder, and two men from the Mother of Pearl with a blanket and a boat. If both twins are characters, play the two takings as two short scenes, cutting between them. If only one is, the other twin is already in his chair when the character wakes. **Nobody gets away from Hesper; that is not what this scene is for.** A character who fights is put down harder and wakes with a worse headache. If neither twin is a character, both are taken anyway, and the party hears of it from Magda and Gardwen, who are about to be sent for as witnesses.

Two Men with One Face

This is the scene the whole opening has been building toward, and the one where the party is made. Give it room.

The burial galleries under the Hill quarter are dry, cold and chalk-white, with three centuries of the respectable dead stacked in them, and sound does not carry up. Two men sit tied to chairs side by side in the lamplight, each looking at his own face on a stranger. Marisette stands in front of them with the lamp. Hesper stands behind them, where they cannot see.

She questions them **together**, which is cruel and clever: each one hears the other's answers, and each one looks at his own face while he gives them. She wants to know where they were at the turn of the night and who the girl is to them. She does not say what happened to the girl. Somewhere in it, somebody says the word *brother* out loud. Let the twins get there themselves if they can. Randall arrives carrying a guard who called him *my lord.* Conall arrives carrying a canal-rat who called him *Randall* and wanted an apology for something he never did. And here is Randall.

Then Marisette sends for the two women from the house, or they come on their own, because Gardwen saw the man on the stair and wants to know whom Marisette has taken. **Magda and Gardwen clear them on what they saw.** The man on the stair was cradling a burnt right hand, and neither of these two has a mark on him. He was dressed better than either of them, and the coat he wore is still over a chair in that room, with a crest under the collar. If either twin can be placed elsewhere at the turn of the night, a witness who was there makes it stick. Marisette believes a person who was there over a face, every time. If you want a roll, it is her Insight against the witnesses' Influence, and with the burn and the coat it is Easy.

If the witnesses do not carry it, because the dice go badly or a character refuses to cooperate, other people tip the scales, each with a price attached. A folded note arrives by the hand of Temerach's squire. Temerach does not come herself, and whatever is in the note, Marisette unties Conall without another question and looks at him differently afterwards. Crowbill sends word that Randall is a known man of the Lullwater and he would like him back. Or Emmeralda, if she is alive and herself, is carried down to look at them and shakes her head. Marisette is right in the end either way; the slow way just means hours in the dark first.

Play the moment the ropes come off. It is the first time the four characters are in one room: two women who saw it, two men who were blamed for it, and a madame who now owes the twins an apology. It is the party's founding image, and the players will remember it.

Then Marisette looks at the face in front of her for a long moment. If the coat has been brought from the house, she turns the collar over and reads the crest. **She names the di Teufels.** She does not know which di Teufel, and she knows exactly what it means that two strangers in her city wear their face.

The Assayer in the Doorway

From Marisette's questions, Conall has just heard what was done upstairs at the Sylph's Embrace, and **the moment he hears it, he investigates.** It is not curiosity. Seating a spirit in an unwilling person is a hanging matter under the King's Assay's charter, and he is the only assayer in Purewater. In the natural course of things he walks out of the cellar and straight to the Pearl. If he hears sooner, on the night, from the street or from a note of Temerach's, let him go sooner.

Constantine does not let strangers into that room, but the warrant opens it: a thumb-ring of assay silver, a steel punch, and a man who says *the Crown's Assay* in a voice that expects to be obeyed. She has never seen an assayer, though she has heard of them. She lets him in and stands in the doorway to watch.

Whatever Santo left and nobody has taken is waiting for him. The **chalk seat** under the rug is still live. Detect Magic finds it, and Read Magic, or the Assay's training, reads what it was for: a seating, not a summoning. Somebody tried to put something *into* her, and whether the seat is spent or broken tells him whether it took. The **spent scroll** holds nine lines in an unregistered hand, which is an offence before anybody asks whose hand it is, and Conall can say, accurately, that whoever wrote it has never been on the Register and is very, very good. The **barbed knife** is behind the armoire if the working failed, and the Assay knows the mark of Asmodeus on its pommel. The **coat** is here, if Marisette has not already taken it. And **Emmeralda** is here, cut open and tainted if the working failed, or, if it took and she is still in the house, bright and wrong and asking for the window to be opened, with Conall's Detect Magic showing him what is sitting inside her.

This is the first lawful lever anybody has had on the di Teufels all week. The Assay's doctrine is *establish, record, refer*, and Conall is good at it: a written finding struck with his own punch is evidence no council can wave away, and the basis of a capital charge, in a court the standing order cannot touch. And it costs. A finding that names a great lord, laid by a junior assayer who cannot make it stand, is a finding he answers for himself. Temerach will want to know what he has written before he seals it. The doctrine says send it to Caldreth, where it will arrive after everything has happened. His brother, whom he has had for about four hours, says do something now.

Santo Wants It Back

Santo has two problems this morning, and he is going to try to solve both at once.

The room comes first. He wants his coat and his scroll, which are errands he could explain to his father if he had to. He sends a man up for them by water between the noon rest and the evening trade. In the natural course of things Conall has been through the room first, straight from the cellar, and Santo's man finds bare boards. That enrages Santo and sends him after whoever has them. If the characters dawdle, the boat arrives while they are still on the stairs, and the scene becomes a fight in a doorway over a coat.

The girl comes second, and only if the working took and he failed to get her out on the night. (If he already has her, she is aboard the ship. If the working failed, he does not want a girl with a wound the length of her body, and he goes straight to his temper.) She is still in Constantine's house, and she still wants to go with him. That is the horror of it: the house has to keep her in while she is trying to get out, and the thing inside her is patient and charming and keeps asking for the window to be opened. So he comes back with a boatman hired off the Shoals, two men who ask no questions and a covered skiff at the water-stair behind the house. He does not have to carry her. He only has to be there when she reaches the door.

Onscreen, this is a fight, a chase over water, or a negotiation the party wins simply by being present and awake. The hard part is Emmeralda, who is on his side. Offscreen, if nobody is watching that stair, **he gets her**, and from dusk she is aboard the Baron's ship, willing, nobody's prisoner but her own. Gardwen will find her there in two nights' time. Do not soften this. It is the cost of not being there.

Boats on the Water-Stair

At some point in the middle of the day, on a water-stair on the Pearl, four Knights step into a working skiff that already has a fare in it. The fare gets out. The boatman, a Shoals man named Perrin Cale, forty, who has rowed this stair for twenty years, stays with his boat, because it is his livelihood and he has decided, wrongly, that he can. They let him row. The two boatmen taken before him are numbers 24 and 25 in Abel Weir's referral book, and they have not come back. Nobody has found a body, and the Dredgers have decided that they were rowed out through the Mouth and left there.

If a character is anywhere near the water, this is the easiest intervention in the scenario and the most instructive one. Four armoured men in a small boat on deep water, in a city where every local can swim and none of them can. A party that thinks about the water rather than steel wins this without a fight, and makes three hundred dockworkers extremely interested in them. Offscreen, roll for Perrin Cale: he comes back at midnight with a broken hand, or he does not come back at all. Either way Marda Blackwater hears about it before breakfast. Mark one for the occupation, and move the Dredgers one step closer to the stairs.

The Lie on Every Stair

By mid-morning the whole Pearl knows Marisette's people took somebody in the night for what was done at the Sylph's Embrace, and Sinnit makes sure it knows who. He tells it on every stair and in every wine-shop between Pearl Quay and the Shoals: *Randall.* Randall, raised in the Promise of Heaven, who turned on the women who raised him. Randall, whom Hesper herself came for. Sinnit was in the Lullwater last night with a man wearing that face, and he has a bruise to show for it.

It does not matter that Marisette cleared him. The clearing happened in a cellar in front of four people; the accusation happens in the open, forty times, in a voice that carries. By evening the street believes, falsely, that the man who carved Emmeralda was Randall the Pearl thief, and it costs Randall on the one ground where he is rich. The Promise of Heaven's door opens to him a little more slowly, and Asphodel's face holds a question she is ashamed to ask. A fence he has used for six years is out when he calls. Somebody spits on the stair behind him. Ila, at the Sylph's Embrace, looks at him and runs. None of it is permanent, and all of it is this week, which is the week he needs it. Marisette can end it with one sentence on the quay, and will if somebody asks her, at a price. Emmeralda, if she is alive and herself, can end it by being seen with him. Or Randall can go and find Sinnit, which is what Sinnit wants.

And Sinnit has seen the real Randall today, walking the Pearl free and unbruised. He is slow, but he is starting to understand that there are two of that face. Mark two for Sinnit.

Fire on the Quay

If Santo does not have her, because the working failed or the boat did, he comes back to the Pearl at dusk with his right hand bandaged and nobody with him, because he has run out of people to send. He stands in front of the Sylph's Embrace and demands her. Then he demands his coat. Then, in front of the evening crowd, he says, *"I'll burn your house with your girls inside it."*

And then he does something about it. A cantrip his father let him learn sends a gout of fire into the doorway, the hangings and the painted shutters. It is not big, and it does not need to be: on a street of timber and lamp-oil it is the worst thing anybody has done on the Pearl in twenty years, and people are running with buckets before he has finished. Blau arrives inside a minute (he has been looking for the boy since noon), takes him by the collar and by the burnt wrist, and walks him off the Pearl without a word, through thirty witnesses who now know exactly what that face is called. The name follows them down the quay: *di Teufel. The son.* **This is the moment the face gets a name**, and anybody who was in the cellar this morning can put the burn, the name and the threat together.

(If Santo has the girl safe aboard his father's ship, he has no reason to make a scene, and none of this happens. Constantine finds an empty room instead, with a coat in it.)

That night Constantine comes to the Mother of Pearl, with smoke still in her hair or an empty room behind her, and tells Marisette what a di Teufel has done under one of her roofs. **Marisette does not close the Pearl.** That would put four hundred of her own people out of work to punish twenty-five men. **She closes it to them.** Every house on the island, at once, to anybody in di Teufel colours or the Baron's pay: no rooms, no drink, no music, no girls, and a doorman on every stair who knows the dragon when he sees it. Crowbill's people enforce it, for a fee Marisette pays without blinking. By morning, a Knight who walks onto the Pearl walks into a street where every door is shut in his face and every woman on it is watching him go.

It costs the di Teufels nothing material and a great deal of face, and the whole city reads it as the Pearl taking a side. It costs the Pearl almost nothing, which is why it holds. The Baron does nothing to Marisette directly. He leans on the Prince's councillors instead, and gives Blau a sharp word about the boy, and the Knights take it out on the streets. Mark one for the occupation.

Whose Son He Is

Late that night, in a stable, out of earshot of anybody, Temerach tells Conall the truth she has held for years.

She has not been waiting for courage. She has been waiting for the moment the truth becomes more useful told than kept: the moment he would find it out anyway, from somebody she does not control. Today he woke in a chair next to a thief wearing his face, who had been called *my lord* by a guard at the Baron's stirrup. His mother was an elven mage the Baron seduced and broke. She fled to this city and died here. Temerach has known since before she recruited him.

Play it as a handler briefing an asset, and let the warmth leak through anyway. She tells him in about six sentences. She does not apologise. She tells him what it means for the next two days and what she needs him to do about it, and then, once, she says something that is not a task. If Conall is not a character, this still happens, and the party meets a Conall who is suddenly a different man. If the players have already worked it out, bring the scene forward. There is nothing worse than a Non-Player Character withholding a fact the table already has.

The Eve

The day before the Tourney. The docks may stop. The characters will probably carry their proof to somebody who reads every word of it and then explains, accurately, why it is not his to act on. And at the presentation of the entrants, the champion's helm comes off for four seconds, and Gardwen sees her brother. By midnight, unless somebody has made peace with a canal-rat, the Baron knows he has more sons than he thought.

The Empty Stairs

If nobody has helped Marda Blackwater by now (if Emmit Rill has not been paid, the two boatmen have not been accounted for, and the referral book has not reached anybody who outranks the council), then at dawn on the eve of the Tourney **the water-stairs are empty.**

No cartage, no provisioning, no boats for hire, no ice, no fish, no lamp oil. And no competitors' gear moved to the Tournament Ground, which is the part that turns a labour dispute into a sacred crisis. Marda stands at the head of the Fishmarket Stair and is entirely reasonable about it, which is what makes her formidable. Her terms are small: wages for Emmit Rill, an accounting of the two boatmen, and one Knight answering for something in front of a magistrate. Any one of the three, and the stairs move again.

Everybody feels it by mid-morning. **The Baron** cannot have this. A stopped port on the eve of the Tourney draws the Prince's personal attention onto his men two days before he needs a quiet room, and Tat Atarer tells him so bluntly. This is the pressure point where Hanzo can be made to give something up, such as a Knight handed to a magistrate or a purse for Rill, and if the characters are clever, they can be the ones who broker it. **The council** leans on the watch to clear the stairs, and the watch has to decide whether to club three hundred of its own neighbours on the orders of the men who wrote the standing order. Abel Weir will not. **The Order** cares, because the Tourney is sacred and the festival is being strangled. And **the characters** can broker it, break it or arm it. A crowd of three hundred angry dockers at the Tournament Ground is a thing the Baron's plan does not survive, and neither, possibly, does anybody standing in front of it.

Put the empty stair in front of the players and stop. If nobody brokers it, the stairs open again at dusk on the first day of the Tourney, on the Prince's personal promise to hear Marda after the closing, and the anger goes back into the Lullwater to wait. If somebody did help Marda earlier in the week, none of this happens. She holds her people, and remembers who helped her.

The Man Who Reads Everything

At some point on the eve, or whenever the characters think they finally have enough, somebody will take the proof to the city's government. The obvious door is the oldest councillor in Purewater, at Palazzo Quist in the Merchant's Quarter. It is the wall of the scenario, in the person of a decent man.

Maro Quist is seventy-one, upright, with his chain on. He does not interrupt and cannot be interrupted. He reads the whole thing, actually reads it, in front of them, at his own pace, while they stand there. Then he repeats their position back to them more accurately than they put it, and tells them exactly why it is not his. The watch is under a written standing order, which he carried through the chamber himself, on the merits. He is not corrupt, he is not frightened, and he is not persuadable, because he is right: a baron's son with a knife is weather, and you do not sue the weather.

Play the wait. Let the players stand in that room while an old man reads, and do not fill the silence for them. **If he reads it twice, he has changed his mind, and the room should know it.** What moves him is not the crime but the hand: a scroll in the Baron's own writing, an Assay finding with Conall's punch on it, or Ivo Calder's original notes. A turned Quist cannot touch the Baron, but he can withdraw the standing order, and that changes every street in Purewater by nightfall. And if the characters have found the Ember Society's list and come in certain that

he is the Baron's creature, this is the most expensive mistake in the political thread. Let them make it, and let it cost them the one honest man in the chamber.

The Helm Comes Off

On the eve of the Tourney, by long form, every entrant in every event is presented to Prince Emeric on the Tournament Ground: names read, colours shown, and each competitor bare-headed for the space of a bow. It is ceremony, it is tedious, and the whole city half-watches it from the stands. The Baron cannot avoid it without forfeiting the entry. So the champion is walked out in harness with the rest of them, and for perhaps four seconds the helm is off, and a seventeen-year-old who has been opened every night for a decade stands in daylight in front of several hundred people.

If Gardwen is there, she sees her brother. Ten years, and he is thirty yards away in somebody else's colours. Play the recognition, and do not resolve what she does about it. Hand it back to the player and wait. If Gardwen is a Non-Player Character, she still sees him, and the party learns it from a woman who has stopped speaking.

And Blau sees her see him. He stands behind the champion where he always stands, watching the crowd rather than the Prince, because watching the crowd is his whole job this week, and one woman in it has stopped breathing. He does not know who she is. He knows what that face means on anybody looking at this boy. By dusk he has a description of her, and from then on the watch on the Baron's ship is doubled and changes at no fixed hour. Her night aboard the ship tomorrow is harder for it, and should feel it.

If Gardwen is not there, somebody else may recognise the boy anyway: Sana, who notices things; or anybody who looks at a boy too thin for the armour he is in and wonders. This is the last moment before the bout when anything can be arranged calmly. After this there are hours, and after the final there are minutes. What Gardwen will do, if nobody stops her, is go aboard that ship to talk to him.

Dinner at the Vantt Estate

That evening, the Baron dines with his host at the Vantt Estate, two miles east of the walls. Alderic Vantt is fifty-two, warm, well fed and genuinely good company: there is drink, chairs, somebody's coat taken, and your name remembered aloud. He moves a conversation the way a man closes a door, so smoothly you only notice you are in the corridor. He is the channel the Baron's money runs through, and he has not said out loud, even at home, how frightened he is. **The tell is two self-deprecating jokes in a row.** A character who notices it (Insight, Hard) can push there, and he will talk about his debts before he talks about anything else.

Watching the house is worth as much as anything said inside it: who arrives, in what order, and who leaves early. The Baron arrives last and leaves first. Tat Atarer does not come at all.

The Canal-Rat at the Camp

If Sinnit has taken his three steps (cornering the wrong man, seeing the real one walk free, and spreading his lie), and Randall has not apologised to him, then tonight he does the worst thing in his life without understanding that it is.

He has worked it out slowly, the way he works everything out. A man in the Lullwater with Randall's face who did not know Randall's story. Randall himself walking the Pearl free the next day. And the young lord on the Pearl street with a bandaged hand, shouting fire, wearing the same face as both of them. That makes three, and a man who knows there are three of something has something to sell. He goes east to the Vantt camp in a borrowed boat and asks for the albino. He is kept waiting an hour in the wet. Then Blau comes out and listens without a word while Sinnit tells it, badly, twice, with the grievance in it: a thief called Randall, off the Pearl, and another one, a gentleman with a ring, both with his lordship's face. Blau pays him, more than he expected, and asks one question: where the thief sleeps.

The Baron knows. Blau goes to the ship that night, and from that moment the hunt for the sons the Baron did not know he had never stops. By dusk tomorrow there is a price on the face, in the same two days that one of the

twins is meant to be on the Baron's ship in the dark. What Sinnit wanted was Randall hurt, and he will get that. What he did not think about is what the Baron does with sons. When he finds out, it is the first thing that has ever frightened him more than being laughed at.

If Randall apologised to him (out loud, in front of people who matter to Sinnit), none of this happens. It is the clearest thing the apology buys.

A Boat in the Dark

Late that night, a quiet boat comes alongside the Baron's ship with a sealed packet, and the Baron is reminded that he is not the top of this pyramid. The courier carries instructions about the champion, and a line of credit that explains where the tournament money came from.

This is offscreen unless the characters are watching the ship or intercepting messages, and catching it is their only chance this week to learn the shape of what stands behind the Baron. The packet names nobody who is in Purewater, and it makes one thing plain: killing the Baron does not end this. The Movement is patient. A failure here costs it a season, not a life's work.

Arrows and the Ship

The first day of the Tourney. The city fills the stands and the slopes, the bookmakers chalk their odds, and an elf in plain harness walks onto the Long Butts. By the end of the night the characters know what the champion is, what holds him, and where that thing lies when the Baron sleeps.

The question of the day is jurisdiction, not evidence. By now the characters have proof. What they need is the court that fits (the Assay, the port or the goddess's ground) and somebody with standing who is willing to walk into it. The Baron's money is the thread that unravels him, because it is not his.

A Price on a Rooftop

At first light, Crowbill collects a character off a ledge, as he has collected people in this city for thirty years, and puts them on a cookshop roof to talk. He already knows what they did last night: the hour, the tide and how many. He does not ask what they found. That is more unsettling than any threat, and it establishes exactly how much of the city he sees.

He does not help people. He trades, and he wants something they will not enjoy giving: intelligence on the Baron's plan, a route into the camp, or control of a story the street is already telling. He has a line, and demon-craft worked on a helpless girl beside the Lady's water crosses it. Bring him proof rather than a grievance, and he opens canals, safe houses and men.

What he can give that nobody else can is the locket. The Baron wears a chain with a locket on it and has never been seen in daylight without it. Crowbill keeps a lamp-man on the Forge wharf who watches that ship for a living, and what the lamp-man has seen is that it comes off at night. The Baron sleeps aft with the locket on the table beside his bed, on a chain with a clasp, not a collar, and Blau sleeps across the door. Crowbill does not say *steal it.* He says what it is, where it lies, and that he knows a boy who would.

Nus is in the next room and has heard every word.

If no character goes to Crowbill, he says the same thing over breakfast to Nus anyway, as a joke. Nus does not hear it as a joke. Either way, the hinge of the whole scenario has just been set swinging, and nobody in the room has noticed.

The Tide Master's Notes

Somewhere in the middle of the week, and the first day of the Tourney is the natural place for it, a clever party goes looking for the reading that was signed off as false. That leads to Ivo Calder, the Watercrafters' Tide Master, best reached after the characters have seen the seam in Alderic Vantt and know whose money it is. He is fifty, distinguished, in guild indigo, with his instruments kept beautifully, and he has not slept properly in six weeks.

He has his whole defence prepared and wants to deliver it, and a question he has not anticipated stops him dead. What he wants is to be told that what he signed was reasonable. **There is no middle with him**: a vigorous defence, and then, the moment an independent reading appears (from Nerissa's people, from Gardwen's own senses at the water's edge, or from the Assay), everything, in one breath, with something close to relief. He has not destroyed the original notes. He has moved them twice. What his confession buys is a name, not a conviction: who is actually paying the Baron, a man who is not in this city and will not die on the sand. And his notes reopen the alarm, which puts the Order officially onto the Baron, and that is exactly the cause Nerissa needs to act on her own ground.

The Archery

This is the set piece of the day. Two hundred paces of marked grass on the Long Butts, a crosswind off the lake that everybody complains about, the Governor's box at the near end, and half the city lying on the slope behind. It is the one open event, with no colours and no fee, which is why an elf in plain harness is standing in it.

Temerach wins. Let her. After three days of being stopped on the road and spoken to in front of her own escort, she puts two hundred paces of arrows where nobody else in the field can, in absolute silence. Then she has to walk up to the Governor's box, with four thousand people watching, to be handed a prize, and **the dice decide what she does with the ninety seconds she has there.** Roll her Passion to see the Baron called to answer against her Loyalty to the Swords. If her Passion wins, **she spends it**: she names, out loud, whose men stopped a King's officer on the Ashwick road and what has been done in this city this week. Thirty years of standing are converted into one public accusation the Governor cannot pretend not to have heard. It buys a hearing, and it makes her a marked woman two days early. If her Loyalty wins, **she holds it**: she takes the prize, says the correct words and walks. She is still a King's officer with a clean record and a door she can open once, colder, and far more useful later. And very rarely, if the dice say so, **she loses**: the household's archer takes the wreath, and the scene becomes the characters watching the one person with standing lose her chance to use it.

Whichever way it falls, this is the scene the last day's shot answers.

A Price on the Face

If the Baron has learned of the twins, and in the natural course of things he has (Sinnit sold them last night), then at dusk Blau puts money on the street: a purse for a name, and a bigger one for delivery. By the next dawn every dockhand, courtesan and cutpurse in Purewater has the description.

From now on the twins cannot move openly. Randall's friends on the Pearl look at him and do arithmetic. Conall's warrant stops opening doors and starts announcing him. Blau will not announce a bastard to the city; he takes one off a street at night, and he is patient. A twin taken now goes to the ship, because the Baron wants the tool before he extinguishes the claim. **This is the moment the back half of the scenario turns into a pursuit**, and it is entirely the characters' doing, which is the point.

Gardwen Goes Aboard

She has seen her brother's face for four seconds after ten years, and she is not going to wait for the sand to see it again.

This is the most important night of the scenario, and it should be quiet. Twenty people are aboard the Baron's ship, at a private pier on the Forges' seaward side, its hull steaming where it meets the water. A stranger on that deck is noticed inside a minute, and since the presentation Blau has doubled the watch and stopped changing it at a fixed hour. Getting aboard is a whole operation: Crowbill's canal routes, Ruhi's nose, the dark under the pier, a party making noise at the far end of the wharf. Make it a real infiltration, Stealth against the Dragon Circle's Perception, and let it cost something.

Below the waterline aft she finds a lamp that is never put out, and a keeper asleep across a door. And then a man in his fifties comes up out of the after hold carrying an empty basin: heavy forearms, sleeves rolled past the elbow, a smell of liniment and lamp oil. This is **Orrin Sculle**, and he has been aboard longer than everybody on deck except the shipmaster. He does not shout. He sets the basin down without looking at it and tells her exactly what is supposed to happen next: he calls out, six men in mail come up the forward hatch, and nobody ashore ever hears of her again. Then he asks, *"So before I do — what are you?"*

Nothing she can say is cleverer than the truth, and the truth is the one thing nobody has offered him in ten years. A character who lies to him gets the six men. What decides it is not a roll on her side but **his own heart, rolled in front of the player: his Love for the boy, 70%, against his Fear of the Baron, 65%.** If Love wins, he does not move out of the way; he sits down on the coaming like a man whose legs have stopped agreeing with him. What he gives her is not access but knowledge. He tells her the boy's real name, which nobody has said aboard that ship in ten years. He tells her the thing he has never told a living soul: Gabriel holds a cup left-handed, the thing wearing him is right-handed, and every time it puts a cup down and the boy surfaces for a second, he moves it across. Then twenty minutes, boots off, and a warning: the third step complains, and the watch changes at the turn of the glass. If Fear wins, he does not betray her either, because he is not a cruel man. He tells her to get off his ship, and he means it, and he will be at the top of that companionway every time she comes back; a second approach

should be harder, and possible. If both rolls are criticals or both are fumbles, he asks her to take the boy with her tonight, which she cannot do, and he will never forgive her for refusing.

Everything she learns tonight, she learns from him or from the boy. **What is in her brother:** a dragon-knight called Thuban Eta, a thousand years dead, held in a living body by a torment and a binding. **That Gabriel is still in there,** and the cup proves it. **What holds the binding:** the bones in a tower on the Baron's border estate, which hold Thuban in the world, and the locket on the Baron's chain, which is the leash, renewed every night; without it, the Baron can neither command Thuban nor move him. **What the Baron wants:** if Orrin's Love won, he tells her what he has worked out and never said, that the Baron does not want a champion, he wants the room after the bout. **And the ship's routines**: the step, the glass, and the Baron's cabin aft beside the working cabin. That is the map two thieves will use tomorrow night.

If Thuban surfaces, as he sometimes does in the small hours, he speaks to her with perfect, thousand-year-old courtesy in her brother's voice. He does not want to be there. He cannot leave while the bones hold him, and he cannot disobey while the locket does. Let that conversation be long, and quiet, and let the player ask him anything. It is the best scene in the book.

She cannot take her brother tonight. Orrin will not help, and he is right: taking the body frees nobody while the anchors hold. She leaves knowing exactly what has to be taken, and from whom. If Emmeralda is aboard, she is forward in the good cabins, bright and wrong, and calls out to anybody she sees. If Gardwen is caught, she is not killed; Blau wants to know who she is, and a captured Gardwen aboard the ship is a rescue for the party and a very bad night for her.

Orrin is a door that opens the first time anybody gets near the boy, by any route: a delivery, an invitation, a disguise, somebody else's errand. If the characters reach him before tonight, play him then. In the natural course of things, it is Gardwen who finds him.

Sand and Theft

The second day of the Tourney. The champion comes out of the litter at last and wins, and the Baron, for the first time in four generations, goes to bed easy. That night the chain comes off his neck.

The Champion Takes the Sand

This is what the whole week has been running toward, and it is a real fight, not a formality.

The stands are full by mid-morning, four thousand people on the timber and the slope behind, with the Governor's box hung in lake-green and the Prince in it, and the bookmakers outside the east wall have the Baron's champion at odds nobody likes. The champion comes out of the competitors' ground in full harness with the helm down, and the helm stays down; nobody sees his face on the sand. He is seventeen and thin, and he fights like a knight of the dragon wars, because he is one. Thuban Eta does the fighting, and Gabriel is not there for it, which is the nearest thing to mercy in his life. He wins each bout in under a minute. In the final he breaks his opponent's leg in three places, and the crowd goes quiet instead of loud.

He wins. He is meant to win; everything depends on it. Run the bouts with Cailan's body and Thuban's Combat Style, using the host's hit locations and armour. Everything that can stop him is hard, which is as it should be:

- **Beat him on the sand.** Nobody entered can. Temerach could, but she is entered in the Archery, and the Single Combat closed its lists on the eve.
- **Have the match stopped.** Nerissa can halt a bout on sacred ground if she has cause she can defend in front of the city: a demon-marked blade on her altar, Ivo Calder's notes, Conall's finding. She stops it once, publicly, and the Baron must answer for it before the Prince. That does not end his plan, but it moves the room, and it puts every eye in Purewater on the champion's helm.
- **Reach Thuban.** Gardwen's voice at the rope, or Speak with the Bound, can make the thing in the harness hesitate for one Combat Round. Thuban does not want to win, but he cannot disobey.

When the last bout is over, **the Baron lets it show.** For the first time all week, a hand rests on the champion's shoulder, he bows to the Governor's box, and the warm, easy man goes home to sleep well. Tomorrow at the closing he walks into the room. That ease is what makes tonight possible.

The Rite Behind the Sealed Door

Every night, behind sealed doors in the working cabin aft of the Baron's ship, the Baron renews the binding: a cut, a bowl, the locket in his hand, and an hour of words. The laundress cannot get the grey residue out of the same linen every morning and has stopped mentioning it.

It is offscreen unless characters have got inside the ship, which is a whole operation of its own. Anybody close enough to hear it learns the two most important facts in the scenario. The champion is a prisoner, and the thing inside him does not want to be there: Thuban surfaces during the rite and is heard, once, speaking in another man's voice, a betrayed knight enslaved through the torment of that betrayal. **Tonight it matters twice over,** because when it is done, the Baron takes the chain off, lays the locket on the table beside his bed, and sleeps, and that is the hour two thieves go in over the stern.

Two Thieves and a Table

This is the hinge of the whole scenario.

The champion has won, and the Baron has come back to his ship with victory in his grasp, renewed the seat, taken the chain off, laid the locket on the table beside his bed and gone to sleep. In the dead hour after the rite, **Nus and Randall go aboard.** Nus has wanted one big score since Crowbill named the locket yesterday morning. Randall

is the only thief in the city who has been mistaken for a di Teufel, and can stand on that deck for three seconds without anybody shouting.

What they need is a way in, a way into the cabin, and a pair of hands. **The way in** is the map Gardwen brought back from her night aboard, if the party has it: the third step that complains, the turn of the glass, the Baron's cabin aft. Without it, the doubled watch makes every Stealth roll one grade harder. **The way into the cabin** is not the door, because Blau sleeps across it. It is the stern windows, from a boat, over steaming water. **The table** holds a locket on a chain with a clasp. It is not welded on, and it is not on the Baron's neck, and that is the whole point of doing it tonight.

Roll it for real. It takes Stealth against the watch, Athletics for the stern, Sleight for the table, and Perception for Blau if anything is fumbled. If it fails, they are seen and run with nothing, or are caught, and the locket stays where it is: the Baron walks into the room tomorrow, and the last day takes its first road. If it succeeds, they are over the side with the locket before anybody knows, and the Baron wakes at first light to an empty table.

Play the moment the locket is in Nus's hand. It is small, and warm, and the most valuable thing in the kingdom. Then remind the players what it is and is not. **It is the leash.** Without it in his hand, the Baron cannot command Thuban, cannot draw him out of the boy and cannot seat him in anybody else. It is a robust working, and destroying it would take a powerful Dispel Magic that nobody in the party can cast. It does not free Thuban from the world: the bones do that, and they are four days away. **And holding it gives nobody any power over Thuban.** It only takes him away from the Baron.

This only happens if somebody points them at it, and in the natural course of things Crowbill does. If the characters have deliberately stopped Nus, the theft does not happen. That is a legitimate story, and it leads to the first ending.

Santo Comes Himself

If the characters are still holding Santo's evidence, whether the coat, the scroll or the knife, then tonight, while the thieves are on the water, Santo comes for it himself, because he cannot report the loss to his father twice. (If he recovered everything on the second day, there is nothing for him to come for, and this does not happen.)

He is pathetic and lethal at once. **He does not run when he panics.** He takes hold of whoever is nearest (a servant, a girl, a thirteen-year-old like Ila) because it has always worked for him and nobody has ever made it stop working. He has his rapier, his fire and nothing to lose that he understands. If he dies tonight, the Baron loses his only legitimate heir, and if anybody connects the twins' face to the dead heir, the Baron's hunt for them begins at once, if it has not already: with Santo gone, the twins are the only di Teufel blood walking. And Blau, whose whole job was the boy, stops cleaning up and starts hunting.

The Last Day

The third day of the Tourney. The Run, the closing, and one of three endings, chosen by where a small warm locket is at dawn.

Read the board before you play a scene. Last night's theft decides which road this day takes, and the three roads share almost nothing:

Table 14: The Three Roads

Road	If	What happens
The Quiet Room	The locket was never stolen, or the theft failed	The Run and the closing. The Baron walks his champion into the room by the old rite and takes the Prince, and nobody in Purewater knows
The Burning	The locket was stolen, and Blau gets it back	The Baron burns the Lullwater to find it. Nus is betrayed and dies. The Prince summons the Baron to answer and is taken in that same room. Temerach makes the shot of her life, and it is not enough
The Breakout	The locket was stolen, Nus lives, and the characters keep it from Blau	The Lullwater burns, but the Baron goes into the evening without his leash, and the thing in the boy stands up

The Lullwater Burns

The Burning and the Breakout: only if the locket was taken.

The Baron wakes at first light to an empty table, and the warm, reasonable, unhurried man the city has watched all week is gone. Without the locket he cannot walk into the room tonight, and four generations of work end at dusk unless he gets it back. He has no idea who has it, only that it went over the stern in the dark toward the north-east, where the thieves live. So he goes after it himself.

He comes off the ship at dawn with Blau and every Knight aboard, and the camp is roused behind him. He does not ask questions. He takes boats at Shilling Stairs at swordpoint and crosses to the Lullwater, and the first people he meets on the stair are killed for being on it. **He is a demonologist and a fire-mage, and he has stopped pretending not to be.** Doors burst inward. A man who will not say where the boy-thieves sleep is burned where he stands. He is not searching; he is making it unbearable for anybody to keep the thing that was stolen.

The quarter fights back. The Lullwater has no bridges, no horse can go into it, and four thousand people who know every roof live in it. The Dredgers come out of their hall with boathooks and grabs. Crowbill's people go up onto the roofs with slings. Women drop roof-tiles into the Gutter, and punts ram the Knights' boats on open water. There is blood on the planking, and running battles go up and down the Gutter and around the Still. If the stairs stopped on the eve, Marda's three hundred are already angry and close. A character in the Lullwater this morning is in a battle: run the Knights in threes, with the Dragon Knight Soldier statistics, and give the locals the roofs, the water and the numbers.

And when the quarter will not give up the thief, the Baron burns it. He calls fire into the tenements along the Gutter, and in a city of timber leaning over water it goes from roof to roof faster than anybody can row. Name what burns, and let the players see which places they know are gone: the Moist Oyster, the Dredgers' Hall, the drying-sheds on the Hook, Eel Bay. By noon there is a column of smoke over the north-east that the Prince can see from the Governor's box. **Play it so the characters can hear it from wherever they are, and do not cut away.**

The Run is abandoned. Nobody races through a city on fire.

The Man in the Smoke at Shilling Stairs

The Burning and the Breakout.

The whole Lullwater knows somebody went over the Baron's stern last night and is hiding in it, and Sinnit knows who. Nus has been Randall's second pair of hands for years, and Sinnit has watched them both for seven. He knows Nus's boat, his sister's loft over Eel Bay, and the drying-shed on the Hook where he sleeps when he does not want to be found.

If nobody has turned him, he finds Blau in the smoke at Shilling Stairs and tells him: because it hurts Randall, because he is frightened, and because he thinks being useful to the men with fire will keep the fire off him. Blau goes straight there. He does not panic and is not fooled by much, and he finds Nus and kills him, quickly, without appearing to enjoy it, and brings the Baron his locket back. That is the road to the Burning. **This is the scene to intercept.** A party that has been watching Sinnit, or guesses who would sell Nus, has one chance to get between him and Blau, or to move Nus before Blau arrives.

If Randall apologised to him, then when Blau comes to the drying-shed, Sinnit is the one standing in the doorway, big and loud and announcing exactly what he is going to do: *"Nobody does that to our people."* Then he does it. He will not win. He buys Nus the minutes it takes to get into a boat, and that may be all the characters need. Whether he lives through it is up to the dice.

This is a consequence, not a scheduled tragedy. If the characters hid Nus, got him out of the city, drew the hunt onto themselves, or are holding the locket somewhere Blau cannot follow, honour it. The burning still happens, but Blau comes back empty-handed, and the Baron goes into the evening without his leash. That is the road to the Breakout.

The Run

The Quiet Room only.

If nothing is burning, the last event of the Tourney goes out through the Lists' water-gate at noon, and for two hours the whole city is the course. Competitors run the length of the North Quarter, over the Triumph Bridge to Caravan Square and back, down the Merchant's Quarter, along the Seaward docks, over the Fishmarket Bridge into the Shoals, across to the bridgeless Lullwater by whatever means they can find, and back over open water to the temple steps, on foot and by boat. No route is laid down and no help is forbidden: half the city is a course and the other half is a crowd.

For two hours, Purewater has no crowd control at all. The watch is holding lines along a route, not patrolling districts. The Knights are strung out along it with nothing to do. Every bridge and stair is packed with cheering people, and nobody can move against the flow. That is the best cover the characters will ever get, or the reason they cannot reach somewhere in time, and it should be both in the same hour. This is the Quiet Room's last chance: the locket is on the Baron's chain, the champion has won, and nothing stands between Hanzo and that door except what the characters do in these two hours. If nobody uses it, it is a magnificent afternoon that the party watched happen, and the Baron's people move freely under exactly the same cover. At dusk the competitors come back to the steps, the Prince takes his place, and the closing begins.

The Room

The Quiet Room and the Burning: only if the Baron has the locket at dusk.

This is the point of the entire hundred years. Prince Emeric is two-and-twenty, well-meaning and badly advised, and he has already been used once this week, when three of his councillors got his name onto the order that silenced the watch. Cailan is the jar, and Emeric is the destination. In that small stone room behind the Governor's box, the Baron casts Draw Forth on the boy and Seat the Bound on the Prince, and the anchor hangs round his neck.

By the old rite, on the Quiet Room's road, the champion won the Single Combat yesterday, and tonight, when the Run comes back to the temple steps and the Prince takes his place, the Baron walks his champion through that door,

alone and unarmed, by a form older than the Governor's office. It is quiet, and nobody in the city knows anything has happened.

Summoned to answer, on the Burning's road, the Prince could see the smoke from the Governor's box by noon, and by mid-afternoon the reports came in: a foreign lord is burning a quarter of the city on the last day of a sacred festival. Emeric does the brave, decent and stupid thing. He summons the Baron to answer to him in private, and the Baron comes with his champion at his side, smoke on his clothes and the locket back round his neck, while the councillors stand outside the door. It is the same room, reached the other way, and Hanzo could not have arranged it better.

The Prince comes out. He is gracious and composed, and right-handed in a way nobody thinks to notice. Thuban Eta is wearing the Crown's nephew. Cailan is carried out behind him, emptied and barely breathing. After the old rite, the Baron goes home with a prince in his pocket and begins to move on the throne, and the scenario ends with the characters knowing exactly what has happened and nobody in the kingdom who would believe them. After the summons, the Prince steps out onto the steps above the burning city and sides with the Baron in front of everybody (*the thieves' quarter rose, and the Baron restored order*), and across the arena, an elf has a bow in her hand.

The Impossible Shot

The Burning; and the Quiet Room only if Temerach has learned what the champion is.

The Prince on the steps, siding with the Baron above a city that is still burning. The Baron beside him, smoke on his coat and the locket back on his chain. Four thousand people on the slopes and in the stands. For Temerach, the calculation inverts. A bound spirit in a stolen boy, and now in the Crown's own nephew, is desecration, and the goddess's own business, and a Sword may act on that without asking anybody.

She names him across the whole width of the arena, in front of the city, as the King's officer's last lawful act. Then she draws.

It is a shot nobody else alive could make: distance, crosswind, smoke, the angle of the steps and a crowd in between. Roll it, at Formidable, and it hits, because she is who she is. And it is not enough. The arrow takes him high, through the shoulder or the side; he goes down on the steps, and gets up again, and he is alive. Then the Knights are coming across the arena for her, and the crowd breaks.

She is an outlaw from the instant the arrow leaves the string, and she knew it before she drew. **She flees with the characters**, or the characters flee with her, over the water, through the smoke, and out of the city by whatever route is left: Crowbill's canals, a Dredger's boat out through the Mouth, or the open road. It costs them something to get out, and it should. She does not thank them, and she does not explain.

The Thing in the Boy Stands Up

The Breakout: only if the characters kept Nus alive through the burning and the locket is still out of the Baron's hands at dusk. It is the ending the players have to earn.

The Baron has spent the day burning the Lullwater and has not found it. At dusk he has no leash, and for the first time in ten years nobody renewed the seat last night with the anchor in hand. **The characters cannot command Thuban**, because they are not demonologists, and they cannot break the locket. What they can do is keep it away from the Baron, and that is enough, because Thuban is no longer obeying anybody.

Somewhere on the ship, or on the competitors' ground where the Baron has dragged his champion to keep him close, the thing in Cailan stands up: a knight of the Sixth Wing with a thousand years of courtesy and ten years of grievance, in a seventeen-year-old's body, with the leash off. **He fights his way out through the Dragon Knights.** Play it as the dragon wars come back for one evening: unarmed at first, then with a Knight's own sword, through the deck, over the side and up the pier. He is looking for one person, the woman who came aboard two nights ago and spoke to him in her brother's name, and when he finds the characters he falls in beside them as though he has always been there. Temerach covers the retreat from the far side of the water with a bow, shot after shot. She has seen what came out of that ship, and she knows now what was under the helm, and whether she meant to or not,

she is leaving with them. They get out of Purewater. It should cost them a boat, a route or a friend holding a stair, but they get out.

And he is still not her brother. The locket only ever tied Thuban to the Baron. What holds him in the world is a box of bones in a tower on the border estate, four days' hard riding away, behind the Baron's own men. Until those bones are found and the rite is said, Thuban stays where he is, and Gabriel stays under him.

The last scene of the adventure is Thuban telling Gardwen where the bones are, with perfect thousand-year-old courtesy, in her brother's voice, because under pressure his manners get better rather than worse, and asking, very politely, whether she would be so kind as to help him die. Do not resolve it, and do not let anybody say the words tonight. Magda's dream said *lay the dragon warrior to rest*, and now she knows where.

The Captain's Arithmetic

That night, whatever has happened, Tat Atarer does arithmetic in the open: men lost, a contract that keeps expanding, and a growing certainty about what was behind the inner doors. Only a character who has been cultivating him sees it. His soldiers are hired, not sworn, and that is the Baron's structural weakness. Every time the characters have cost the Dragon Knights something this week (a man in the water, a broken contract, a burning quarter that will get a company hanged), Tat has added it up. If the sum has grown long enough, he will not fight the Baron. He will march his company home and leave the Baron with six men on a ship, and on the road out of the city, a captain who does not pursue is worth a great deal.

Afterwards

None of the three roads ends with the Baron beaten. The best of them takes his champion away from him and puts the characters on the road to the bones. The worst leaves the Crown's nephew carrying a dragon-knight, with nobody in the kingdom willing to believe the people who know it. That is deliberate. Purewater is the first act of something larger, and the end of it should feel like a door opening, not one closing.

After the Quiet Room

Nothing burns and nobody dies in public. The Tourney closes with its prizes, the Dragon Knights march home the next morning, and the standing order lapses without anybody quite remembering who signed it. The characters hold whatever they gathered (the scroll in the Baron's hand, Conall's finding, the Tide Master's notes) against a man who now has a prince to vouch for him.

Cailan was carried out of the room emptied. If the characters can reach him, he is a seventeen-year-old who cannot stand, coming apart without the seat that held him together for ten years. Gabriel may surface for longer than a second now, because there is nobody else in there. That is the most hopeful thing in this ending, and also the most fragile. What follows is a pursuit and a conspiracy: the Prince goes home to the King's court at Caldreth wearing Thuban, among men who have been the Baron's friends for thirty years, and the bones in the border tower still hold Thuban in the world, now in a far more dangerous body.

After the Burning

The Lullwater is ash. Nus is dead at Blau's hand, unless the characters changed who paid. The Prince was taken in the room he summoned the Baron to, and Temerach's shot wounded the Baron in front of four thousand people. Then she left the city an outlaw, with the characters.

What they carry out of Purewater is a wounded enemy who was seen by the whole city refusing to answer; a King's officer who spent thirty years of standing on one arrow; and the knowledge of what is now wearing the Prince. The Lullwater will not forget who burned it, and Marda's three hundred, Crowbill's people and the women of the Pearl have all now seen the Baron's true face. In Purewater, at least, nobody will doubt the characters again. Ahead lies the road and the tower, and Temerach knows the border country and has nothing left to lose.

After the Breakout

The characters kept a reckless young thief alive and kept a locket from the most patient man in the kingdom through a day of fire, and so the Baron went into the evening without his leash. Thuban broke a decade of bondage and cut his way out through the Dragon Knights with Gabriel's body and Gabriel's voice, and left Purewater beside the woman who came aboard and spoke to him in her brother's name. The Prince is untouched. The Baron has lost his champion, his proof and his room.

What they carry is the locket, which they cannot use and cannot easily destroy, and which the Baron will want back more than anything in the world. They also carry Thuban, a courteous, grieving and terrifying ally who wants only to die properly, and Gabriel, still underneath him. Ahead lies the hardest ride of the campaign, to a tower on the Baron's own estate, with the Baron and everything he has left behind them.

What Comes Next: the Bones

All three roads lead to the same place. Thuban's bones lie in a box in a tower on the Baron's border estate, four days' hard riding from Purewater, behind the Baron's own men. Until they are found, and the rite that was never said over a knight of the Sixth Wing is finally said, Thuban stays in the world and Gabriel stays under him.

Magda's dream told her to lay the dragon warrior to rest, which is not the same as killing him. Gardwen came to Purewater to bring her brother home. Laying Thuban to rest in that tower is the only way to do both, and it is the next adventure.

Threads to carry forward:

- **The Movement** is untouched. It holds the credit line and the texts, and a failure at Purewater costs it a season, not a life's work. It is already looking for its next candidate, and Cassian Bree is still writing his letters.
- **The twins** are the Baron's only other blood. If he knows of them, he wants them: the tool first, then the claim extinguished.
- **Santo,** if he lives, is a frightened young man with a burnt hand and a father who has stopped forgiving him.
- **Emmeralda,** if the working took, still has a small hungry spirit seated in her, and only the binding school or a powerful Dispel Magic will draw it out.
- **Blau** has spent a week watching the characters, and he does not forget faces. He has also spent years studying his employer's art, and a wounded or ruined Baron may be the opening he has waited for.
- **Tat Atarer** has done the arithmetic. A company that has seen what was behind the inner doors may not ride for the Baron again.
- **The Lady** has been silent for fourteen months, and Lilura still has not told anybody. Whether the goddess stirred when her Sword named the Baron on her steps is yours to decide.

Experience

Award three Experience Rolls for completing the scenario, and one more for each of the following:

- Nus is alive at the end.
- The Lullwater did not burn.
- Marda's grievance was answered without bloodshed.
- The Pearl's rule held.
- Thuban was freed from the Baron.

Then review every character's Passions. Purewater is a story about what people love and fear, and most characters should leave it with at least one Passion changed by ten percentage points or more, and some with a new one. Ask the players which moment changed their character, and believe them.

When the Players Do Something Else

They will. This chapter is about the common ways a table leaves the road, and how the city answers. The principle behind all of it is simple: **the world keeps going, everybody wants what they wanted, and the characters' choices change who is standing where when it happens.** You never need to steer them back. You need to know what the people in this book do about whatever the characters have just done.

"We go straight to the Baron."

Let them. He receives them on the after deck of his ship, or at dinner at the Vantt Estate, or in the Governor's enclosure, and he is delightful. He offers chairs, wine and a sincere interest in their work. He has never once been accused of anything, and he treats an accusation as a failure of hospitality and corrects it by becoming more generous. If they show him evidence, he is shocked and grateful, and his son will be dealt with. Santo is sent home under guard the next morning, and that is the end of the matter as far as the city is concerned. Nobody searches a man they have just had a pleasant hour with.

What the characters have actually done is let him see their faces. If two of them wear the same face, he now knows he has more sons, and *A di Teufel who is not his* wakes at once. This is the most dangerous thing a party can do in the first two days, and it should be allowed, and it should cost them.

"We tell the Prince."

The Prince is the best person in the city to tell, and the hardest to reach. He is surrounded by councillors who have spent two years managing what reaches him. Getting in front of him needs standing (Conall's warrant, Temerach, Nerissa) or an occasion he cannot avoid, such as the presentation, the Archery or the closing. Once there, the characters face a young man who wants very much to do one thing properly on his own judgement. **Tell him the truth plainly, and ask him to decide rather than sign, and he may decide well.** He can withdraw the standing order. He can refuse the champion's audience, if he believes what is in the champion, and that closes the Quiet Room; the Baron then needs another way into a room with him, and he will find one. What the Prince cannot do is arrest a baron on the strength of strangers' accusations, so the characters will still need somebody with standing to make the charge.

"We kill Santo."

The Baron loses his only legitimate heir. Blau's job becomes vengeance, and he becomes the characters' most persistent pursuer. If anybody connects the twins' face to the dead heir, the Baron's hunt for them begins at once, because the twins are now the only di Teufel blood walking. The Pearl, which wanted a reckoning, gets one, and Marisette may be grateful in ways that matter. The Baron's plan is not touched at all. A party that kills Santo and thinks the scenario is over discovers on the second day of the Tourney that it has not started.

"We go after the camp."

Good. The Vantt Estate is the soft target. It has no walls, local labour comes and goes all day, twenty-five bored men drink a councillor's beer, the champion's spare kit is there, and so is the litter. Characters who work the camp can learn the company's mood, find Tat Atarer and start his arithmetic, see the Baron's routine from outside, or steal the Knights' horses and make them a laughing stock. What they cannot do is reach the champion or the locket, both of which are on the ship.

“We never go near the Pearl.”

The Pearl comes to them. Hesper takes the twins before dawn on the second day wherever they are; Marisette’s people know every inn in the city. Magda and Gardwen are lodged at the Sylph’s Embrace whether or not they are characters. Sinnit’s lie about Randall reaches every stair by noon. A party that avoids the Pearl simply experiences its events as news, and should feel what they missed.

“We split up.”

Usually a good thing in this scenario, because the city is big and the week is crowded. Cut between them in short scenes and keep each scene to one decision. Remember that a character alone is a character who can be taken off a street at night, especially once there is a price on the face. Blau is patient, and a split party is exactly what he waits for.

“We fight the Knights.”

Three or four at a time, in the open, with the city watching, the characters can beat them, and should be allowed to. Every unanswered public incident advances the occupation, and an *answered* one is the first thing in nine days that has made the city stand up straight. But twenty-five Knights can be in one place within a watch, and Blau escalates fast. The characters should feel that they won the scene and raised the stakes. Remember the water: almost no Knight can swim.

“We steal the locket ourselves.”

Then the characters are the thieves, and Nus is either with them or very put out. Everything in *Two Thieves and a Table* applies. The difference comes the next morning: when the Lullwater burns, the Baron is hunting the characters, and Sinnit may be selling *them.* A party holding the locket that keeps it hidden through the burning has earned the Breakout, and it should be the hardest day they ever play.

“We destroy the locket.”

Only a powerful Dispel Magic can, and nobody in the party has one. Nerissa does not; the Order has no such art. The Quiet Hand might know somebody, and Hesper might, if anybody ever sees past the costume. If the locket is destroyed, the effect is the same as keeping it from the Baron, and permanently so: Thuban is no longer leashed, and the Breakout follows that evening wherever the champion is. It does not free Thuban from the world. Only the bones do that.

“We take the boy.”

Without the locket, taking the body frees nobody, and Orrin will say so. The Baron can still command Thuban, and does, and a boy carried off the ship becomes a dragon-knight in a cellar under orders to walk home. With the locket in the characters’ hands, taking the body is the Breakout under a different name.

“We do nothing.”

Then the week happens without them, exactly as this book describes, and on the last evening the Prince walks out of a small stone room right-handed. Tell them so, through whoever they trust, and let them decide whether they can live with it.

PART

Appendices

The Week at a Glance

Everything in this book that happens on its own, in order. Each time is the latest the event happens; the characters can bring it sooner. Read down this table each time you move the clock, and ask, for each event, whether a character is there.

Table 15: The Week, If Nobody Interferes

When	Event	Where	Agenda
d-3/dawn	The old woman at the ford	The Ford	-
d-3/day	A knight calls Randall 'my lord'	Caravan Square	-
d-3/day	Four knights and a King's officer	The Ashwick Road	-
d-3/day	The Baron's column enters Purewater	Caravan Square	Field the champion and take the city
d-3/day	Three of them on the gate bridge	Caravan Square	Hold the streets as if we own them
d-3/dusk	Santo buys her evening	The Sylph's Embrace	Have her
d-3/dusk	Sinnit corners the wrong man	The Lullwater	Make Randall say it
d-3/night	Santo's working	The Sylph's Embrace	Have her
d-2/dawn	Hesper takes the look-alikes	The Catacombs	Find who carved Emmeralda
d-2/dawn	Two men with one face	The Catacombs	Find who carved Emmeralda
d-2/day	A boat taken off the water-stair	The Pearl	Hold the streets as if we own them
d-2/day	Conall reads the room	The Sylph's Embrace	-
d-2/day	Santo comes back for her	The Sylph's Embrace	Have her
d-2/day	Sinnit tells the Pearl it was Randall	The Pearl	Make Randall say it
d-2/dusk	Santo's tantrum on the Pearl street	The Pearl	Have her
d-2/night	Temerach tells Conall whose son he is	Purewater	Shield the boy, unmask the house
d-2/night	The Pearl closes to the Dragon Knights	The Pearl	Find who carved Emmeralda
d-1/dawn	The stairs stop	The Shoals	Make them pay for one of ours
d-1/day	Maro Quist reads it to the end	-	-
d-1/day	The presentation of the entrants	The Lists	Field the champion and take the city
d-1/dusk	Alderic Vantt jokes about his cellar	The Vantt Estate	-
d-1/night	A courier from the Movement	The DragonBarge	Wake a Dragon King
d-1/night	Sinnit sells the face	The Vantt Estate	Make Randall say it
d0/dawn	Crowbill names his price	-	-
d0/day	Ivo Calder folds	-	-
d0/day	PIVOT: the Archery	The Long Butts	-
d0/dusk	A price on the face	Purewater	A di Teufel who is not his
d0/night	Gardwen goes aboard	The DragonBarge	-
d1/day	The champion takes the sand — and wins	The Lists	Field the champion and take the city
d1/night	Nus and Randall lift the binding locket	The DragonBarge	One big score, and a name

When	Event	Where	Agenda
d1/night	Santo comes for it himself	-	-
d1/night	The nightly reinforcement	The DragonBarge	Keep the champion unseen
d2/dawn	Sinnit sells Nus	The Lullwater	Make Randall say it
d2/dawn	The Lullwater burns	The Lullwater	Field the champion and take the city
d2/day	The Run across the town	Purewater	-
d2/dusk	The impossible shot	The Lists	Shield the boy, unmask the house
d2/dusk	The private audience	The Lists	Field the champion and take the city
d2/dusk	Thuban breaks out	The DragonBarge	-
d2/night	Tat counts the cost	The DragonBarge	Get paid, keep the company whole
opportunity	Orrin Sculle decides	The DragonBarge	-

Running the Living World

Every Non-Player Character and faction with a stake in the week holds an **agenda**: something they want, pursued on a **clock** of four to ten segments. Fill a segment when the fiction moves the holder toward their goal; *Events and Story Structure* tells you when the main ones move. When a clock fills, the holder has what they wanted and the world changes. Nothing empties a clock. When the characters genuinely beat an agenda, mark it thwarted, and then let the holder react: a thwarted agenda should produce a new one, not a quiet re-run of the old. Some clocks start partly full, because the week began before the characters arrived. The Dragon Knights, for instance, have been holding the streets for eight days.

One agenda sleeps until something wakes it. *A di Teufel who is not his* waits until somebody in the Baron's service sees two of the di Teufel face, or is sold the fact. Once it wakes, it never sleeps again.

Table 16: Agendas and Their Clocks

Agenda	Held by	Goal	Clock	Status
A di Teufel who is not his	Hanzo di Teufel	Identify, take, and control the grown son he did not know had lived	0/6	dormant
Clean up after the young master	Blau	Contain Santo's messes before they reach the Baron or the city watch	0/6	active
Field the champion and take the city	Hanzo di Teufel	Win the Single Combat, take the champion's private audience with the Prince, and put Thuban Eta into Emeric	2/8	active
Find who carved Emmeralda	Marisette	Identify and punish whoever worked demon-craft on one of her courtesans	0/6	active
Get paid, keep the company whole	Tat Atarer	Collect the contract without spending men on a nobleman's private madness	0/4	active
Have her	Santo di Teufel	Get Emmeralda off the Pearl and onto the DragonBarge, willing if she can be made willing	0/6	active

Agenda	Held by	Goal	Clock	Status
Hold the streets as if we own them	The Dragon Knights	Establish that the Baron's men answer to nobody in this city, and be unopposed when it matters	2/6	active
Keep the Lady's water clean	High Priestess Nerissa	Hold the Tourney without the sacred water being profaned	0/6	active
Keep the champion unseen	Hanzo di Teufel	Let no one see or speak to Cailan before he steps onto the tournament sand	1/4	active
Keep the table level	Crowbill	Keep Purewater's business running, and remove anyone who threatens to overturn it	0/6	active
Make Randall say it	Sinnit	Get an apology out of Randall, out loud, with people watching — and until he gets it, take everything from him that can be taken	0/6	active
Make them pay for one of ours	Marda Blackwater	Force redress for the dockhands the Knights have hurt — by law if there is any, by three hundred labourers if there is not	1/4	active
One big score, and a name	Nus	Pull off a theft big enough that Crowbill's people have to respect him	0/4	active
Shield the boy, unmask the house	Temerach Nebulo	Get the Baron called to answer in a form he cannot charm his way out of — and keep Conall alive through learning what he is	1/6	active
The one who works it out	Kag	Keep Crowbill's business on the streets running through an occupation, and come out of the week ahead	0/4	active
Wake a Dragon King	The Awake the Dragon Movement	Prove a living man can be made to carry a dragon's spirit, and then do it properly	3/10	active

Conditions to Watch For

- **The water-stairs stop** at dawn on the eve of the Tourney if nobody has helped Marda Blackwater.
- **The Pearl closes** to the Dragon Knights after Santo's tantrum, or after Constantine finds the room empty.
- **Sinnit sells the face** at three steps if Randall has not apologised to him, and a price on the face follows the next dusk.
- **The theft** decides the last day: read the board at dawn, and play only the road it chose.

Who Knows What

Some events depend on who knows what. Keep a short list of the facts that matter and who holds each one, and add a name whenever a character tells somebody something. A Non-Player Character can only act on what they know.

- The twins are the Baron's sons: Temerach knows; the Baron learns it only from Sinnit, or from seeing two of the face.
- The champion is Gardwen's brother: the Baron and Orrin know; Gardwen learns it at the presentation.
- The locket is the leash and comes off at night: Crowbill knows, and the characters learn it from him.
- The man who carved Emmeralda was Randall the Pearl thief: false, and believed on the street after Sinnit's lie.

Statistics

Every person in this book, in the Design Mechanism's stat block format. The principals use the major block, with characteristics, and the supporting cast uses the minor block. Initiative is given as it stands: under *Classic Fantasy Imperative*, armour a character is trained in does not count against them. The weapon tables include each character's Damage Modifier where it applies.

Principal Non-Player Characters

Blau

Baron Hanzo's albino lieutenant — known to the ranks as Commander Vask. A thin, red-eyed, burn-scarred killer with unnatural strength who runs the Dragon Knights' day-to-day command and handles the Baron's 'dirty work': a cold, efficient assassin and intimidator.

Thin, white-skinned, red-eyed, old burn-scarring down one side. Plain harness, kept well, no colours.

Characteristics	Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR: 11	**Action Points:** 2	1–3	Right Leg	2/5
CON: 11	**Damage Modifier:** +1d2	4–6	Left Leg	2/5
SIZ: 13	**Magic Points:** 11	7–9	Abdomen	4/6
DEX: 11	**Movement:** 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	4/7
INT: 13	**Initiative Bonus:** +12	13–15	Right Arm	4/4
POW: 11	**Armour:** Plain harness: brigandine on torso and arms, leather on the legs, no helm	16–18	Left Arm	4/4
CHA: 11	**Abilities:** Unnatural Strength (thin frame, freakishly strong — treat Brawn/grapple as one step stronger); Albino (red eyes; may be light-sensitive); Burn scars / possibly subjected to the Baron's experimental procedures	19–20	Head	0/5
	Magic: None			
Skills: Athletics 70%, Boating 22%, Brawn 65%, Conceal 75%, Customs 26%, Dance 22%, Deceit 65%, Drive 22%, Endurance 70%, Evade 75%, First Aid 40%, Influence 38%, Insight 60%, Intimidation 68%, Locale 40%, Native Tongue 64%, Perception 72%, Ride 30%, Sing 22%, Stealth 82%, Streetwise 66%, Swim 30%, Track 55%, Unarmed 75%, Willpower 60% **Passions:** Cruelty 60% Ambition — to surpass the Baron and break away 50%				

Combat Style: Dragon Knight Enforcer (dagger, garrotte, short sword) 82%				
Weapon	**Size/Force**	**Reach/Range**	**Damage**	**AP/HP**
Dagger	S	S	1d4+1+1d2	6/8
Garrotte	S	S	special	1/2
Short sword	M	S	1d6+1d2	6/8

Cailan

Gardwen's possessed brother (birth name Gabriel) — the Baron's tournament champion, host to the ancient dragon-knight spirit Thuban Eta. Dragon-scale armor fused to his skin; eyes flicker reptilian when possessed; fights with uncanny ancient skill and minor fire.

Seventeen and far too thin for the harness. Dragon-scale growing out of the skin of his throat and jaw with no strap or edge, the flesh around it raised and weeping. A fresh dressing inside the right elbow over years of older scarring.

Characteristics	Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR: 16	**Action Points:** 3	1–3	Right Leg	5/6
CON: 14	**Damage Modifier:** +1d2	4–6	Left Leg	5/6
SIZ: 13	**Magic Points:** 14	7–9	Abdomen	5/7
DEX: 17	**Movement:** 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	5/8
INT: 13	**Initiative Bonus:** +15	13–15	Right Arm	5/5
POW: 14	**Armour:** Dragon-scale armor (fused, all locations)	16–18	Left Arm	5/5
CHA: 11	**Abilities:** Ancient dragon-knight fighting techniques (from Thuban's memories); Unnatural precision with bow and spear; Minor fire abilities (channeled through the binding)	19–20	Head	5/6
	Magic: None			

Skills: Athletics 80%, Brawn 70%, Conceal 40%, Customs 30%, Deceit 35%, Endurance 72%, Evade 78%, First Aid 35%, Influence 30%, Insight 45%, Locale 30%, Lore (Dragon Knights, ancient) 85%, Lore (Tactics) 75%, Native Tongue 55%, Perception 78%, Ride 70%, Stealth 65%, Survival 50%, Swim 55%, Unarmed 80%, Willpower 58%
Passions: Buried self — 'I am Gabriel' 45%
Compelled loyalty to Baron Hanzo (ritual) 70%

Combat Style: Possessed Warrior (spear, bow, sword) 92%

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach/Range	Damage	AP/HP
War Spear	L	VL	1d10+1+1d2	4/10
Composite Bow	H	15/90/180	1d8+1d2	4/8
Long Sword	M	L	1d8+1d2	6/12

Crowbill

Leader of Purewater's criminal underworld — canal smuggling, gambling, protection. Wiry and forgettable but for a small crow tattoo on his right hand. A master of streets and shadows (Streetwise 88, Stealth 82, Conceal 78) who keeps to a code: no killing locals, no harming children, no touching the Lake Lady's sites.

Wiry, entirely forgettable, middle years. A small crow inked on the back of the right hand and no other mark anywhere on him.

Characteristics	Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR: 12	**Action Points:** 3	1–3	Right Leg	2/5
CON: 13	**Damage Modifier:** +0	4–6	Left Leg	2/5
SIZ: 11	**Magic Points:** 13	7–9	Abdomen	2/6
DEX: 16	**Movement:** 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	2/7
INT: 15	**Initiative Bonus:** +16	13–15	Right Arm	2/4
POW: 13	**Armour:** Leather armor (all locations)	16–18	Left Arm	2/4
CHA: 14	**Abilities:** None	19–20	Head	2/5
	Magic: None			

Skills: Athletics 68%, Boating 65%, Brawn 42%, Commerce 68%, Conceal 78%, Customs 55%, Deceit 78%, Endurance 62%, Evade 72%, Influence 65%, Insight 75%, Locale 82%, Lore (Criminal underworld) 80%, Native Tongue 62%, Perception 72%, Sleight 75%, Stealth 82%, Streetwise 88%, Swim 60%, Unarmed 65%, Willpower 62%
Passions: Keep the code of the underworld 70%
Protect my equilibrium / my city 60%

Combat Style: Knifework & ambush (knife, crossbow) 72%

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach/Range	Damage	AP/HP
Fighting knife	S	S	1d4+1	5/4
Hand crossbow	L	5/20/40	1d6	4/5

Guildmaster Torval Bluehand

Guildmaster of the Watercrafters — middle-aged, practical innovator whose hands are permanently blue-tinged from decades of watercraft enchantment. A Magic-User specialized in water artifice (Craft 85, Arcane Casting 60, Mechanisms 80) rather than battle magic; his guild's enchantments keep the canal-city running.

Middle-aged, indigo sash, hands permanently blue-tinged to the wrist.

Characteristics	Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR: 13	**Action Points:** 3	1–3	Right Leg	0/6
CON: 14	**Damage Modifier:** +1d2	4–6	Left Leg	0/6
SIZ: 13	**Magic Points:** 14	7–9	Abdomen	0/7
DEX: 15	**Movement:** 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	0/8
INT: 16	**Initiative Bonus:** +16	13–15	Right Arm	0/5
POW: 14	**Armour:** None	16–18	Left Arm	0/5
CHA: 13	**Abilities:** None	19–20	Head	0/6
	Magic: None			
Skills: Arcane Casting (water enchantment) 60%, Athletics 55%, Boating 78%, Brawn 52%, Commerce 75%, Craft (Watercraft) 85%, Customs 58%, Deceit 45%, Endurance 62%, Evade 55%, Influence 70%, Insight 62%, Invocation 50%, Locale 68%, Lore (Engineering) 75%, Lore (Watercraft enchantment) 88%, Mechanisms 80%, Native Tongue 68%, Perception 68%, Swim 75%, Unarmed 45%, Willpower 68% **Passions:** Advance the craft of water-enchantment 75% Keep Purewater's waterworks running 65%				

Combat Style: Guild defense (mace) 48%				
Weapon	**Size/Force**	**Reach/Range**	**Damage**	**AP/HP**
Enchanter's mace	M	M	1d8+1d2	6/6
Tool-knife	S	S	1d4+1d2	5/4

Hanzo di Teufel

Baron Hanzo di Teufel — the campaign's master villain: a charismatic borderland noble and fire-wielding arcane sorcerer/demonologist who commands the Dragon Knights, runs possession rituals, and secretly seeks to become a Dragon King.

Fifties, well made, silver at the temples, black cloth that cost more than a fishing boat. Nothing about him is ornamented.

Characteristics	Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR: 13	**Action Points:** 3	1–3	Right Leg	0/6
CON: 11	**Damage Modifier:** +1d2	4–6	Left Leg	0/6
SIZ: 15	**Magic Points:** 17	7–9	Abdomen	4/7
DEX: 13	**Movement:** 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	4/8
INT: 17	**Initiative Bonus:** +15	13–15	Right Arm	0/5
POW: 17	**Armour:** Nobleman's cuirass (chest, abdomen)	16–18	Left Arm	0/5
CHA: 16	**Abilities:** The Binding (Open the Channel (2 PP), Seat the Bound (4 PP), Anchor (2 PP), Reinforce the Seat (1 PP), Draw Forth (4 PP))	19–20	Head	0/6
	Magic: Arcane: Charm Person, Detect Magic, Hold Person, Locate Object, Mage Lock, Read Magic, Shield, Sleep			

Skills: Arcane Casting 88%, Arcane Knowledge 80%, Athletics 36%, Boating 24%, Brawn 58%, Conceal 30%, Customs 34%, Dance 29%, Deceit 93%, Drive 30%, Endurance 42%, Evade 36%, First Aid 30%, Influence 92%, Insight 84%, Locale 34%, Native Tongue 73%, Perception 74%, Ride 60%, Sing 33%, Stealth 50%, Swim 24%, Unarmed 46%, Willpower 94%
Passions: Become a Dragon King 90%
A hundred years of patience — never be seen doing it 80%
Contempt for Santo, who is not enough 65%

Combat Style: Nobleman (broadsword, dagger) 56%

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach/Range	Damage	AP/HP
Broadsword	M	L	1d8+1d2	6/10
Dagger	S	S	1d4+1+1d2	6/8

Hesper

To Purewater, Hesper is the madame Marisette's cold, dangerous mage-enforcer — quiet, watchful, able to drop a strong man with a single spoken word. The truth is the opposite of what the mask suggests: Hesper is a deep-cover agent of the Quiet Hand, a hidden fellowship that works unseen for the good of the world, and the menace is a costume worn over a conscience. Master arcane caster (Arcane Casting 100, Willpower 95).

Plain dark clothes, good boots, empty hands, a face you would lose in a crowd of four.

Characteristics	Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR: 9	**Action Points:** 3	1–3	Right Leg	0/5
CON: 11	**Damage Modifier:** -1d2	4–6	Left Leg	0/5
SIZ: 10	**Magic Points:** 18	7–9	Abdomen	0/6
DEX: 12	**Movement:** 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	0/7
INT: 18	**Initiative Bonus:** +15	13–15	Right Arm	0/4
POW: 18	**Armour:** None	16–18	Left Arm	0/4
CHA: 15	**Abilities:** None	19–20	Head	0/5
	Magic: Arcane: Charm Person, Chill, Command, Darkness, Detect Magic, Dispel Magic, Fear, Hold Person, Levitate, Locate Object, Mage Lock, Magic Tricks, Mirror Image, Protection, Read Magic, Shield, Sleep, Slow, Witchsight, Wizard Sight			

Skills: Arcane Casting 100%, Athletics 45%, Brawn 28%, Conceal 72%, Customs 62%, Deceit 80%, Endurance 55%, Evade 58%, Influence 80%, Insight 85%, Invocation 92%, Locale 55%, Lore (Demonology) 62%, Lore (Sorcery) 92%, Lore (Statecraft & Intrigue) 80%, Native Tongue 70%, Perception 78%, Stealth 68%, Streetwise 58%, Unarmed 45%, Willpower 95%
Passions: The Oath of the Empty Hand — take no credit, seize no power, spare whom you can 90%
Stop the Awake the Dragon movement before it ripens 75%
Keep the cover intact — a finger that is seen is a finger that is lost 70%

Combat Style: Duelist-mage (rapier, staff) 58%

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach/Range	Damage	AP/HP
Sorcerer's blade (rapier)	M	L	1d8-1d2	5/8
Sorcerer's staff	M	L	1d8-1d2	4/8

High Priestess Nerissa

High Priestess of the Temple of the Lake Lady — middle-aged, silver-streaked hair, blue-green robes that ripple like water. A powerful divine caster (Piety 92, Willpower 85) who senses water corruption, blesses sacred waters, and speaks with water spirits. Temple law forbids her from intervening directly, so she works through the characters.

Fifties. Blue-green worked so heavily with silver that the light does something strange on the cloth.

Characteristics	Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR: 10	**Action Points:** 3	1–3	Right Leg	0/5
CON: 12	**Damage Modifier:** +0	4–6	Left Leg	0/5
SIZ: 11	**Magic Points:** 17	7–9	Abdomen	0/6
DEX: 12	**Movement:** 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	0/7
INT: 15	**Initiative Bonus:** +14	13–15	Right Arm	0/4
POW: 17	**Armour:** None	16–18	Left Arm	0/4
CHA: 16	**Abilities:** The Rites of the Lady (The Lady's Washing (2 PP), Blessing of the Waters (2 PP), Consecration (4 PP), The Asking (4 PP), The Raising (8 PP + 1 EXP))	19–20	Head	0/5
	Magic: Divine (memorised): Bless, Calm, Command, Create Food and Water, Cure Disease, Cure Minor Wounds, Cure Serious Wounds, Detect Evil, Detect Magic, Dry, Heal, Hold Person, Light, Locate Object, Might, Neutralize Poison, Purify Food and Drink, Remove Fear, Silence, Slow Poison, Spiritshield			

Skills: Athletics 42%, Boating 55%, Brawn 35%, Channel 92%, Customs 75%, Deceit 40%, Devotion 92%, Endurance 58%, Evade 48%, Folk Magic (Casting) 60%, Influence 78%, Insight 80%, Locale 65%, Lore (Theology, Lake Lady) 88%, Lore (Water spirits) 80%, Native Tongue 72%, Oratory 78%, Perception 70%, Piety (Devotion) 92%, Sing 68%, Swim 75%, Unarmed 35%, Willpower 85%
Passions: Serve the Lake Lady 92%
Protect the sacred waters from corruption 80%

Combat Style: Temple guardian (staff) 45%

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach/Range	Damage	AP/HP
Blessed staff	M	L	1d8	4/8

Lilura Deepcurrent

Deputy to High Priestess Nerissa and her right hand in the Order of the Lake Lady — about thirty, dark, usually wet to the knee because she is the one who actually goes into the channel to check it. Rumoured merfolk ancestry on her mother's side; she holds her breath unnaturally long and does not discuss it. A genuine divine caster in her own right, and the person who decides who reaches the High Priestess and who does not.

Elderly, piercing blue eyes, very still. Holds her breath unnaturally long without noticing she is doing it.

Characteristics	Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR: 9	**Action Points:** 3	1–3	Right Leg	0/5
CON: 13	**Damage Modifier:** -1d2	4–6	Left Leg	0/5
SIZ: 10	**Magic Points:** 18	7–9	Abdomen	0/6
DEX: 11	**Movement:** 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	0/7
INT: 16	**Initiative Bonus:** +14	13–15	Right Arm	0/4
POW: 18	**Armour:** None	16–18	Left Arm	0/4
CHA: 15	**Abilities:** The Rites of the Lady (The Lady's Washing (2 PP), Blessing of the Waters (2 PP), Consecration (4 PP), The Asking (4 PP))	19–20	Head	0/5
	Magic: None			

Skills: Athletics 40%, Boating 60%, Brawn 30%, Channel 85%, Customs 82%, Deceit 35%, Devotion 88%, Endurance 62%, Evade 42%, Folk Magic (Casting) 65%, Influence 80%, Insight 85%, Locale 70%, Lore (Order history) 72%, Lore (Theology, Lake Lady) 76%, Lore (Water spirits) 85%, Native Tongue 78%, Oratory 80%, Perception 72%, Piety (Devotion) 78%, Sing 62%, Swim 88%, Unarmed 30%, Willpower 92%
Passions: Steward the Order of the Lake Lady 92%
Keep the sacred waters pure 85%

Combat Style: Order rites (trident) 40%

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach/Range	Damage	AP/HP
Ceremonial trident	M	L	1d8+1-1d2	4/10

Ravella

Half-merfolk proprietor of The Siren's Call — pleasure house and information market in one. Subtle waterfolk tells (webbed fingers, water-reflecting eyes, Swim 90). A master broker (Insight 85, Streetwise 88, Commerce 80) with light innate water magic, secretly protecting the city's hidden waterfolk.

Half-merfolk to anyone who looks properly — faint scales at the hairline, slightly webbed fingers, eyes that catch the water-light.

Characteristics	Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR: 10	**Action Points:** 3	1–3	Right Leg	0/5
CON: 12	**Damage Modifier:** +0	4–6	Left Leg	0/5
SIZ: 11	**Magic Points:** 15	7–9	Abdomen	0/6
DEX: 14	**Movement:** 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	0/7
INT: 17	**Initiative Bonus:** +16	13–15	Right Arm	0/4
POW: 15	**Armour:** None	16–18	Left Arm	0/4
CHA: 17	**Abilities:** None	19–20	Head	0/5
	Magic: None			

Skills: Athletics 50%, Boating 60%, Brawn 35%, Commerce 80%, Conceal 65%, Customs 65%, Deceit 82%, Endurance 55%, Evade 58%, Folk Magic (Casting) 55%, Influence 82%, Insight 85%, Locale 80%, Lore (Merfolk & waterfolk) 75%, Native Tongue 70%, Perception 75%, Seduction 70%, Sing 55%, Stealth 55%, Streetwise 88%, Swim 90%, Unarmed 40%, Willpower 72%
Passions: Protect the hidden waterfolk 80%
Guard the secrets of The Siren's Call 65%

Combat Style: Defensive (dagger) 45%

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach/Range	Damage	AP/HP
Ornate dagger	S	S	1d4+1	6/8

Santo di Teufel

Baron Hanzo's cruel son and heir — a sadistic young fire-mage who has decided he wants Emmeralda of the Sylph's Embrace, and who carries a stolen ritual knife marked with the sigil of Asmodeus because he cannot imagine being told no.

Nineteen, dressed beautifully and always slightly too warm for it. Rings. A good sword he cannot really use.

Characteristics	Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR: 10	**Action Points:** 3	1–3	Right Leg	0/5
CON: 13	**Damage Modifier:** +0	4–6	Left Leg	0/5
SIZ: 11	**Magic Points:** 16	7–9	Abdomen	0/6
DEX: 15	**Movement:** 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	0/7
INT: 15	**Initiative Bonus:** +15	13–15	Right Arm	0/4
POW: 16	**Armour:** None	16–18	Left Arm	0/4
CHA: 16	**Abilities:** The Binding (Open the Channel (2 PP))	19–20	Head	0/5
	Magic: Arcane: Burning Hands, Ignite, Magic Missile			

Skills: Arcane Casting 55%, Arcane Knowledge 50%, Athletics 45%, Boating 23%, Brawn 31%, Conceal 31%, Courtesy 81%, Customs 30%, Dance 31%, Deceit 66%, Drive 31%, Endurance 51%, Evade 30%, First Aid 30%, Influence 62%, Insight 55%, Literacy 70%, Locale 30%, Lore (Demonology) 50%, Native Tongue 71%, Perception 61%, Ride 51%, Seduction 81%, Sing 52%, Stealth 50%, Swim 23%, Unarmed 55%, Willpower 69%
Passions: Have Emmeralda 80%
Lust 80%
Arrogance + Entitlement 75%
Terror of his father finding out 60%

Combat Style: Magic User 25%

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach/Range	Damage	AP/HP
Rapier	M	L	1d8	5/8
Ritual knife (soul-knife, symbol of Asmodeus)	S	S	1d4	6/8

Tat Atarer

Captain of the Dragon Knights — a hardened, pragmatic mercenary commander who serves Baron Hanzo for pay, not ideology. Master fighter (combat 97%); 'the Baron pays for our swords, not our opinions.'

Hard-faced professional in harness that fits properly. Fifties. Unhurried.

Characteristics	Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR: 17	**Action Points:** 2	1–3	Right Leg	3/6
CON: 15	**Damage Modifier:** +1d2	4–6	Left Leg	3/6
SIZ: 13	**Magic Points:** 7	7–9	Abdomen	3/7
DEX: 15	**Movement:** 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	3/8
INT: 9	**Initiative Bonus:** +12	13–15	Right Arm	3/5
POW: 7	**Armour:** Light armor (all locations)	16–18	Left Arm	3/5
CHA: 17	**Abilities:** Agile Defender; Combat Proficiency (+5% Combat Style); Weapon Specialization (+10% with specialised weapon; +1 AP for Parry); Weapon Master (+1-step damage modifier)	19–20	Head	3/6
	Magic: None			

Skills: Athletics 82%, Boating 32%, Brawn 80%, Conceal 72%, Customs 18%, Dance 32%, Deceit 26%, Drive 22%, Endurance 80%, Evade 80%, First Aid 24%, Influence 34%, Insight 16%, Locale 18%, Lore (Cult) 95%, Lore (World) 92%, Native Tongue 66%, Navigation 73%, Oratory 85%, Perception 66%, Ride 72%, Seamanship 74%, Sing 24%, Stealth 74%, Survival 69%, Swim 82%, Unarmed 87%, Willpower 64%
Passions: Bring the company home paid 75%
This is a contract, not a cause 60%
Professional contempt for the Baron's private business 50%

Combat Style: Fighter (sword, dagger, shield, bow) 97%

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach/Range	Damage	AP/HP
Long Sword	M	L	1d8+1d2	6/12
Dagger	S	S	1d4+1+1d2	6/8
Round Shield	L	S	1d4+1d2	4/12
Recurve bow	H	15/125/250	1d8+1d2	4/5
Han-kyu (short bow)	L	5/25/50	1d8+1d2	4/4

Temerach Nebulo

Elf knight of the Swords of the Lake, called 'the Lakelady's Javelin' — and the order's spymaster in Purewater, who has spent four years building a quiet network around Baron Hanzo and has not yet made her move. Nobody recruits her. She recruits them.

Elf. Plain full plate without a single ornament, kept perfectly. No colours, no house, no badge. Never seen arriving; already there.

Characteristics	Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR: 17	**Action Points:** 2	1–3	Right Leg	8/6
CON: 12	**Damage Modifier:** +1d4	4–6	Left Leg	8/6
SIZ: 17	**Magic Points:** 16	7–9	Abdomen	8/7
DEX: 12	**Movement:** 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	8/8
INT: 12	**Initiative Bonus:** +2	13–15	Right Arm	8/5
POW: 16	**Armour:** Full Plate (all locations)	16–18	Left Arm	8/5
CHA: 12	**Abilities:** None	19–20	Head	8/6
	Magic: None			

Skills: Athletics 91%, Boating 22%, Brawn 81%, Conceal 72%, Craft (Weaponsmithing) 53%, Customs 26%, Dance 22%, Deceit 24%, Drive 22%, Endurance 87%, Evade 79%, First Aid 24%, Influence 22%, Insight 24%, Locale 73%, Native Tongue 89%, Oratory 105%, Perception 96%, Ride 22%, Sing 22%, Stealth 90%, Swim 22%, Unarmed 96%, Willpower 100%
Passions: See Hanzo di Teufel called to answer 75%
Loyalty (the Swords of the Lake) 70%
Protect Conall from what he is 65%

Combat Style: Knight of the Lake (Swords of the Lake; bow, spear, longsword, rapier, shield) 121%

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach/Range	Damage	AP/HP
Longsword	M	L	1d8+1d4	6/12
Rapier	M	L	1d8+1d4	5/8
Dagger	S	S	1d4+1+1d4	6/8
Kite Shield	H	S	1d4+1d4	4/15
Composite longbow	H	50/400/800	1d8+1d4	4/8
Shortspear (javelin)	M	L	1d8+1+1d4	4/5

Thuban Eta

The ancient dragon-knight spirit bound inside Cailan. A betrayed tactical genius from the Dragon Kings era, held in thrall by Baron Hanzo's ritual through his bones and the binding locket. Indomitable will (Willpower 95), peerless tactics, honors the old codes — a potential ally if freed.

Not a body. A weight behind a boy's eyes, and a fighting style a thousand years out of date executed perfectly by arms too thin to do it.

A bound spirit. He fights through his host's body (see Cailan) and uses the host's hit locations and armour; his own sheet is for Spirit Combat and for the moments he is spoken to.

Characteristics	Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR: 14	**Action Points:** 3	1–3	Right Leg	0/6
CON: 13	**Damage Modifier:** +1d2	4–6	Left Leg	0/6
SIZ: 13	**Magic Points:** 18	7–9	Abdomen	0/7
DEX: 16	**Movement:** 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	0/8
INT: 18	**Initiative Bonus:** +17	13–15	Right Arm	0/5
POW: 18	**Armour:** None	16–18	Left Arm	0/5
CHA: 15	**Abilities:** None	19–20	Head	0/6
	Magic: None			

Skills: Athletics 75%, Brawn 60%, Customs (ancient codes) 85%, Endurance 70%, Evade 75%, Insight 80%, Lore (Draconic ritual) 80%, Lore (Dragon Kings era) 98%, Lore (Strategy & Tactics) 95%, Native Tongue (ancient) 70%, Oratory 75%, Perception 80%, Ride 80%, Unarmed 96%, Willpower 95%
Passions: Honor the old codes 90%
Hatred of betrayers (and the Baron who enslaves him) 80%
Torment of his betrayal and death 70%

Combat Style: Ancient Dragon-Knight mastery (spectral) 121%

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach/Range	Damage	AP/HP
Spectral arms (manifest through host)	-	-	by host weapon	-

Supporting Non-Player Characters

Abel Weir

Sergeant of the City Watch, forty-one, twenty-two years in blue-grey. Keeps the referral book at the Isle post — four inches of complaints against the Baron's people that he has been ordered to record and not act on. He is very tired.

Forty-one, heavy, tired, blue-grey Watch coat. A four-inch book under one arm that does not leave him.

Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
Action Points: 2	1–3	Right Leg	0/6
Damage Modifier: +0	4–6	Left Leg	0/6
Magic Points: 12	7–9	Abdomen	0/7
Movement: 6m	10–12	Chest	0/8
Initiative Bonus: +13	13–15	Right Arm	0/5
Armour: None	16–18	Left Arm	0/5
Abilities: None	19–20	Head	0/6
Magic: None			

Skills: Athletics 33%, Boating 68%, Brawn 35%, Bureaucracy 65%, Conceal 30%, Customs 70%, Deceit 30%, Endurance 46%, Evade 32%, First Aid 48%, Influence 44%, Insight 62%, Locale 72%, Native Tongue 67%, Perception 58%, Purewater Law 68%, Streetwise 58%, Swim 58%, Unarmed 44%, Willpower 54%
Passions: Twenty-two years in blue-grey 70%
Somebody should have to answer for the barrow-man 65%
A wife and two daughters on Isle post pay 60%
Loathing of the standing order 55%

Combat Style: Watch drill 45%

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach/Range	Damage	AP/HP
Watch baton	M	S	1d6	4/4

Alderic Vantt

Merchant prince and councillor, fifty-two: borderland transit, grain and timber. The Baron's host — the Dragon Knights are camped on his water-meadow — and the man who drafted the standing order and put it in front of the Prince.

Fifty-two, warm-faced, well fed, beautifully turned out without being showy.

Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
Action Points: 2	1–3	Right Leg	0/5
Damage Modifier: +0	4–6	Left Leg	0/5
Magic Points: 10	7–9	Abdomen	0/6
Movement: 6m	10–12	Chest	0/7
Initiative Bonus: +12	13–15	Right Arm	0/4
Armour: None	16–18	Left Arm	0/4
Abilities: None	19–20	Head	0/5
Magic: None			
Skills: Athletics 20%, Boating 40%, Bureaucracy 74%, Commerce 85%, Customs 72%, Deceit 58%, Endurance 22%, Evade 25%, Influence 78%, Insight 62%, Locale 70%, Native Tongue 74%, Oratory 66%, Perception 48%, Ride 45%, Willpower 45% **Passions:** The Vantt name, solvent and respectable 80% Debt of gratitude to Baron Hanzo (which he calls friendship) 65% Fear of the man he owes 60% Love of his daughter Ilse 70%			

Combat Style: Gentleman's blade (rapier, dagger) 30%				
Weapon	**Size/Force**	**Reach/Range**	**Damage**	**AP/HP**
Rapier	M	L	1d8	5/8
Dagger	S	S	1d4+1	6/8

Asphodel

A courtesan at the Promise of Heaven, the house where Randall grew up. Warm, quick, and trusted by him 'as brother and sister' — his closest confidante on the Pearl Quay and a ready source of information from the working girls.

Warm, quick, always slightly underdressed for the weather. Touches people while talking to them.

Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
Action Points: 2	1–3	Right Leg	0/5
Damage Modifier: -1d2	4–6	Left Leg	0/5
Magic Points: 11	7–9	Abdomen	0/6
Movement: 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	0/7
Initiative Bonus: +12	13–15	Right Arm	0/4
Armour: None	16–18	Left Arm	0/4
Abilities: None	19–20	Head	0/5
Magic: None			
Skills: Athletics 45%, Boating 40%, Brawn 28%, Conceal 50%, Customs 58%, Dance 70%, Deceit 68%, Endurance 48%, Evade 52%, First Aid 40%, Influence 72%, Insight 75%, Locale 65%, Lore (Pearl gossip) 72%, Native Tongue 60%, Perception 62%, Seduction 78%, Sing 60%, Stealth 50%, Streetwise 65%, Swim 45%, Unarmed 40%, Willpower 55% **Passions:** Loves Randall like a brother 70% Look out for the girls of the Promise of Heaven 55%			

Combat Style: Desperate self-defense (dagger) 35%				
Weapon	**Size/Force**	**Reach/Range**	**Damage**	**AP/HP**
Concealed dagger	S	S	1d4+1-1d2	6/8

Cassian Bree

Secretary of the Ember Society, forty-four: courteous, damp-handed, immaculate minutes, boring on purpose. The only confirmed member of the Awake the Dragon Movement in Purewater — and everything he does is legal.

Forty-four, courteous, immaculate cuffs, faintly damp handshake. Utterly unmemorable and working at it.

Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
Action Points: 2	1–3	Right Leg	0/5
Damage Modifier: -1d2	4–6	Left Leg	0/5
Magic Points: 13	7–9	Abdomen	0/6
Movement: 6m	10–12	Chest	0/7
Initiative Bonus: +14	13–15	Right Arm	0/4
Armour: None	16–18	Left Arm	0/4
Abilities: None	19–20	Head	0/5
Magic: None			
Skills: Athletics 20%, Bureaucracy 80%, Commerce 62%, Conceal 60%, Customs 70%, Deceit 68%, Endurance 22%, Evade 30%, Influence 66%, Insight 74%, Locale 68%, Lore (Dragon Kings era) 64%, Lore (History) 72%, Native Tongue 76%, Perception 58%, Willpower 62% **Passions:** Sort them correctly, every time 75% Never be the one who is remembered 70% Quiet contempt for the men he flatters 55% Self-preservation 65%			

Combat Style: Clerk's caution (dagger) 25%				
Weapon	**Size/Force**	**Reach/Range**	**Damage**	**AP/HP**
Dagger	S	S	1d4+1-1d2	6/8

Constantine

Proprietor of The Sylph's Embrace on the Pearl — shrewd, protective of her workers, fiercely independent. Operates under Marisette's authority. After what a di Teufel did to Emmeralda under her roof, she is hiring protection and wants justice.

Forties, strong forearms, sleeves shoved past the elbow. Good cloth worn like working clothes.

Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
Action Points: 3	1–3	Right Leg	0/5
Damage Modifier: +0	4–6	Left Leg	0/5
Magic Points: 13	7–9	Abdomen	0/6
Movement: 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	0/7
Initiative Bonus: +14	13–15	Right Arm	0/4
Armour: None	16–18	Left Arm	0/4
Abilities: None	19–20	Head	0/5
Magic: None			
Skills: Athletics 48%, Brawn 40%, Commerce 72%, Conceal 50%, Customs 58%, Deceit 60%, Endurance 55%, Evade 52%, Influence 72%, Insight 68%, Locale 65%, Lore (Pleasure trade) 60%, Native Tongue 65%, Perception 60%, Streetwise 62%, Unarmed 48%, Willpower 62% **Passions:** Protect my workers 75% Independence of my house 55%			

Combat Style: Protective (stiletto, crossbow) 55%				
Weapon	**Size/Force**	**Reach/Range**	**Damage**	**AP/HP**
Hidden stiletto	S	S	1d4	6/8
Hand crossbow	L	5/20/40	1d6	4/5

Corvin

Sword of the Lake, twenty-two, earnest and brave and not remotely subtle. Rows well. Currently in a brown coat that is too short in the arm and sulking about it.

Twenty-two, Sword of the Lake in white, open honest face. Rows extremely well and would like that mentioned.

Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
Action Points: 2	1–3	Right Leg	3/6
Damage Modifier: +1d2	4–6	Left Leg	3/6
Magic Points: 11	7–9	Abdomen	3/7
Movement: 6m	10–12	Chest	3/8
Initiative Bonus: +11	13–15	Right Arm	3/5
Armour: Mail and leather (all locations)	16–18	Left Arm	3/5
Abilities: None	19–20	Head	3/6
Magic: None			
Skills: Athletics 25%, Boating 68%, Brawn 26%, Conceal 23%, Customs 62%, Dance 23%, Deceit 22%, Drive 23%, Endurance 60%, Evade 24%, First Aid 23%, Influence 22%, Insight 22%, Locale 22%, Native Tongue 62%, Perception 55%, Ride 23%, Sing 22%, Stealth 45%, Unarmed 25%, Willpower 50% **Passions:** Earn the white belt of the Swords of the Lake 70% Do what the Mother tells me, exactly 65% Do not be sick in front of anybody again 40%			

Combat Style: Sword of the Lake (longsword, shortspear, round shield, longbow) 62%				
Weapon	**Size/Force**	**Reach/Range**	**Damage**	**AP/HP**
Longsword	M	M	1d8+1d2	6/12
Shortspear	M	L	1d8+1+1d2	4/5
Round shield	L	S	1d4+1d2	4/12
Longbow	H	45/375/750	1d8+1d2	4/7

Emmeralda

Elven courtesan of The Sylph's Embrace — poised, magnetic, and the finest performer on the Pearl (CHA 18, Seduction 88, Dance 85).

Elven, poised, the finest performer on the Pearl and vain about her hair.

Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
Action Points: 3	1–3	Right Leg	0/5
Damage Modifier: -1d2	4–6	Left Leg	0/5
Magic Points: 13	7–9	Abdomen	0/6
Movement: 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	0/7
Initiative Bonus: +15	13–15	Right Arm	0/4
Armour: None	16–18	Left Arm	0/4
Abilities: None	19–20	Head	0/5
Magic: None			
Skills: Athletics 55%, Brawn 30%, Conceal 40%, Customs 55%, Dance 85%, Deceit 70%, Endurance 50%, Evade 62%, Influence 78%, Insight 65%, Locale 50%, Lore (Courtly etiquette) 60%, Native Tongue (Elven) 70%, Perception 55%, Seduction 88%, Sing 80%, Streetwise 50%, Unarmed 40%, Willpower 58% **Passions:** Cling to her own identity 60% Count down to the year she gets to stop 55%			

Combat Style: Desperate struggle (dagger, claw) 45%				
Weapon	**Size/Force**	**Reach/Range**	**Damage**	**AP/HP**
Concealed dagger	S	S	1d4+1-1d2	6/8
Demon-surge (involuntary)	-	-	1d3 + bestial strength	-

Harbormaster Velen Deepkeel

Stern, weathered Harbormaster with forty years at the docks — meticulous, traditional, publicly incorruptible. A consummate seaman and administrator (Seamanship 85, Navigation 82, Maritime Law 80) who controls the harbor's lawful face while quietly tolerating Crowbill's smuggling.

Weathered, dark blue coat badged by rank, forty years of it. Formal even sitting down.

Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
Action Points: 3	1–3	Right Leg	0/5
Damage Modifier: +0	4–6	Left Leg	0/5
Magic Points: 13	7–9	Abdomen	0/6
Movement: 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	0/7
Initiative Bonus: +14	13–15	Right Arm	0/4
Armour: None	16–18	Left Arm	0/4
Abilities: None	19–20	Head	0/5
Magic: None			
Skills: Athletics 48%, Boating 82%, Brawn 48%, Commerce 72%, Customs 68%, Deceit 50%, Drive 40%, Endurance 58%, Evade 48%, Influence 70%, Insight 68%, Locale 78%, Lore (Maritime law) 80%, Lore (Shipping & trade) 78%, Native Tongue 68%, Navigation 82%, Perception 72%, Ride 40%, Seamanship 85%, Streetwise 58%, Swim 72%, Unarmed 50%, Willpower 70% **Passions:** Uphold the order of the harbor 75% Protect the merchant shipping trade 60%			

Combat Style: Old sailor (cutlass) 52%				
Weapon	**Size/Force**	**Reach/Range**	**Damage**	**AP/HP**
Officer's cutlass	M	M	1d8	6/8
Belaying pin / club	M	S	1d6	4/4

Hesketh Pyle

Councillor, fifty-eight: salt, glass and a good name going soft. Votes as he is told and drinks more than he did last year. The crack in the council.

Fifty-eight, well dressed and slightly unkempt with it. There is always a glass and it is always further on than anyone else's.

Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
Action Points: 2	1–3	Right Leg	0/5
Damage Modifier: +0	4–6	Left Leg	0/5
Magic Points: 9	7–9	Abdomen	0/6
Movement: 6m	10–12	Chest	0/7
Initiative Bonus: +12	13–15	Right Arm	0/4
Armour: None	16–18	Left Arm	0/4
Abilities: None	19–20	Head	0/5
Magic: None			
Skills: Athletics 18%, Bureaucracy 65%, Commerce 70%, Customs 68%, Deceit 35%, Endurance 20%, Evade 24%, Influence 55%, Insight 58%, Locale 66%, Native Tongue 70%, Oratory 40%, Perception 45%, Willpower 32% **Passions:** My son's neck 90% Shame, carried daily 70% A good name, three generations old 55% Wine, lately 45%			

Combat Style: Old man's stick (walking stick, knife) 24%				
Weapon	**Size/Force**	**Reach/Range**	**Damage**	**AP/HP**
Walking stick (club)	M	M	1d6	4/4
Knife	S	S	1d3	5/4

Ila

A young elven girl (about thirteen) at the Sylph's Embrace, devoted to Emmeralda. An innocent of the Pearl, and a thread on the party's conscience.

Thirteen, elven, thin. Sits where she can see the front door.

Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
Action Points: 2	1–3	Right Leg	0/4
Damage Modifier: -1d4	4–6	Left Leg	0/4
Magic Points: 11	7–9	Abdomen	0/5
Movement: 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	0/6
Initiative Bonus: +12	13–15	Right Arm	0/3
Armour: None	16–18	Left Arm	0/3
Abilities: None	19–20	Head	0/4
Magic: None			
Skills: Athletics 48%, Brawn 18%, Conceal 52%, Customs 40%, Deceit 48%, Endurance 40%, Evade 58%, First Aid 35%, Influence 45%, Insight 55%, Locale 58%, Native Tongue (Elven) 50%, Perception 58%, Sing 45%, Stealth 60%, Streetwise 45%, Swim 40%, Unarmed 30%, Willpower 48% **Passions:** Love for Emmeralda 70% Stay unseen and safe in the Quarter 50%			

Combat Style: Frightened flailing (knife) 25%				
Weapon	**Size/Force**	**Reach/Range**	**Damage**	**AP/HP**
Small knife	S	S	1d3-1d4	5/4

Ivo Calder

Tide Master of the Watercrafters Guild, fifty, assessor by appointment to the city — and the man who signed the Lake Lady's fouling alarm off as a false reading six weeks ago. He has not slept properly since.

Fifty, distinguished, guild indigo, instruments kept beautifully. Has not slept properly in six weeks and it has started to show in the hands.

Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
Action Points: 2	1–3	Right Leg	0/5
Damage Modifier: +0	4–6	Left Leg	0/5
Magic Points: 14	7–9	Abdomen	0/6
Movement: 6m	10–12	Chest	0/7
Initiative Bonus: +14	13–15	Right Arm	0/4
Armour: None	16–18	Left Arm	0/4
Abilities: None	19–20	Head	0/5
Magic: Arcane: Detect Magic, Read Magic			
Skills: Arcane Casting 45%, Athletics 28%, Boating 66%, Bureaucracy 70%, Commerce 55%, Craft (Watercraft) 84%, Customs 66%, Endurance 30%, Evade 32%, Influence 58%, Insight 60%, Locale 72%, Lore (Water Divination) 88%, Native Tongue 74%, Perception 70%, Swim 60%, Willpower 48% **Passions:** Thirty years of honest readings 80% The shame of the one that was not 75% Awe of being let into the room 60% The guild, and his place in it 55%			

Combat Style: Guild instruments (tool-knife) 30%				
Weapon	**Size/Force**	**Reach/Range**	**Damage**	**AP/HP**
Tool-knife	S	S	1d3	5/4

Kag

Half-orc, female, thirties. Rank 2 Thief of Crowbill's guild — muscle, not a burglar, and the only person in the outfit who can read a ledger. Raised among humans in a Purewater that had no use for her. Seven feet of her, a club she actually reaches for, and a quarter-bound octavo with five years of the Shoals in it that she paid for herself. she/her.

Half-orc, thirties, a head and a half taller than anybody in the room and built to match. Leather, worn. A club on the belt that is plainly the thing she reaches for. Hands too big for most work and good at all of it.

Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
Action Points: 4	1–3	Right Leg	2/8
Damage Modifier: +1d6	4–6	Left Leg	2/8
Magic Points: 7	7–9	Abdomen	2/9
Movement: 20 ft	10–12	Chest	2/10
Initiative Bonus: +14	13–15	Right Arm	2/7
Armour: Leather, worn (all locations)	16–18	Left Arm	2/7
Abilities: Climb Walls — ignore 1 grade on Athletics to climb, unburdened and in light armor or less; Hide in Shadows — in shadow, Perception rolls to spot her are 1 grade harder; Sneak Attack — from outside the victim's field of vision: Choose Location free, +1d2 at Rank 2, and Bypass Armor / Maximize Damage need no critical; Subterfuge — Lockpicking, Mechanisms and Sleight one grade easier; GREAT HEARING (Rank 1, chosen) — all Perception rolls that pertain to hearing are one Difficulty Grade easier; Darkvision (half-orc) — 60 ft; dim light reads as bright, darkness as dim; Literate — raised among humans, so she reads and writes Common	19–20	Head	2/8
Magic: None			
Skills: Athletics 70%, Boating 68%, Brawn 58%, Commerce 65%, Conceal 30%, Craft (Boatwright) 34%, Customs 72%, Dance 18%, Deceit 41%, Drive 25%, Endurance 52%, Evade 70%, First Aid 29%, Influence 20%, Insight 70%, Intimidation 50%, Language (Thieves' Cant) 61%, Literacy (Common) 48%, Locale 42%, Lockpicking 36%, Mechanisms 39%, Native Tongue 61%, Perception 50%, Ride 20%, Sing 12%, Stealth 70%, Streetwise 60%, Swim 58%, Thieves' Guild Oath 53%, Unarmed 48%, Willpower 35% **Passions:** Hate (being taken for dumb muscle) 75% Loyalty (Crowbill — he has never once short-changed me) 60% Ambition (to run these streets the way he does) 55%			

Combat Style: Rogue (all basic weapons, hand crossbow, longsword, rapier, shortsword) 78%				
Weapon	**Size/Force**	**Reach/Range**	**Damage**	**AP/HP**
Shortsword	M	S	1d6+1d6	6/8
Dagger (x3, thrown 15/30/60)	S	S	1d4+1+1d6	6/8
Club — the one she actually reaches for	M	S	1d6+1d6	4/4

Kerrin (brown coat)

One of Crowbill's watchers. Dockside, unremarkable, brown coat. Professional — follows, does not close.

Dockside, unremarkable, brown coat, easy in a crowd.

Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
Action Points: 2	1–3	Right Leg	0/5
Damage Modifier: +0	4–6	Left Leg	0/5
Magic Points: 11	7–9	Abdomen	0/6
Movement: 6m	10–12	Chest	0/7
Initiative Bonus: +13	13–15	Right Arm	0/4
Armour: None	16–18	Left Arm	0/4
Abilities: None	19–20	Head	0/5
Magic: None			
Skills: Athletics 25%, Boating 65%, Brawn 23%, Conceal 25%, Customs 66%, Dance 26%, Deceit 62%, Drive 25%, Endurance 24%, Evade 60%, First Aid 27%, Influence 24%, Insight 55%, Locale 26%, Native Tongue 65%, Perception 64%, Ride 25%, Sing 23%, Stealth 68%, Streetwise 71%, Swim 55%, Unarmed 25%, Willpower 52% **Passions:** Eleven years of reading faces across a room 65% Loyalty to Crowbill, who is straight with me 60%			

Combat Style: Watcher (knife, cosh) 52%				
Weapon	**Size/Force**	**Reach/Range**	**Damage**	**AP/HP**
Knife	S	S	1d3	5/4
Cosh (club)	M	S	1d6	4/4

Marda Blackwater

Broad-shouldered leader of The Dredgers, risen from the dredge-boats during a labor dispute five years ago. A powerful working-class champion (Brawn 75, Oratory 78, Influence 75) who rallies dock labor against the merchant princes and — above all — against the Baron's Dragon Knights.

Forties, broad, dredge-boat hands, a black armband with a white wave on it.

Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
Action Points: 3	1–3	Right Leg	1/6
Damage Modifier: +1d2	4–6	Left Leg	1/6
Magic Points: 14	7–9	Abdomen	1/7
Movement: 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	1/8
Initiative Bonus: +12	13–15	Right Arm	1/5
Armour: Heavy work-leathers (all locations)	16–18	Left Arm	1/5
Abilities: None	19–20	Head	1/6
Magic: None			
Skills: Athletics 68%, Boating 72%, Brawn 75%, Commerce 55%, Customs 55%, Deceit 40%, Drive 50%, Endurance 80%, Endurance (labor) 80%, Evade 52%, Influence 75%, Insight 62%, Locale 72%, Lore (Dock labor & dredging) 80%, Native Tongue 62%, Oratory 78%, Perception 62%, Streetwise 65%, Swim 75%, Unarmed 72%, Willpower 72% **Passions:** Champion of Purewater's working class 85% Break the Dragon Knights' oppression 70%			

Combat Style: Dockside brawler (hook, fists) 68%				
Weapon	**Size/Force**	**Reach/Range**	**Damage**	**AP/HP**
Dredging hook (improvised polearm)	L	L	1d8+1d2	4/10
Heavy fists / brawl	M	S	1d3+1d2	-

Mariarta

An older, canny courtesan of the Promise of Heaven with 'the calm intelligence of someone who can survive almost any situation involving men.' Sent up to entertain the Baron's soldiers, she brings back the hard intelligence on his guarded quarters — Randall's most valuable inside source on the Dragon Knights' manor.

Older, composed, entirely unremarkable in a room full of soldiers — which is the whole skill.

Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
Action Points: 3	1–3	Right Leg	0/5
Damage Modifier: +0	4–6	Left Leg	0/5
Magic Points: 12	7–9	Abdomen	0/6
Movement: 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	0/7
Initiative Bonus: +13	13–15	Right Arm	0/4
Armour: None	16–18	Left Arm	0/4
Abilities: None	19–20	Head	0/5
Magic: None			
Skills: Athletics 45%, Boating 45%, Brawn 32%, Commerce 50%, Conceal 48%, Customs 60%, Dance 62%, Deceit 62%, Endurance 52%, Evade 50%, First Aid 40%, Influence 68%, Insight 78%, Locale 68%, Lore (Reading men) 72%, Native Tongue 60%, Perception 65%, Seduction 70%, Sing 55%, Stealth 45%, Streetwise 62%, Swim 42%, Unarmed 40%, Willpower 58% **Passions:** Survive and make the most of it 65% Look after the girls of the Promise of Heaven 55% Old fondness for Randall 50%			

Combat Style: Self-defense (knife) 40%				
Weapon	**Size/Force**	**Reach/Range**	**Damage**	**AP/HP**
Concealed knife	S	S	1d4+1	5/4

Marisette

Madame of The Mother of Pearl and the near-absolute authority over Purewater's Pearl — the proprietors, Constantine among them, answer to her. A consummate social power broker who keeps the pleasure district running, keeps her accounts in obligations, and resents the disorder the Baron and Santo have brought to it. Her oldest rule: the Pearl sells a night, never a person.

Immaculate, ageless in the way money buys, never dressed louder than the room. Sits while others stand.

Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
Action Points: 3	1–3	Right Leg	0/5
Damage Modifier: +0	4–6	Left Leg	0/5
Magic Points: 15	7–9	Abdomen	0/6
Movement: 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	0/7
Initiative Bonus: +14	13–15	Right Arm	0/4
Armour: None	16–18	Left Arm	0/4
Abilities: None	19–20	Head	0/5
Magic: None			
Skills: Athletics 42%, Brawn 35%, Commerce 82%, Conceal 58%, Customs 70%, Deceit 78%, Endurance 55%, Evade 50%, Influence 85%, Insight 82%, Locale 75%, Lore (Pleasure district) 82%, Native Tongue 70%, Oratory 72%, Perception 70%, Seduction 75%, Streetwise 78%, Unarmed 40%, Willpower 75% **Passions:** Rule the Pearl district 80% Keep order (and profit) in the trade 65%			

Combat Style: Self-defense (dagger) 45%				
Weapon	**Size/Force**	**Reach/Range**	**Damage**	**AP/HP**
Jeweled dagger	S	S	1d4+1	6/8

Maro Quist

Councillor, seventy-one, thirty years on the council: incorruptible, formidable, and completely wrong. He voted for both instructions on the merits and will defend them to your face.

Seventy-one, upright, councillor's chain always worn, hands entirely still.

Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
Action Points: 2	1–3	Right Leg	0/5
Damage Modifier: -1d2	4–6	Left Leg	0/5
Magic Points: 14	7–9	Abdomen	0/6
Movement: 6m	10–12	Chest	0/7
Initiative Bonus: +13	13–15	Right Arm	0/4
Armour: None	16–18	Left Arm	0/4
Abilities: None	19–20	Head	0/5
Magic: None			
Skills: Athletics 15%, Bureaucracy 86%, Commerce 60%, Customs 80%, Deceit 30%, Endurance 18%, Evade 20%, Influence 82%, Insight 76%, Locale 74%, Lore (History) 78%, Native Tongue 82%, Oratory 80%, Perception 55%, Purewater Law 84%, Willpower 74% **Passions:** Thirty years of getting it right 85% The city, as an idea 75% Contempt for men who are moved by money 70% A weakness for being told the age is in decline 50%			

Combat Style: Magistrate's staff (staff) 20%				
Weapon	**Size/Force**	**Reach/Range**	**Damage**	**AP/HP**
Staff of office (quarterstaff)	M	L	1d8-1d2	4/8

Murgeroch

Temerach Nebulo's squire and go-between — the steady, competent young fighter who carries the knight's messages, screens her meetings, and tends her gear. Usually the first of Temerach's people the party deals with.

Steady young fighter, kit well kept, stands slightly in front of whoever he is screening without making a production of it.

Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
Action Points: 2	1–3	Right Leg	3/5
Damage Modifier: +1d2	4–6	Left Leg	3/5
Magic Points: 10	7–9	Abdomen	3/6
Movement: 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	3/7
Initiative Bonus: +12	13–15	Right Arm	3/4
Armour: Mail & leather (all locations)	16–18	Left Arm	3/4
Abilities: None	19–20	Head	3/5
Magic: None			
Skills: Athletics 65%, Boating 40%, Brawn 58%, Conceal 48%, Craft (Armorer) 45%, Customs 48%, Deceit 45%, Endurance 62%, Evade 60%, First Aid 50%, Influence 42%, Insight 50%, Locale 40%, Lore (Swords of the Lake) 55%, Native Tongue 55%, Perception 62%, Ride 62%, Stealth 58%, Survival 48%, Swim 50%, Unarmed 62%, Willpower 55% **Passions:** Serve the Lakelady's Javelin 70% Earn the white belt of the Swords of the Lake 55%			

Combat Style: Squire of the Lake (sword, spear, bow, shield) 68%				
Weapon	**Size/Force**	**Reach/Range**	**Damage**	**AP/HP**
Arming Sword	M	L	1d8+1d2	6/12
Spear	M	L	1d8+1+1d2	4/5
Short Bow	L	5/40/80	1d8+1d2	4/4
Round Shield	L	S	1d4+1d2	4/12

Nus

A quick-fingered Purewater street thief and loyal friend of Randall — lookout, fence, and second pair of hands for a job; nimble, streetwise, and easy to underestimate.

Young, quick-fingered, dressed rather better than he can account for.

Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
Action Points: 2	1–3	Right Leg	1/5
Damage Modifier: +0	4–6	Left Leg	1/5
Magic Points: 10	7–9	Abdomen	1/6
Movement: 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	1/7
Initiative Bonus: +14	13–15	Right Arm	1/4
Armour: Leather jerkin (all locations)	16–18	Left Arm	1/4
Abilities: Climb Walls (ignore 1 grade of Athletics difficulty to climb); Hide in Shadows (Perception to spot is 1 grade harder); Read Languages	19–20	Head	1/5
Magic: None			
Skills: Acrobatics 55%, Athletics 62%, Boating 65%, Brawn 28%, Commerce 58%, Conceal 60%, Customs 26%, Dance 30%, Deceit 58%, Drive 24%, Endurance 45%, Evade 64%, First Aid 28%, Influence 48%, Insight 55%, Locale 50%, Lockpicking 62%, Native Tongue 66%, Perception 62%, Ride 22%, Sing 24%, Sleight 65%, Stealth 68%, Streetwise 68%, Swim 55%, Thieves' Cant 62%, Unarmed 45%, Willpower 45% **Passions:** Loyalty to Randall 70% Greed 50%			

Combat Style: Street Thief (dagger, sap, sling, short sword) 65%				
Weapon	**Size/Force**	**Reach/Range**	**Damage**	**AP/HP**
Dagger	S	S	1d4+1	6/8
Sap (cosh)	S	S	1d6	4/4
Sling	L	10/150/300	1d8	1/2

Orrin Sculle

The champion's keeper. Ten years feeding, dressing, washing and walking a boy who is not there, and talking to him every night while he does it.

Fifties, heavy in the forearms, sleeves permanently rolled. Smells of liniment and lamp oil. Moves around a small dark space without needing to look at it.

Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
Action Points: 2	1–2	Right Leg	0/5
Damage Modifier: +1d2	3–4	Left Leg	0/5
Magic Points: 15	5–7	Abdomen	0/6
Movement: 4m walk / 12m fly	8–10	Chest	0/7
Initiative Bonus: +11	15–16	Right Arm	0/4
Armour: None	17–18	Left Arm	0/4
Abilities: None	19–20	Head	0/5
Magic: None	11–12	Right Wing	0/5
	13–14	Left Wing	0/5
Skills: Athletics 28%, Boating 60%, Brawn 65%, Conceal 28%, Customs 60%, Dance 26%, Deceit 30%, Drive 28%, Endurance 60%, Evade 26%, First Aid 70%, Flight 28%, Influence 45%, Insight 58%, Locale 20%, Native Tongue 63%, Perception 62%, Ride 28%, Sing 28%, Stealth 23%, Swim 50%, Unarmed 28%, Willpower 55% **Passions:** Love (the boy) 70% Fear (the Baron) 65% Loyalty (the di Teufel household) 40%			

Combat Style: Ship-hand (belaying pin, knife) 40%				
Weapon	**Size/Force**	**Reach/Range**	**Damage**	**AP/HP**
Belaying pin (club)	M	S	1d6+1d2	4/4
Knife	S	S	1d3+1d2	5/4

Prince Emeric

The young Governor of Purewater — the King's nephew, perhaps two-and-twenty: clever, idealistic, genuinely decent, and entirely unsuited to govern a city like this. He wants to reform Purewater; the factions humor him, manage him, and run rings around his good intentions.

Two-and-twenty, fair, thin, extremely good clothes, in a chair slightly too large for him.

Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
Action Points: 2	1–3	Right Leg	0/5
Damage Modifier: -1d2	4–6	Left Leg	0/5
Magic Points: 13	7–9	Abdomen	0/6
Movement: 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	0/7
Initiative Bonus: +14	13–15	Right Arm	0/4
Armour: None	16–18	Left Arm	0/4
Abilities: None	19–20	Head	0/5
Magic: None			
Skills: Athletics 48%, Boating 35%, Brawn 40%, Commerce 55%, Conceal 30%, Courtesy 75%, Customs 78%, Dance 62%, Deceit 35%, Drive 40%, Endurance 50%, Evade 52%, First Aid 40%, Influence 68%, Insight 48%, Language (Courtly/Old Tongue) 60%, Locale 45%, Lore (Heraldry) 60%, Lore (History of Thornmere) 72%, Lore (Statecraft & Law) 80%, Native Tongue 75%, Oratory 72%, Perception 55%, Ride 62%, Sing 50%, Streetwise 20%, Unarmed 50%, Willpower 60% **Passions:** Reform Purewater and serve its people 80% Loyalty to the Crown and my uncle the King 70% Naive faith in law and due process 65%			

Combat Style: Courtly fencing (rapier & dagger) 55%				
Weapon	**Size/Force**	**Reach/Range**	**Damage**	**AP/HP**
Ornate rapier	M	L	1d8-1d2	5/8
Parrying dagger	S	S	1d4+1-1d2	6/10

Sana

Nineteen, dark red hair chopped ragged on the left side. High Priestess Nerissa's niece, six weeks at the temple and not yet resigned to it. Clever, not biddable, and a noticer — she sees the thing nobody else in the room thought was worth looking at, and says so at the wrong moment.

Nineteen, dark red hair chopped ragged down one side, temple blue-green worn like a coat that belongs to somebody else.

Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
Action Points: 2	1–3	Right Leg	0/5
Damage Modifier: -1d2	4–6	Left Leg	0/5
Magic Points: 13	7–9	Abdomen	0/6
Movement: 6m	10–12	Chest	0/7
Initiative Bonus: +13	13–15	Right Arm	0/4
Armour: None	16–18	Left Arm	0/4
Abilities: None	19–20	Head	0/5
Magic: None			
Skills: Athletics 40%, Boating 20%, Brawn 19%, Conceal 25%, Customs 70%, Dance 25%, Deceit 28%, Drive 25%, Endurance 22%, Evade 24%, First Aid 27%, Influence 26%, Insight 52%, Locale 30%, Native Tongue 70%, Perception 58%, Ride 25%, Sing 26%, Stealth 45%, Swim 45%, Unarmed 21%, Willpower 56% **Passions:** Love (my aunt Nerissa) 75% Notice what nobody else notices 65% Bettan did my hair and I said thank you 60%			

Combat Style: Temple acolyte (quarterstaff) 30%				
Weapon	**Size/Force**	**Reach/Range**	**Damage**	**AP/HP**
Quarterstaff	M	L	1d8-1d2	4/8

Sinnit

A brutish Lullwater canal-rat and rival thief who has hated Randall for seven years over a purse handed back with a bow — and who, in the one week Randall's face is worth money, sells what he sees to the men who can hurt him worst.

Big, canal-rat, permanently aggrieved. Fills a doorway and knows it.

Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
Action Points: 2	1–3	Right Leg	1/5
Damage Modifier: +1d2	4–6	Left Leg	1/5
Magic Points: 10	7–9	Abdomen	1/6
Movement: 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	1/7
Initiative Bonus: +12	13–15	Right Arm	1/5
Armour: Leather jerkin (all locations)	16–18	Left Arm	1/5
Abilities: Backstab (use 'Kill Silently' with surprise); Hide in Shadows (Perception to spot is 1 grade harder)	19–20	Head	1/6
Magic: None			
Skills: Athletics 60%, Boating 70%, Brawn 58%, Conceal 50%, Customs 26%, Dance 22%, Deceit 50%, Drive 24%, Endurance 62%, Evade 55%, First Aid 28%, Gambling 50%, Influence 40%, Insight 45%, Intimidation 68%, Locale 48%, Lockpicking 45%, Native Tongue 62%, Perception 55%, Ride 22%, Sing 22%, Sleight 48%, Stealth 55%, Streetwise 66%, Swim 60%, Thieves' Cant 55%, Unarmed 70%, Willpower 50% **Passions:** Hatred (Randall) 70% Greed 55%			

Combat Style: Canal-rat Brawler (knife, cudgel, knuckledusters, short sword) 70%				
Weapon	**Size/Force**	**Reach/Range**	**Damage**	**AP/HP**
Long Knife	S	S	1d6+1d2	5/4
Cudgel (club)	M	S	1d6+1d2	4/4
Knuckledusters	S	S	1d3+1d2+1d2	-

Thorne

Elderly storyteller of The Moist Oyster — frail-seeming but with penetrating blue eyes and a cane that hides a blade. Secretly a former Order of the Lake initiate and Dragon-Knight-raid survivor with peerless historical lore (Dragon Kings era 92) and knowledge of possession-ritual weaknesses.

Old, wrapped up warm in every weather, a cane across his knees. Blue eyes much too vivid for the rest of him.

Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
Action Points: 3	1–3	Right Leg	0/5
Damage Modifier: +0	4–6	Left Leg	0/5
Magic Points: 15	7–9	Abdomen	0/6
Movement: 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	0/7
Initiative Bonus: +14	13–15	Right Arm	0/4
Armour: None	16–18	Left Arm	0/4
Abilities: None	19–20	Head	0/5
Magic: None			
Skills: Athletics 40%, Brawn 35%, Conceal 60%, Customs 70%, Deceit 68%, Endurance 48%, Evade 50%, Influence 70%, Insight 78%, Locale 75%, Lore (Dragon Kings era) 92%, Lore (Order of the Lake) 85%, Lore (Possession rituals) 78%, Native Tongue 75%, Oratory 80%, Perception 72%, Sing 55%, Stealth 55%, Streetwise 70%, Unarmed 50%, Willpower 75% **Passions:** Bear witness to the Order of the Lake 75% Undo the Baron's draconic rituals 65%			

Combat Style: Old Order training (cane/staff) 62%				
Weapon	**Size/Force**	**Reach/Range**	**Damage**	**AP/HP**
Cane (disguised weapon)	M	M	1d6	4/8

Troops and Creatures

Use the Dragon Knight Soldier for the rank and file, in threes and fours, and the Ash Lord for anybody the Baron trusts. The City Watch template serves for any watchman, and the Canal Cutpurse for Sinnit's lads and the Lullwater's rougher residents.

Canal Cutpurse

Generic Purewater street thief — pickpocket, second-storey worker, or smuggler's runner. The Lullwater and the Pearl are thick with them.

Characteristics	Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR: 10	**Action Points:** 3	1–3	Right Leg	0/5
CON: 11	**Damage Modifier:** +0	4–6	Left Leg	0/5
SIZ: 10	**Magic Points:** 10	7–9	Abdomen	0/5
DEX: 15	**Movement:** 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	0/6
INT: 12	**Initiative Bonus:** +13	13–15	Right Arm	0/4
POW: 10	**Armour:** None	16–18	Left Arm	0/4
CHA: 12	**Abilities:** None	19–20	Head	0/5
	Magic: None			
Skills: Athletics 55%, Boating 50%, Brawn 30%, Conceal 58%, Deceit 58%, Endurance 45%, Evade 62%, First Aid 30%, Influence 48%, Insight 52%, Locale 65%, Native Tongue 52%, Perception 58%, Sleight 62%, Stealth 68%, Streetwise 62%, Swim 52%, Unarmed 48%, Willpower 42%				

Combat Style: Cutpurse (dagger, sap, sling) 48%

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach/Range	Damage	AP/HP
Dagger	S	S	1d4+1	6/8
Sap	S	S	1d6	4/4
Sling	L	10/40/80	1d8	1/2

Dragon Knight Ash Lord

Elite Dragon Knight who has undergone partial fire-binding — a fire spirit shares his flesh. Battle-trance: ignores pain/Fatigue penalties for a few rounds; wreathes weapon in flame (+1d4 fire).

Characteristics	Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR: 16	**Action Points:** 2	1–3	Right Leg	5/6
CON: 15	**Damage Modifier:** +1d4	4–6	Left Leg	5/6
SIZ: 13	**Magic Points:** 13	7–9	Abdomen	5/7
DEX: 13	**Movement:** 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	5/8
INT: 11	**Initiative Bonus:** +12	13–15	Right Arm	5/5
POW: 13	**Armour:** Scale-and-plate (all locations)	16–18	Left Arm	5/5
CHA: 10	**Abilities:** None	19–20	Head	5/6
	Magic: None			
Skills: Athletics 68%, Brawn 72%, Conceal 45%, Deceit 42%, Endurance 78%, Evade 62%, First Aid 40%, Influence 40%, Insight 45%, Intimidation 72%, Locale 30%, Lore (Fire demonology) 40%, Native Tongue 52%, Perception 62%, Ride 60%, Stealth 50%, Survival 55%, Unarmed 72%, Willpower 68%				

Combat Style: Ash Lord (greatsword, axe, shield) 82%

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach/Range	Damage	AP/HP
Greatsword	H	VL	2d8+1d4	6/12
War Axe	M	M	1d8+1+1d4	4/8
Ember Shield	L	S	1d4+1d4	6/12

Dragon Knight Soldier

Typical Flame Soldier of Baron Hanzo's Dragon Knights — a hardened borderland raider in dragon-marked armor. Many carry a fire-touched blade (Bladesharp-equivalent, +1 fire damage).

Characteristics	Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR: 14	**Action Points:** 2	1–3	Right Leg	4/6
CON: 13	**Damage Modifier:** +1d2	4–6	Left Leg	4/6
SIZ: 13	**Magic Points:** 10	7–9	Abdomen	4/6
DEX: 12	**Movement:** 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	4/7
INT: 10	**Initiative Bonus:** +12	13–15	Right Arm	4/4
POW: 10	**Armour:** Dragon-marked mail (all locations)	16–18	Left Arm	4/4
CHA: 9	**Abilities:** None	19–20	Head	4/5
	Magic: None			
Skills: Athletics 55%, Brawn 60%, Conceal 40%, Deceit 40%, Drive 35%, Endurance 62%, Evade 55%, First Aid 35%, Influence 30%, Insight 35%, Intimidation 58%, Locale 25%, Native Tongue 50%, Perception 55%, Ride 55%, Stealth 45%, Survival 45%, Unarmed 60%, Willpower 50%				

Combat Style: Dragon Knight (sword, spear, shield, crossbow) 62%

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach/Range	Damage	AP/HP
Arming Sword	M	L	1d8+1d2	6/12
Spear	M	L	1d8+1+1d2	4/5
Round Shield	L	S	1d4+1d2	4/12
Crossbow	L	15/80/160	1d8	4/5

Purewater City Watch

Ordinary Purewater watchman — canal patrol, often hampered by politics and the underworld's reach. Competent but not eager to die for the Governor.

Characteristics	Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR: 12	**Action Points:** 2	1–3	Right Leg	2/5
CON: 12	**Damage Modifier:** +1d2	4–6	Left Leg	2/5
SIZ: 11	**Magic Points:** 10	7–9	Abdomen	2/5
DEX: 11	**Movement:** 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	2/6
INT: 10	**Initiative Bonus:** +11	13–15	Right Arm	2/4
POW: 10	**Armour:** Leather & helm (all locations)	16–18	Left Arm	2/4
CHA: 10	**Abilities:** None	19–20	Head	2/5
	Magic: None			
Skills: Athletics 45%, Boating 50%, Brawn 45%, Conceal 30%, Deceit 35%, Endurance 50%, Evade 45%, First Aid 35%, Influence 40%, Insight 45%, Locale 60%, Native Tongue 50%, Perception 52%, Stealth 35%, Streetwise 45%, Swim 50%, Unarmed 50%, Willpower 42%				

Combat Style: City Watch (spear, cudgel, buckler) 48%

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach/Range	Damage	AP/HP
Short Spear	M	L	1d8+1+1d2	4/5
Cudgel	M	S	1d6+1d2	4/4
Buckler	S	S	1d3+1d2	6/9

Ruhi

Gardwen's befriended companion — a loyal she-wolf; swift, keen-nosed and savage in the bite.

Enormous, grey, winter coat coming out in handfuls.

Characteristics	Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR: 10	**Action Points:** 2	17–20	Head	1/5
CON: 12	**Damage Modifier:** +0	1–2	Right Hind Leg	1/5
SIZ: 11	**Magic Points:** 6	3–4	Left Hind Leg	1/5
DEX: 9	**Movement:** 25' (8 metres)	5–7	Hindquarters	1/6
INT: 15	**Initiative Bonus:** +12	8–10	Forequarters	1/7
POW: 6	**Armour:** Pelt (natural armor, all locations)	11–13	Right Front Leg	1/5
CHA: 0	**Abilities:** None	14–16	Left Front Leg	1/5
	Magic: None			

Skills: Athletics 82%, Boating 22%, Brawn 62%, Conceal 15%, Customs 30%, Dance 9%, Deceit 15%, Drive 15%, Endurance 78%, Evade 64%, First Aid 24%, Influence 0%, Insight 21%, Locale 30%, Native Tongue 55%, Perception 74%, Ride 15%, Sing 6%, Stealth 24%, Swim 22%, Track 84%, Unarmed 19%, Willpower 61%
Passions: Bonded to Gardwen 85%
Distrust of enclosed places and cities 55%

Combat Style: Pack Savage (Bite) 85%

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach/Range	Damage	AP/HP
Bite	S	T	1d4	-

The Four Strangers

The pregenerated characters, for the Games Master's reference and for any the players do not choose.

Conall Bjornlasch

Warranted investigator of the King's Assay — the Crown's arcane inspectorate; twin brother of Randall and secretly a son of Baron Hanzo. A razor-sharp investigator (Insight 88) who is also a capable fighter.

Well-dressed traveller, sharp-eyed, unhurried. Sits where he can see the door because it was drummed into him.

Characteristics	Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR: 13	**Action Points:** 3	1–3	Right Leg	2/5
CON: 14	**Damage Modifier:** +0	4–6	Left Leg	2/5
SIZ: 11	**Magic Points:** 17	7–9	Abdomen	2/6
DEX: 14	**Movement:** 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	2/7
INT: 16	**Initiative Bonus:** +13	13–15	Right Arm	2/4
POW: 17	**Armour:** Gambeson (all locations)	16–18	Left Arm	2/4
CHA: 10	**Abilities:** None	19–20	Head	2/5
	Magic: Arcane: Befuddle, Change Appearance, Coordination, Dancing Lights, Darkness, Detect Magic, Glamour, Illusion, Invisibility, Invisibility, 10 ft. Radius, Knock, Light, Locate Object, Magic Missile, Magic Mouth, Mirror Image, Protection, Read Magic, Witchsight			

Skills: Arcane Casting 73%, Arcane Knowledge 72%, Athletics 49%, Boating 27%, Brawn 24%, Conceal 40%, Courtesy 41%, Customs 32%, Dance 24%, Deceit 51%, Drive 31%, Endurance 78%, Evade 81%, First Aid 30%, Influence 20%, Insight 88%, Locale 32%, Lore (Military History) 50%, Lore (Strategy + Tactics) 50%, Native Tongue 66%, Perception 73%, Ride 50%, Sing 27%, Sleight 50%, Stealth 50%, Streetwise 67%, Survival 50%, Swim 27%, Unarmed 50%, Willpower 74%
Passions: Find the man who wears my face 60%
Love (Temerach Nebulo), unspoken 65%
Know a thing before acting on it 55%

Combat Style: Fighter (all weapons, all shields) 82%

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach/Range	Damage	AP/HP
Rapier	M	L	1d8	5/8
Buckler	L	S	1d4	6/9
Short bow	L	15/100/200	1d6	4/4

Gardwen

Feral-raised elf druid and lone survivor of a Dragon Knight raid; a rank-1 divine caster of nature and pure-water magic who walks with a befriended she-wolf, searching for her long-lost brother.

Characteristics	Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR: 10	**Action Points:** 3	1–3	Right Leg	0/5
CON: 14	**Damage Modifier:** +0	4–6	Left Leg	0/5
SIZ: 11	**Magic Points:** 18	7–9	Abdomen	0/6
DEX: 14	**Movement:** 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	0/7
INT: 16	**Initiative Bonus:** +15	13–15	Right Arm	0/4
POW: 18	**Armour:** None	16–18	Left Arm	0/4
CHA: 14	**Abilities:** The Wild Line (Sanctuary (2 PP), Unseat (4 PP)); Woodwise	19–20	Head	0/5
	Magic: Divine (memorised): Command, Cure Disease, Cure Minor Wounds, Cure Serious Wounds, Detect Evil, Hold Person, Know Alignment, Protection, Remove Fear, Slow Poison, Spiritshield			

Skills: Animal Training 52%, Athletics 59%, Boating 24%, Brawn 21%, Channel 85%, Conceal 42%, Courtesy 40%, Customs 32%, Dance 28%, Deceit 32%, Devotion 87%, Drive 32%, Druid's Cant 70%, Endurance 48%, Evade 53%, First Aid 60%, Influence 38%, Insight 44%, Language (Common) 40%, Locale 72%, Lore (Species) 52%, Lore (Woodland Animal 1) 70%, Lore (Woodland Animal 2) 70%, Native Tongue 70%, Perception 79%, Ride 32%, Sing 32%, Stealth 50%, Survival 62%, Swim 24%, Track 60%, Unarmed 24%, Willpower 81%
Passions: Love (Brother + Family) 80%
Hatred (The Dragons) 70%
Love (Nature + Wilderness) 65%
Love (Elves) 45%

Combat Style: Druid (club, dagger, dart, hammer, sickle, scimitar, shield, sling, spear, staff, staff sling, whip) 59%

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach/Range	Damage	AP/HP
Staff	M	L	1d8	4/8
Dagger	S	S	1d4+1	6/8

Magda

Aged barbarian berserker and sworn servant of the death-goddess Hel; Blessed by Hel (she does not age), she guards Gardwen and the lost twins and fights with berserk fury despite her years.

Built like a gatepost, sixty-odd, ringmail under a travelling cloak, grey hair cropped short and badly by her own hand.

Characteristics	Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR: 13	**Action Points:** 3	1–3	Right Leg	3/5
CON: 14	**Damage Modifier:** +0	4–6	Left Leg	3/5
SIZ: 8	**Magic Points:** 14	7–9	Abdomen	3/6
DEX: 12	**Movement:** 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	3/7
INT: 16	**Initiative Bonus:** +11	13–15	Right Arm	3/4
POW: 14	**Armour:** Ringmail (all locations)	16–18	Left Arm	3/4
CHA: 9	**Abilities:** Artful Dodger (CFI) — unburdened and in light armor or less, Evade a melee attack without going prone; prone against a ranged attack only on a failure; Berserk (Stay over (2 PP), Take it with her (2 PP)); Hel's Mark	19–20	Head	3/5
	Magic: None			

Skills: Acrobatics 60%, Arcane Casting 0%, Athletics 50%, Boating 37%, Brawn 71%, Conceal 26%, Customs 32%, Dance 21%, Deceit 25%, Drive 26%, Endurance 78%, Evade 79%, First Aid 38%, Influence 18%, Insight 30%, Language (Common) 65%, Locale 32%, Lore (Hel) 52%, Native Tongue 65%, Navigation 55%, Perception 70%, Ride 56%, Sing 23%, Sleight 46%, Stealth 68%, Survival 63%, Swim 27%, Track 65%, Unarmed 85%, Willpower 63%
Passions: Love (Sister) 70%
Neutral (Curmudgeon) 54%
Fear (Arcane Magic) 54%

Combat Style: Berserker (all weapons + shields; uses anything she can get her hands on, including others' weapons) 85%

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach/Range	Damage	AP/HP
Quarterstaff	M	L	1d8	4/8
Staff Sling	E	15/75/150	2d6	1/2

Randall

Street thief of Purewater, raised in a brothel on the Pearl; identical twin of Conall and secretly a son of Baron Hanzo. A nimble, silver-tongued rogue (Deceit 75, Stealth 72, Sleight 71).

Twenty. Black hair cut by somebody who knew how. A market-stall wardrobe assembled with real care and no money.

Characteristics	Attributes	1d20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR: 13	**Action Points:** 3	1–3	Right Leg	3/5
CON: 13	**Damage Modifier:** +0	4–6	Left Leg	3/5
SIZ: 11	**Magic Points:** 12	7–9	Abdomen	3/6
DEX: 17	**Movement:** 20' (6 metres)	10–12	Chest	3/7
INT: 15	**Initiative Bonus:** +13	13–15	Right Arm	3/4
POW: 12	**Armour:** Studded Leather (all locations)	16–18	Left Arm	3/4
CHA: 14	**Abilities:** Artful Dodger — 1 extra Action Point (parry/evade); may use Evade to dodge a melee attack without falling prone (only fall prone on a failure); Backstab — may use 'Kill Silently' with surprise; Climb Walls — ignore 1 grade of difficulty on Athletics to climb; Hide in Shadows — Perception rolls to spot him are one grade harder; Read Languages	19–20	Head	3/5
	Magic: None			

Skills: Acrobatics 60%, Acting 48%, Athletics 70%, Boating 72%, Brawn 24%, Commerce 49%, Conceal 39%, Courtesy 39%, Customs 30%, Dance 31%, Deceit 75%, Drive 39%, Endurance 55%, Evade 70%, First Aid 32%, Influence 63%, Insight 62%, Locale 40%, Lockpicking 69%, Native Tongue 69%, Perception 62%, Ride 29%, Sing 26%, Sleight 71%, Stealth 72%, Streetwise 66%, Swim 65%, Thieves' Cant 69%, Unarmed 40%, Willpower 49%
Passions: Caring for Loved Ones 70%
The Pearl raised me and I pay it back 60%
Never ask who my mother was 55%

Combat Style: Thief (broadsword, club, dagger, dart, falchion, garrotte, hand crossbow, knife, longsword, shortbow, shortsword, sling) 75%

Weapon	Size/Force	Reach/Range	Damage	AP/HP
Dagger	S	S	1d4+1	6/8
Knife	S	S	1d3	5/4
Sling	L	10/150/300	1d8	1/2
Crossbow	L	20/100/200	1d8+1	4/5