

D. COLEMAN

Cities ~ & ~ Towns

Locations and adventure ideas for your fifth edition campaign

Dungeons
ON DEMAND

Settlements at a Glance

Everkeep Harbor. A bustling city at the edge of the sea, much is going on here every day. Filled with NPCs of their own agendas, many different plots are playing out here at a time. This is a great city for new players to begin an adventure in, with plenty of guilds, allies, and rivals to keep them occupied at any level.

Greymere Pass. The best smiths of the land forge their wares in this mountain town, aided by the constant influx of iron and minerals from the nearby mines. As the mines are the lifeblood of the town, their security is key. A great destination town for a party looking for quality goods, filled with intrigue and adventure.

Hillshollow Crest. A small village brimming with potential. Beneath Hillshollow is a daunting underground complex known by all the villagers, yet explored by none. This is a suitable low-level settlement, but could require the aid of higher level adventurers depending upon what inhabits the depths below!

Rellholdt City. This beautiful city is built out from the side of a cliff, complemented by a magnificent waterfall. The king and queen take up residence in their castle here, an incredible sight carved out from among the cliff itself. Rellholdt is ideal for a party of any level; its challenges and rewards are purposefully left ambiguous so the GM can fill in the details.

Sunmaw. The home of criminals, gamblers, and monster hunters alike, Sunmaw is a crude canyon town. Its most notable feature is the ancient arena the shanty town is built around. Those that disturb the peace are often thrown in the arena to contend with monsters captured from the canyon, to the bloody amusement of the crowd.

Using This Document

The calls of the town crier. The roar of the city crowd. The antics of the local drunk.

In every fantasy setting, the cities and towns of the world have a certain personality and appeal saved in the hearts and minds of players and GMs alike. This document presents several options you can use for such settlements. They could be pit stops along the road where the party gets supplies. They could be the destination they're heading to. They may become the party's base of operation. Whatever the case, each location presented below has its own flavor to make it unique.

Settlement Format

Each settlement is listed in the following format:

- **Settlement background.** The history and setting of the settlement, and what sets it apart from others.
- **Settlement information.** This is the key demographics of the area, including the estimated population, racial breakdown, government, defense, and methods of commerce.
- **Lodgings.** When the party arrives, where are they staying? Any lodgings are listed here. Inns and taverns are great places to start an adventure as well!
- **Points of Interest.** Finally, a list of the sights to see or visit are listed, with descriptions of what the party can expect to find there.



NPCs

Each location with an interesting NPC is notated by this icon, followed by a description of the NPC. Note, not every NPC in the settlement has an NPC description.



Adventure Hooks

If the party finds an NPC in need of help, or perhaps something suspicious at their location, an adventure hook icon is presented here. Keep in mind an adventure hook is just that! They're to serve as inspiration for GMs. If you like the direction an adventure hook points the party, be prepared to develop an adventure based off of it.

Everkeep Harbor

The road to the city is accompanied by the cries of seagulls, the smell of saltwater, and the occasional crash of waves upon the rocky shore. Up ahead, Everkeep Harbor comes into view. The town is well concealed by the forest; you'd miss it if not for the guard towers along its walls that jut out above the canopy. Beyond the walls lies the Jewel of the Coast. They say whatever it is you're looking for, you can find it there.

Everkeep Harbor is a coastal city, bustling with sailors, merchants, and craftsmen of all trades. It's nestled between the shoreline and the forest, with large walls surrounding the city on its land faces. It originally served as a harbor when the country was being explored a century ago, quickly growing into a city in its own right as more and more tradesmen settled the area. The city still keeps its name Everkeep Harbor, but is colloquially referred to as the "Jewel of the Coast" among merchants. The vast amount of exotic goods that enter Everkeep each day make it an ideal spot for those seeking something rare and special.

Information

- **Population:** Approximately 4,420. At any given time there are hundreds of travelers staying in the city, lodging in one of the harbor's many inns, guild houses, their ships, or among friends or family.
- **Resident races:** Human (82%), Half-Elf (4%), Elf (3%), Dwarf (3%), Gnome (2%), Dragonborn (2%), Other races (< 1% each). Generally each race has some representation in the city at any time.
- **Government:** Everkeep Harbor exercises a plutocracy; ruling power is given to those who can afford it. Whoever purchases rulership of the city is given the title of "Patrician," (or "Lady Patrician" for female rulers) and is given the right to rule from Harborbrook Castle. Patricians are tasked with drafting and enforcing laws, ensuring the prosperity and peace of the city, as well as tending to its defenses. How they fulfill their duties, however, is up to them to decide. Currently, Everkeep Harbor is governed by *Lady Patrician Anastasia Hone*.
- **Defense:** The land portion of the city is walled, with manned guard posts positioned around it. Each patrician chooses how their city is policed; currently a force of several hundred guards patrol the streets to keep the peace. On short notice, the harbor could muster a standing force of just over a thousand men to defend their walls. Everkeep Harbor has many allies with a vested interest in the city's safety, and an attack against it would swiftly spur these allies to its defense.
- **Commerce:** Everkeep Harbor survives on trade. Merchants sailing into town sell their wares to residents and other travelers. Local shops restock travelers' supplies and equipment. Patricians have the right to ban the sale of certain goods, which has led to a vast black market as well.

Lodgings

The Brown herald

This inn lies at in middle of the city at Centretree, and sees the most diverse lot of patrons. It is ran by *Darla Crane*, a young woman looking to make a name for herself in the city. Darla can get away with charging 1 gold piece a night due to the popularity of her tavern. Her youthful good looks and flirtatiousness certainly help bring back repeat business as well.

Dead Rat Inn

The Dead Rat Inn is located by the harbor's west gate, which typically attracts a lot of travelers coming from the forest. The tavern is named for a dead rat nailed above its doors (the rat is replaced once every week or so... depending on the smell). It is kept by two human brothers, *Migel* and *Gregor Holdfast*. The beds and food are not fantastic, but the price is right at 2 silver pieces a night.



Adventure Hook

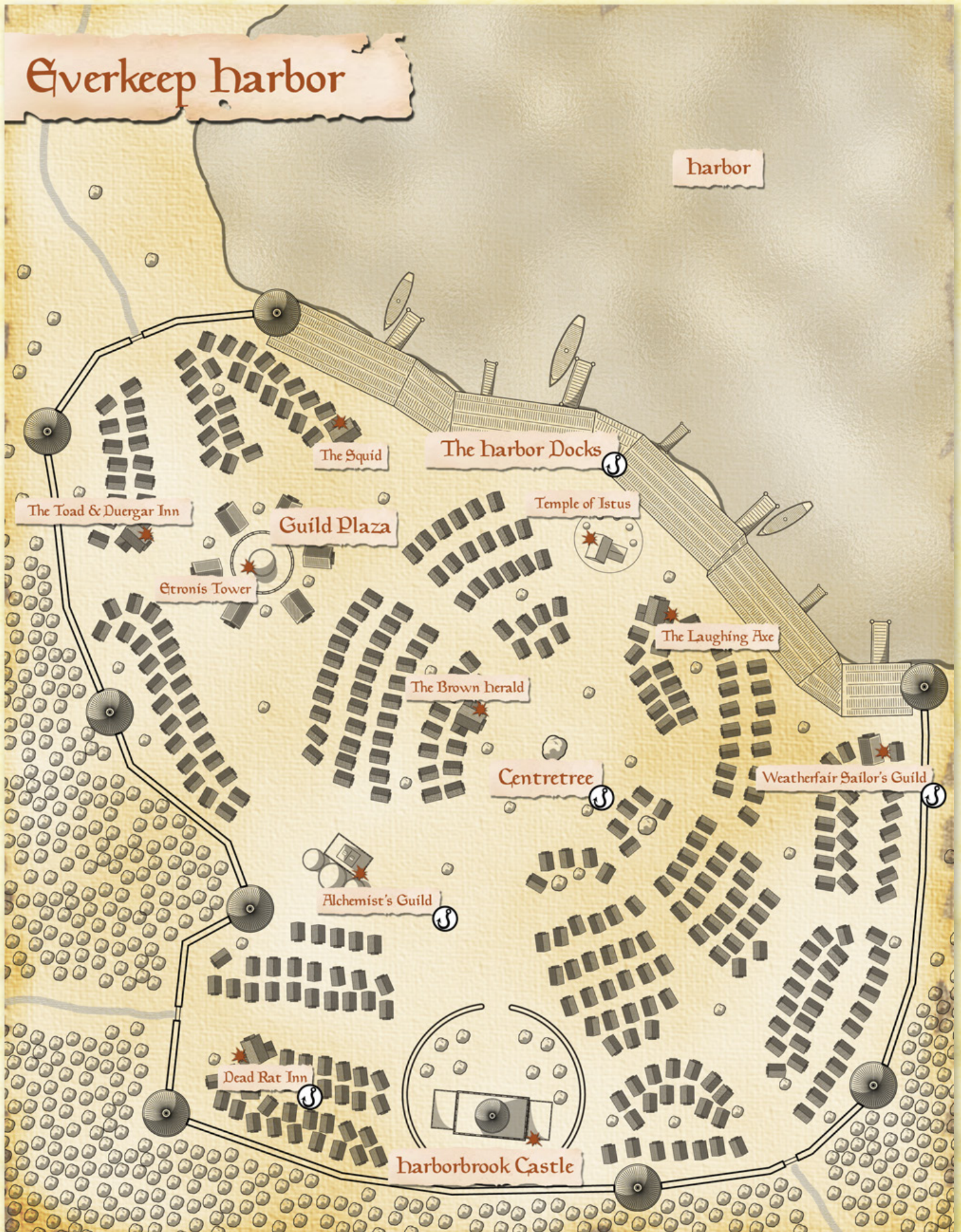
The Dead Rat Inn is actually a front for the city's thieves' guild. It's a convenient operation to launder money brought in from Everkeep's pickpockets, and is used as a safe haven for those in the guild's employ. The brothers have done a good job concealing the guild's presence here thus far, but they are sometimes forced to turn away patrons in order to operate. It would just take one spurned traveler sticking their nose where it doesn't belong to risk blowing the guild's cover.

The Laughing Axe

Ran by the tenacious halfling *Gertrude Goodberry*, the Laughing Axe is one of the oldest lodgings in the city. It's located just south-east of the Temple of Istus, and sees a large portion of sailors and travelers as patrons. Those seeking lodging here can find a warm bed and hearty meal for 8 silver pieces a night.

The Squid

The Squid is the newest inn in Everkeep Harbor, constructed only several years ago. It is owned and operated by *Bindson Lortner*, an overweight, slovenly, middle-aged man and recently retired fisherman. Bindson has many friends still in the fishing business, and his connections allow him to serve fresh seafood to his patrons. Though scruffy in appearance, he runs a clean operation and usually has a full house each night. Patrons can find a good meal and a comfortable stay here for 9 silver pieces a night.



Everkeep Harbor

Cities & Towns

The Toad & Duergar Inn

This oddly named inn is located in the city's northwestern side, facing the guild plaza. It is kept by the tiefling *Dirrius Night*, a snide, though likeable, innkeeper. Due to its location, it sees a lot of travelers in the city visiting the guild halls. Patrons can find comfortable lodgings here for 8 silver pieces a night.

Points of Interest

Alchemist's Guild

The alchemists that work in the city have a special guild hall, removed from the guild plaza for both reasons of safety and convenience. Everkeep Harbor's alchemists produce some of the world's best alchemical salves and concoctions, making the guild hall a popular destination for adventurers and others in the trade.



Sebastian Counter (Human, male)

Many guilds exist in Everkeep Harbor, each one appointing their own leaders and representatives to do business with one another. None are as intriguing or inscrutable as Sebastian Counter, the newly elected figurehead of the Alchemist's Guild. Sebastian is a wiry man, with a salted beard and frizzy gray hair that always appears to be leaping from his scalp. He wears a burned and tarnished smock wherever he goes, and has a habit of wringing his hands while deep in thought.



Adventure Hook

Sebastian has been hard at work in the production of poisons for the city's black market, a practice which has made him incredibly paranoid. He's ingeniously embezzled innocuous compounds created by his guild mates, alchemically turning these ingredients into poisons at his personal laboratory. The last time he delivered these poisons, however, he was afraid one of the city guardsmen identified him. Sebastian has decided he'll need an errand boy or girl to make his deliveries in the future, and is looking for someone he can trust, or outwit, to do so.

Centretree

Everkeep's central commerce area is marked by the small "park" of Centretree, aptly named for the prominent oak tree growing from its middle. Most foot traffic passes through here, causing a diverse crowd of the city's residents and travelers.



Bruumlash Firetongue (Dragonborn, male)

This dragonborn is no stranger to Everkeep Harbor, but he doesn't take permanent residence here. Bruumlash dresses in fine clothing, covering his scaly hair with silver and copper rings to show his wealth. He has deep crimson scales, and a flame tattoo in a crescent over his right eye. Bruumlash has made a comfortable living purchasing and reselling parcels of land for profit, something he fancies himself an expert at. His latest appearance in the city is unexpected; he's visibly agitated and always in the company of a bodyguard.



Adventure Hook

Bruumlash has recently been swindled by the halfling *Velda Topplebutton*. He purchased a parcel of land from her quickly in attempt to flip it for profit, only to later learn the land was unmanageable. Bruumlash can survive the loss of money, but his pride has been wounded and he's dead set on revenge. If he can find the halfling, he intends the worst for her.



Laav Lastbreath (Half-orc, female)

Laav has made a reputation and living for herself as a bounty hunter, and she is met with equal admiration and disdain. Though stereotyped as a brute, Laav is very intelligent, usually catching her quarry through cunning before forced to draw her blades. She adores the thrill of the hunt, and her expertise allows her to charge top coin for her services. She's not particularly discriminatory in which jobs she'll take, but she's wise enough not to take a job that would earn her face on a wanted sign.



Meadow Wa'boba (Elf, female)

The ironically named Meadow has been a druid of the adjacent forest since Everkeep Harbor's inception. She is a stout, full-figured elf that wears animal hides and dresses her hair with stag antlers. She has never been fond of the rate of growth of Everkeep, and with whispers of further expansion planned she fears many more trees will have to die before the city's ruler is contented. Meadow never enters the city openly, instead preferring to take the form of a beast. Disguised as a cat today, she stalks Centretree seeking information.

Etronis Tower

The tallest structure in the harbor is eponymous Etronis Tower, home to the sorceress *Zerowyn Etronis* (see NPCs). Zerowyn employs a small retinue of servants to tend to the tower, and actually keeps the its ground level open to the public. This area is usually filled with paintings and curiosities brought to the harbor, but nothing of true value. Rumors abound of what magical relics may hide higher in her tower, but none are so bold as to stoke Zerowyn's wrath by sneaking around her home.



Zerowyn Etronis (Human, female)

The most powerful and enigmatic resident of Everkeep Harbor is undoubtedly Zerowyn Etronis. Zerowyn is an adult female with platinum white hair, although she couldn't be more than thirty years old. She dresses in flowing red robes, carrying an oak staff engraved with runes. She has been in town for nearly a decade, erecting her tower in the guild plaza with the permission of the previous patrician. No one is really sure what she is up to in there, but she is almost universally feared by the citizens of Everkeep.

Guild Plaza

The buildings in this plaza serve the many guilds of Everkeep Harbor. Here, artisans of all kinds can gain the benefits of guild membership, and the plaza attracts many potential customers. The guilds are diverse and share the buildings; it's not uncommon to find cobblers sharing their walls with masons, for example, depend-

ing upon the need or urgency for meetings. Each of the halls here are large enough to accommodate multiple guilds without issue.

harbor Docks

The harbor docks stretch across the city's northwest side, accommodating over a dozen sea vessels at a time, with room for many more in the harbor itself. The boardwalk is often filled with street vendors and shanties; residents and travelers alike that visit are met with merchants eager for trade. The docks also attract the majority of cutpurses and pickpockets in the city, forcing Everkeep's city guard to be particularly vigilant here.



Adventure Hook

As the party is exploring the harbor docks, the shout of "Stop, thief!" echoes in the air. A fleeing girl crashes past the party, knocking over several bystanders as she sprints from one of the docked galleons. The person screaming after the thief is an aged and haggard man. He claims the cutpurse made off with his locket - a family heirloom that he would do anything to get back.



Captain Phineas Brawl (Human, male)

Phineas Brawl is a retired military man, now making his living as a captain in the guard. Though aged, Captain Brawl keeps himself in peak physical condition, able to outrun and overpower grown men twenty years his younger. He is often seen donning his breastplate which bears the crest of Everkeep Harbor, his longsword and heater shield at his sides. Brawl is not a man without compassion, though does not tolerate crime or violence in his city. He works tirelessly to rid the harbor of both.

harborbrook Castle

The city castle rises prominently over the southern stretch of Everkeep. The castle is kept off limits to anyone without an appointment or in the company of the Lady Patrician, though it is home to her many vassals and servants.



Lady Patrician Anastasia Hone (Human, female)

The current patrician is a woman just past adulthood, a practical if not strikingly beautiful young lady of average height and braided black hair. Lady Patrician Hone dresses modestly, preferring silk gloves, a doublet, sensible pants and boots over extravagant clothing typical of nobles. She carries her scepter of office wherever she goes, and always makes a point to interact with the common people of the city. She has been particularly well-received since her appointment several years ago, as she plans to expand Everkeep Harbor to the point where it becomes a dominant power.

Temple of Istus

The goddess Istus is revered by many of those traveling to Everkeep Harbor, and her temple awaits them just off the harbor docks. Patrons are free to rest here, seek treatment from Istus' clerics, and give the goddess offerings in exchange for blessings of safe voyage across the sea.

Weatherfair Sailor's Guild

The Sailor's Guild is the oldest guild in the city, noticeably removed from the rest of the guild plaza. It offers membership to seamen with at least semi-permanent residence in Everkeep Harbor. Guild members construct and repair ships, chart and exchange safe sea routes, and sell or trade sailing equipment. Weatherfair opens its doors to travelers arriving to the city by sea, charging a modest fee for sailors to rest and get a warm meal before they leave again.



Adventure Hook

Known only to the guild members here, a secret tunnel extends from the guild hall's basement to Harborbrook Castle. The tunnel was made in the first few years of the city's birth, but has gone unnoticed after so much turnover of patricians and castle staff. If someone were to use this tunnel, they could enter the castle unseen.

Greymere Pass

The air is crisp here, a breeze carrying a chill and the scent of pine. The triad of mountains that enclose the town of Greymere Pass loom over the landscape. Just ahead, you can see one of the town's three walls, the road you're on leading to its gate. Its stonework is impeccable, indicative of dwarvish craftsmanship. Beyond the wall, jutting into sight from the center of town, are the spiraling towers of Greymere Castle. Billows of forge smoke float into the sky, and you can only wonder what creations the famous smiths of Greymere are hard at work upon today.

Greymere Pass is a modest-sized town that occupies the central area at the base of three mountains. The town began roughly six centuries ago as a mining community. Miners continue to unearth a bounty from the nearby mountains to this day. With rich deposits routinely coming into Greymere, the town has attracted the eye of some of the world's best craftsmen and blacksmiths. It is a well-known destination for those in need of only the finest goods.

Dwarves have inhabited and mined the mountains around Greymere for generations. These dwarves have had strong influence in the development of the town, shaping its appearance. The finest dwarf masonry and stone-cutting is evident in the town's architecture, although its most breath-taking site is the town's center piece: Greymere Castle. The castle is elevated on a stone rise that stands at Greymere's center, making its magnificent towers and archways visible to all its residents from anywhere in town.

Information

- **Population:** Approximately 1,250. In addition to the homes and residences within the walls of Greymere pass, some domiciles have been erected underground, accessible by the mine entrances.
- **Resident races:** Human (77%), Dwarf (13%), Gnome (4%), Dragonborn (3%), Half-orc (1%) Other races (< 1% each).
- **Government:** Greymere operates a republic. Its ruling council is referred to as the *Triad*, consisting of three members each given the title "triarch." Each triarch is voted upon by the town's residents during an election held once every five years. The Triad holds a court of subjects which they empower to make financial decisions, run trials, settle disputes, and keep the peace.
- **Defense:** Though Greymere is well fortified, it does not have a large militia. A small force of guards police the streets day to day, but should the town be sieged its residents would have no recourse but to hide behind their walls. On short notice Greymere can muster a standing force of 300 able-bodied soldiers. However, Greymere has deep pockets. Ruling Triads have been known to employ mercenary armies, tens of thousands of men willing to ride to its aid with the promise of gold and steel as payment.
- **Commerce:** The town has attracted dozens of smiths from around the world to settle within its walls. The goods they create have spurred a thriving economy. Travelers arrive daily from the mountain pass, often staying weeks at a time

as they await craftsmen to finish commissioned pieces. Weapons forged here bear the name "Greymere steel," a title that carries the utmost prestige.

Lodgings

Blue Wench Inn

Named for the sign above the door bearing the image of a portly lady in a blue dress, this is the largest inn in Greymere Pass, one most travelers frequent. The inn is operated by *Melora "Moody" Mountainsdeep*, a dwarf known for her surly attitude. Melora won the inn in a game of cards, and now takes pride in running it with the assistance of those in her employ.

The Eagle Horn

This building is a relatively new addition to the lodgings in town, constructed less than a decade ago. The inn was built by *Trawick Maines*, a new and affluent resident that recognized the potential of a location like Greymere Pass. He envisions the Eagle Horn to serve only the finest clientele, and spends a small fortune in keeping a standard of luxury. A night's stay here costs no less than 3 gold pieces, meaning its patrons are almost exclusively wealthy merchants, nobility, or adventurers.



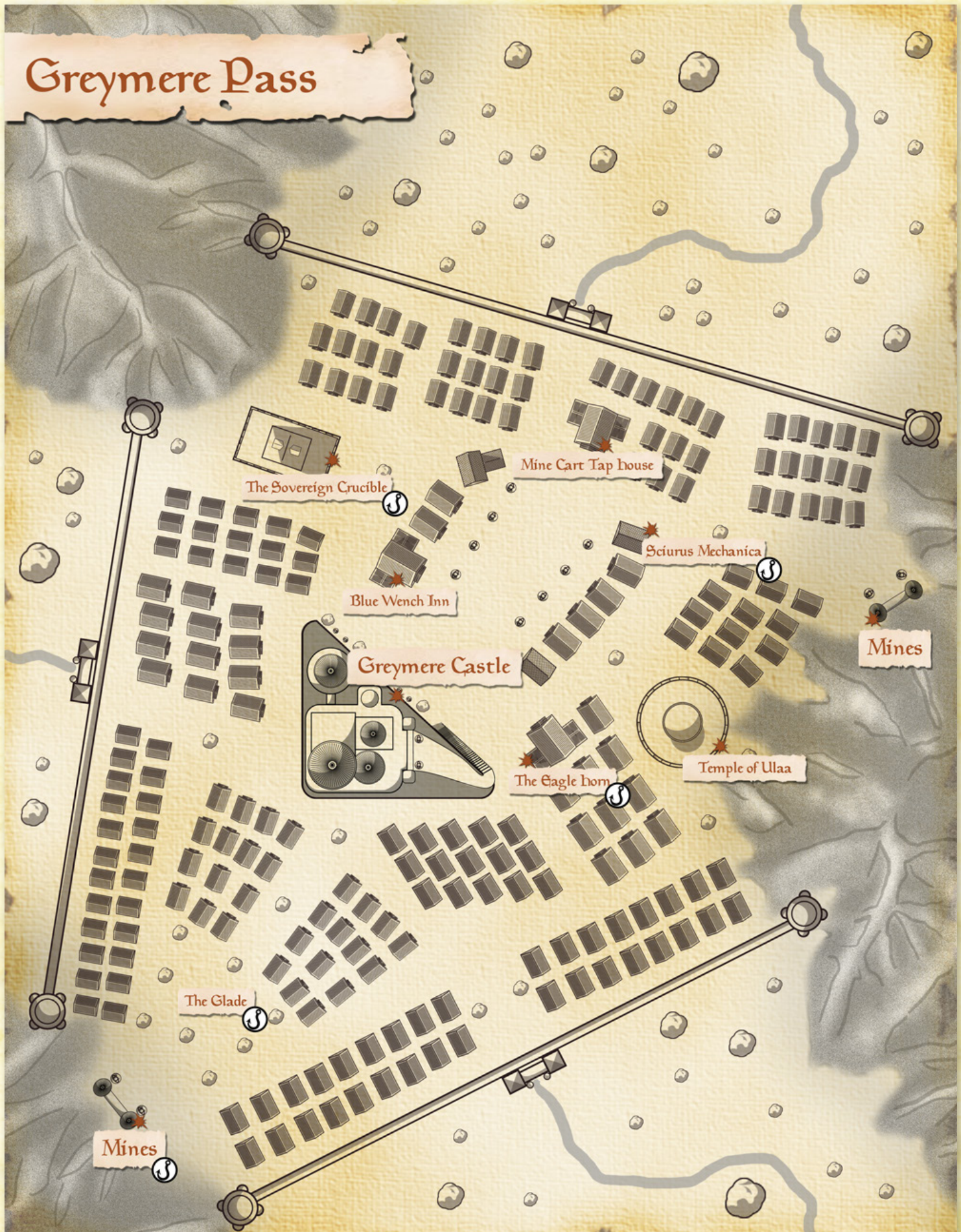
Adventure Hook

The inn is named for a round shield that bears the image of an eagle grasping a horn in its talons. The shield hangs above the bar... or at least, it used to. It went missing very recently, and while it's not especially valuable, Trawick would certainly like it back. He suspects it was stolen by one of the patrons of the *Mine Cart Tap House*, and Trawick resents being made a fool of. The innkeeper is willing to pay upwards of 50 gold pieces for its return, preferably with as much embarrassment to the thief as possible.

Mine Cart Tap house

This tavern gets its namesake for the upturned mine carts fashioned into tables in its ale room. It is the most popular watering hole for the vast amount of miners in the town. The tap house is run by *Merick Ackerson*, a grizzled and retired miner with a face full of scars and a chest covered in hair. The tavern-goers are mostly laborers who turn their noses up at any patrons with an easier way of life (who they derisively call "soft-handers.")

Greymere Pass



Points of Interest

The Glade

An open area in the southwest portion of the city is jokingly referred to as “The Glade,” named for the trees planted there. The Glade functions as a meeting spot for many townsfolk, where travelers can buy and sell trinkets, take meals, and relax.



Berk Bloodtooth (Half-orc, male)

Berk is small for a half-orc, standing eye to eye with most human men, but his muscle mass and impressive frame make him intimidating nonetheless. Berk often wears hide armor, hefting a massive club wherever he goes. The half-orc was outcast from an orc tribe that left him for dead in the mountains, rescued and brought in by citizens of Greymere Pass. While his barbaric nature and rough appearance generally garner a cautious eye from most residents, Berk is fiercely loyal to the town and relishes his role as a citizen soldier. He proved the extent of this loyalty years ago after the assassination of Triarch Norvec, running down the culprit on foot and biting into the assassin's throat. Authorities found Berk sitting on the wounded assassin with a mouthful of blood, smeared across his teeth in a wide smile.



Ryyven Forsette (Human, female)

Ryyven is a teenaged girl, arriving in Greymere pass just weeks ago. She is very attractive, with long, flowing black hair and rich, emerald eyes. Ryyven typically dresses in traveling clothes; pants and boots, a small knapsack, and a walking stick are common for her to have on her person. She claims to be a fortune teller, and is wont to read tea leaves and knuckle bones in the Glade for a copper piece or two. Though she plays the role well, she's a well-known fraud; her fortunes have never come to pass outside of lucky circumstance. Greymere's residents give her a pass however. With her young age and cheap prices, they regard her readings as entertainment.



Adventure Hook

Ryyven is an agent of the *Obsidian Circle*, an underground network of assassins, information dealers, and spies. The Obsidian Circle fears the miners of Greymere Pass have recently unearthed something of grave importance from the mountains, a relic of awful consequence should it fall into the wrong hands. If true, the Triad would certainly have such a relic guarded in Greymere Castle, but Ryyven has been stymied at all attempts at entrance. She's looking for someone to assist her, so her position won't be compromised. Ryyven has been authorized to eliminate anyone that would prevent her from recovering the relic, biding her time until she makes her move.

Greymere Castle

Greymere Castle stands testament to the craftsmanship of its builders. Elevated in the middle of the town, its spiraling towers are the highest points of Greymere Pass. This castle is where the Triad (see NPCs) spends the majority of their time. It is also filled with its court of advisors, adjutants, servants, and petitioners. Portions of the castle are open to the public; residents come to arrange an audience with a triarch or their proxies, view displays filled with art and treasures unearthed from the mines, or peruse its large library of books. Beneath the castle is a dungeon where those who break the law are kept for trial and sentencing. The castle also stores the town's vault and a large portion of its armory.



Triarch Brunhilda Bearskin (Dwarf, female)

Triarch Brunhilda Bearskin has severed three terms now, her specialty being matters of law, military, and mining. Despite such austere subjects, she enjoys lewd conversations and raunchy jokes, known to join tavern patrons for carousing. She is short for a dwarf, with a hooked nose and scar that runs under her right ear.



Triarch Fausten Feine (Human, male)

Triarch Fausten Feine is the oldest member of the Triad, serving his seventh consecutive term. He is a man caught between middle-age and old-age, his hair retreating from his head and his stomach growing with each passing year. He wears a sensible outfit and a fine black cloak. Triarch Feine is a numbers man – under his tutelage he's grown Greymere's industry and filled its coffers extensively. His attention is kept to the town's taxes and expenditures. He takes his job and position seriously, letting little interfere with his work.



Triarch Oswei Morsus (Tiefling, male)

Triarch Morsus is an up-and-comer, the newest addition of Greymere's Triad and the one with the most to prove. There is not a strong representation of tieflings in the town, and his success in the election to become a Triarch has certainly raised a few eyebrows. However, the tiefling has certainly taken to his position with some manner of success. He focuses his attention on the town's relations with other cities and settlements, bartering trade and fostering good relations. Oswei has dark blue skin and jet black eyes, dressing in impeccably tailored silk garments.

The Mines

There are an innumerable amount of tunnels in the nearby mountains that have been mined for generations by the residents of Greymere. The mines are rich with iron, precious metals, gemstones, and exotic minerals as well. Technically, only miners are allowed past the gates into the mines, but this law is never enforced. In fact, the mining tunnels have recently been excavated to the point where they now serve as roads to underground dwarven cities, some residents choosing to build their homes inside as well.



Adventure Hook

The mine shafts directly accessible from Greymere Pass are safe and stable, but the further one ventures from the town towards old and abandoned shafts the more dangerous they become. Recently, a rash of oozes have been creeping into the mines, killing unaware miners in swathes. All that remains of the unfortunate miners are their discarded tools and inorganic materials.



Adventure Hook

Niles is in town under an alias. His real name is *Gavin Peak*, the son of *Areius Peak*. When Areius did not return from Greymere Pass a year ago as promised, Gavin came looking for him. He's spent the year here seeking information about his father's disappearance. He suspects his father was murdered by a member of the Sovereign Crucible, but he is lacking evidence. If someone can bring him proof of his father's murderer, Gavin intends to take revenge.

Sciurus Mechanica

One of the most renowned tinker gnomes in the world, *Finkle Goldbearing* (see **NPCs**) makes his home in Greymere Pass. His home doubles as his workshop and store, where those interested in clockwork devices can find the best of their kind there.



Finkle Goldbearing (Gnome, male)

Finkle is adept in most fields of artifice, capable of complex creations well beyond the simple clockwork toys. The gnome has a long, wispy black mustache and eye brows that plume from his face. He is often seen in his lab apron and work goggles, both sullied by grime and sweat. When about town, he is accompanied by clockwork squirrel walks by his side and cracks walnuts for him.



Adventure Hook

One of the rare minerals mined by Greymere is a red stone called *notchspark*. Finkle routinely uses a powder compound made from notchspark in his experiments, and he is on the verge of a breakthrough in its uses. As luck would have it, he's run short on his supply, and none has come into town for weeks. The miners haven't been able to gather notchspark since a rut of giant spiders invaded the mine shaft rich with it. The stone is not an especially valuably mineral to most of the residents of Greymere Pass, but to Finkle it's priceless. He's willing to pay as much as 200 gold pieces for someone to clear out the spiders and return with several canisters of the mineral. If he could only find someone for the job!

Temple of Ulaa

Ulaa, the goddess of hills and mountains, is revered in Greymere Pass, and her temple is frequented by many visitors daily. *Lady Vulma Beslarian* (see **NPCs**) oversees the temple, and her acolytes run services of faith for its patrons. It is a custom in Greymere Pass, when a miner unearths something of value or interest, that the miner gild his pick and offer it to the temple as a token of thanks to Ulaa. Dozens of gilded picks are on display in the temple, hung from its walls in decoration.



Lady Vulma Beslarian (Dragonborn, female)

Lady Beslarian is a cleric of Ulaa. She spends her time here, tending to matters of faith and serving as a healer and guide. Vulma has silver scales, dressing herself in dark brown and gray robes. She keeps a bronze holy symbol that bears a ruby at its center. She is gentle and patient, and a strong believer in the tenets of virtue and justice.

The Sovereign Crucible

Due of the large amount of smiths that call Greymere Pass home, this guild of craftsmen quickly rose to prominence. "The Sovereign Crucible" is both the name of the guild and its guild hall. The Crucible serves as a center for organizing smiths in Greymere Pass, allowing them to monitor pricing, fairly allocate resources, and ensure quality of work. Buyers benefit from the guild as well, allowing customers to commission smiths with confidence.



Niles Severen (Human, male)

A young man entering into adulthood, Niles came to Greymere just under a year ago looking for work. He was accepted as an apprentice of one of the town's many smiths, and he's shown to have remarkable promise in the trade. There's nothing striking about Niles, he dresses the part of laboring peasant, though he does his best to keep his brown hair combed and his beard cut to a goatee. He spends most of his free time in the Sovereign Crucible.

Hillshollow Crest

Acres of farmland and rolling meadows stretch before you. Small clusters of trees bound up from the land here and there, and dotting the landscape are occasional farm houses and cottages. The nearby stream gently fills the air with sound of running water. A large hill divides the horizon in half, the road you travel leading straight to a pair of towers at its base. Dozens of houses encircle the hill at half its height, with dozens more lining its crest. Dominating the top of the hill is a large estate, and the bustle of the village's residents becomes louder as you approach.

Hillshollow Crest is named for the large hill the majority the small village is settled upon. It was founded over a hundred years ago as a farming community. Its residents built a garrison upon the hill due to its strategic value against the then-common kobold raids. As the years passed, more villagers built their homes and shops upon the hill, until the village became what it is today.

While not truly hollow, the hill the village is founded upon is not entirely solid, either. Beneath the hill is a subterranean complex of unknown origin and purpose. It is accessible through a path beneath the old garrison, although none that inhabit the village ever go there. What lies beneath the hill may be innocuous, but an air of mystery, fright, and wonder pervades conversations regarding it.

Information

- **Population:** Approximately 670. The majority of this populace resides on the large hill the village is named for, while the rest is dispersed around a large area of farmland.
- **Resident races:** Human (96%), Halfling (1%), Half-Elf (1%) Other races (< 1% each).
- **Government:** The village is overseen by *Count Byron Eyrewell*, who has final authority on Hillshollow's laws and financial matters. He has employed *Reeve Alexandros Faell* to settle civil disputes, collect taxes, oversee the village guard, and act as sheriff.
- **Defense:** A small guard patrols the count's estate, commerce area, and main residential streets of Hillshollow. The size of the guard fluctuates, but is generally never exceeds two dozen men.
- **Commerce:** Hillshollow Crest generates most of its income from agriculture; the majority of its residents are farmers or craftsmen that keep the community and economy stable. While relatively remote, the village benefits from several major roads that lead to it, often bringing traveling merchants with more esoteric goods for trade.

Lodgings

The hearthflame Inn

This tavern is ran by the dwarf *Caldur One-Eye* (see NPCs). It's renowned for the ale he serves there, *Stonebrew*, and is without a doubt the most popular watering hole in the village. Caldur typically has a couple rooms available at any given time, and charges a modest 3 silver pieces a night to stay.



Caldur One-Eye (Dwarf, male)

Caldur is the only resident dwarf in Hillshollow. Stout and grisly in appearance, Caldur has a tangled black beard wallowing his face, bushy black eyebrows, and a black leather eye patch always over his right eye. The tale of how he lost the eye changes depending upon the dwarf's mood and who is asking. Caldur has described different stories from losing the eye in battle (against orcs, trolls, or dragons), to having ripped it out himself in a fit of rage to intimidate an adversary. The truth is Caldur was simply born without it, but such a tale lacks a fitting flavor for the dwarf. Caldur is generally well-liked, and his company is second only to his ale, *Stonebrew*. A family recipe, the dwarf spends much of his earnings to keep it in production. Travelers have told him on many occasions the ale is finer than any they've tasted in even the largest cities, and he routinely sees it drawing repeat business year in and out.



Adventure Hook

Midni Sarvogna, the innkeeper of *The Howling Wolf* tavern, has been passing off the ale he serves there as *Stonebrew*. While Caldur is no stranger to imitations, this ale tastes suspiciously like his own, and he's worried Midni has somehow gotten his hands on Caldur's family recipe. *Stonebrew* is his livelihood, and he'd do anything to protect it. He's in need of someone willing to investigate and, more importantly, make sure he remains the only innkeeper in the village serving the ale.

The howling Wolf

The Howling Wolf is a relatively recent addition to the village, recently opened by and ran by the human *Midni Sarvogna*. Midni has done his best to compete with Caldur One-Eye, but the truth is the village doesn't see enough travelers for a second inn to be warranted. His patronage has picked up recently, however, since he started serving *Stonebrew* in the tavern.



Hillshollow Crest

Points of Interest

The Count's Estate

The largest building in the village belongs to *Count Byron Eyrewell* (see NPCs). His estate has been built from the garrison that originally served the village in the first days it was founded. Though the count keeps mostly to himself in his private quarters, portions of his estate are open to the public. The estate is used to draft letters and laws, count collected taxes, and conduct all matters of business important to the village.



Count Byron Eyrewell (Human, male)

Hillshollow's count is an aging, gaunt man with thin white hair and soft gray eyes. He wears a fine raiment appropriate for his station with a silver amulet that bears his family's mark. He generally dons a finely-crafted longsword at his side but has never drawn it; he is always accompanied by a personal bodyguard while not in his estate. Hillshollow's residents treat Count Eyrewell with a special reverence usually reserved for kings. They generally display a mix of terror and awe in his presence.



Adventure Hook

Residents of the town have been shocked to learn two youths recently snuck into the Hill's Hollow, and haven't returned. Guardsmen sent in search of the youths have returned empty-handed, describing the underground area as alien and terrifying, its walls slick with slime and the ever-present echo of something sinister playing at their nerves. The count does not condone travelers getting involved in village matters, but he'd be willing to let the party go in search of the youths if they seem capable.

Farmland

A vast amount of farmland covers the area around the Hill. Farmers in the village routinely make the trek to Hilltop each day to sell their crops and livestock.



Reeve Alexandros Faell (Human, male)

Alexandros Faell is an imposing, middle-aged man with blond hair, a cropped blond beard, and a bulbous nose. He is typically seen clad in leather armor when on duty. The reeve does his best to promote peace and civility in Hillshollow. Alexandros is a retired soldier; the tolls of years in combat have etched lines into his face. Nonetheless, he is an amiable and well-liked authority the citizens of the village tend to respect.



Adventure Hook

The local farmers have been reporting raids on their crops and livestock recently. The village used to be prone to kobold attacks, but it's been generations since anyone had seen a kobold within miles of Hillshollow. The reeve is poorly outfitted to handle this. He needs capable soldiers beyond those that serve in the guard to deal with this, and it needs to be dealt with before there's a food crisis on his hands.

Ferdid's Hammer

Jebediah Ferdid is the village's blacksmith, spending most of his time in his shop. He typically fashions farming tools, wheels, locks, and other mundane tools and equipment, but he can fashion weapons or armor in a pinch.

The hill's hollow

The phrase "under the hill" is used commonly among the residents of Hillshollow. Most villagers are aware of the underground chamber that sits a small distance beneath them from day to day. Although many claim with bravado that they'd ventured down there and return unscathed, Count Eyrewell has the good sense to restrict access to the hill's hollow to the townsfolk.

hilltop

The top of the hill is the main community area of the village. Residents travel here to trade or sell their wares daily, and all matters of the village's laws or trials happen here. This area is simply referred to as "Hilltop" to the village's residents.



Gilden Hulmfast (Halfling, male)

Gilden is a hedge wizard - a young, wily halfling with copper hair and sharp blue eyes. Gilden is almost always seen with his familiar, a red fox named Dart. The halfling is outgoing and gregarious, he loves performing small magical tricks for children or as entertainment during festivals and gatherings. Gilden was separated from his family at a young age, although the nature of why or how is a secret only the halfling knows.



Alora Gladesong (Half-elf, female)

Alora is the village minstrel, often working at the employ of Count Eyrewell to perform during holidays and festivals. She is a comely half-elf, wearing tailored clothing in earthy colors, sporting a pair of glasses with copper rims. While she is well-known by Hillshollow's residents for her musical performances, she is also the village's best pick-pocket. She's never been caught stealing, and her innate charm and exceptionally good-looks make her seem all the less likely to be a thief.



Bellis Raeryth (Human, female)

Bellis is a follower of Pelor, the sun god, and serves as Hillshollow's healer and apothecary. Bellis is averaged sized, but she is stern-faced and unflappable - in fact, she's the only resident who has been seen to publicly quarrel with Count Eyrewell seemingly without consequence. Despite her rough exterior, she feels deeply for the village's residents and their well-being.



Adventure Hook

Bellis is in need of herbs to create medicine. She was expecting a merchant that usually brings such supplies to the village weeks ago, and his absence is troubling her. She has enough stock to make it through the next several days, but without more herbs she fears the village might run sick. The plants aren't terribly rare, all can be collected from the nearby forests but the task isn't something suitable for a woman of her age.

Lightlow Pond

The small stream that runs southward past the village juts off into Lightlow Pond, a small body of fresh water just at the northern base of the hill. The pond is named for the Lightlow family, whose residence is built upon its shore. The Lightlows fish the pond regularly for sport, and many travelers enjoy the quaint appeal the small fishing hole offers.



Adventure Hook

Several weeks past, one of the Lightlows fished a small stone statue of unknown origin from the pond. Unable to find someone interested in purchasing it, the stone statue has sat on the family's mantle ever since. Recently, however, the Lightlows have not been seen at market or out fishing. If the party goes to investigate, they find their house abandoned. The house reeks with the smell of dried pond water, and the statue is noticeably missing. Finding the Lightlow family will become a priority for the authorities, not just for their safety, but for the safety of the entire village.

Rellholdt City

You can see the face of the cliff divided by the waterfall, gently tumbling over the cliff's tiers and disappearing beyond the trees. Just aside it, clear as day, lay the rises of Rellholdt City. Stone houses and structures jut from the side of the cliff, and standing amid them is the unmistakable tops of Suffrenia Castle, the earth carved around it. A stone marker along the trail points in its direction, the path turning from earth and soil to cobblestone as it draws near the city.

Rellholdt is an old city with a storied history. The half-elf *Rell Suffrenia* was an outcast among the human civilizations, and was discarded and ignored by the elvish ones. Such a life would lead a man to hate those that scorned him, but Rell persevered, finding acceptance among those of different races in an adventuring party. He acquired a fortune working with these comrades and, when he had had his fill of creeping through caves and plundering tombs, he spent it in erecting a city he could truly call home.

Rell choose a beautiful spot of earth, touched by trees, stone, water, and sky, for his city to grow to life. The process began nearly 400 years ago, and took decades to complete, though Rell never lived to see it finished. He passed away when what would become Suffrenia Castle was merely a hole in the cliff, piles of timber, stone, and scaffolding. His son *Metaryn* took over his father's duties, naming the city after Rell, and titled its hallmark castle for his family.

Information

- **Population:** Approximately 7,950. Rellholdt sees a fair bit of travelers from different routes; visitors arrive daily via the higher or lower portions of the cliff the city occupies. Many homes hide within the cliff as well; almost 30% of the buildings of Rellholdt City cannot be seen in the open.
- **Resident races:** Human (32%), Half-Elf (28%), Elf (13%), Dwarf (9%), Gnome (7%), Halfling (7%) Other races (< 1% each). The Suffrenias keep their gates open to most and are generally accepting of all races, given the family's history.
- **Government:** Rellholdt has held a monarchy along the Suffrenia family line since the city's inception. Since Metaryn's days, young heirs were married off quickly and prompted to reproduce. Kings and queens of Rellholdt have always been half-elves, and the city has seen its share of both good and bad rulers. Currently, the city is ruled by *King Leto Suffrenia*, married to *Queen Sarnya*, father of *Prince Menaras* and the younger *Princess Taen*. The children are too young to take to court or learn politics, but the king and queen actively instruct their vassals about how to enforce law, conduct events in the city, and hold audiences with their supplicants.
- **Defense:** Rellholdt City's structure within the cliff makes it seemingly vulnerable to a pincer attack on different fronts, but the city has never endured such an attack in the four centuries of its existence. Nonetheless, the Suffrenias have a standing force of just over 1,600 men which patrols the city.

This force watches the city's borders and generally keeps the peace. The Suffrenias also have ties to mercenary forces and allies spread far and wide; should the city find itself under siege, it wouldn't be long before aid would arrive at the half-elves' beck and call.

- **Commerce:** A little bit of everything goes on within the city limits. Residents make their lives as laborers or tradesmen, and plenty of goods are sent to and from the city on a daily basis. Rellholdt doesn't have a reputation for specific goods, but it is a popular destination for those intrigued by its beauty. That is enough to keep interested minds and fresh coins returning year after year.

Lodgings

Copperbuckle

Copperbuckle is the oldest tavern still active in Rellholdt City. It was founded in the city's early days, and paintings of the cliff, unmarked by Rellholdt's stone buildings that would come to be, adorn its walls. It's unknown who its first proprietor was, but as of now Copperbuckle is ran by *Catherine "Kitten" Willstead* (see NPCs). Kitten earned her nickname more than thirty years ago when she first started running the joint. Now, into her late fifties, it has become a bit of a misnomer. Kitten charges a fair 5 silver pieces a night for modest lodgings.



Catherine "Kitten" Willstead (Human, female)

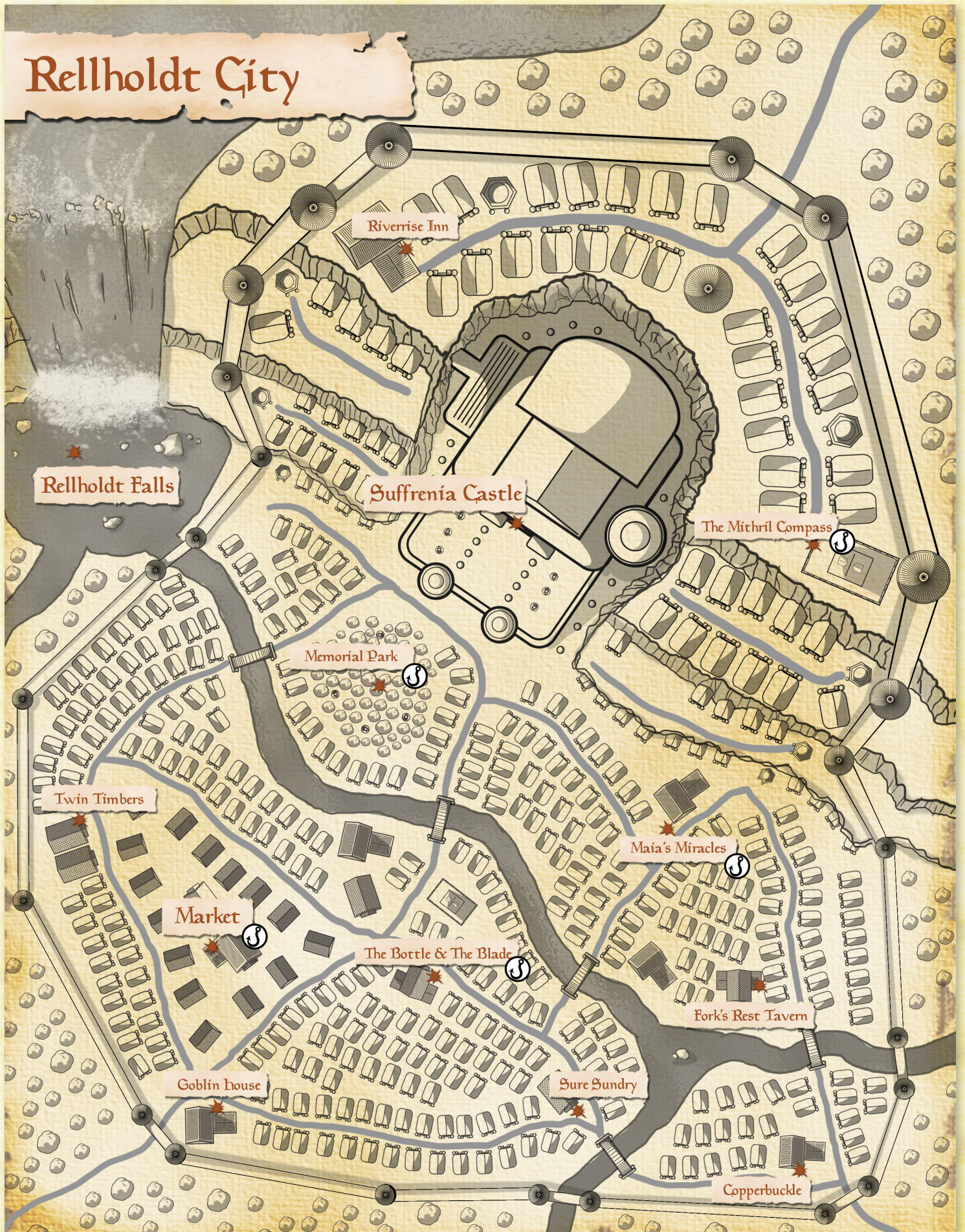
Though Kitten has seen the best years of her life gone by, she still serves her patrons with the vim and vigor of her youth. In many ways, running Copperbuckle is the only life she knows. As she heads into old age, she views this fact with mix pride and regret. She's one of the best known people in town, and always has an ear to the ground for news or gossip.



Primm Honeyglow (Half-elf, female)

This half-elf dresses in modest garb, decorated with stones and adorned with briar. She'll always introduce herself as a "naturalist," but the truth is Primm is a young druid. She finds Rellholdt to be a beautiful place, and has become a regular in Copperbuckle for afternoon meals.

Rellholdt City



Rellholdt City

Cities & Towns

Fork's Rest Tavern

A stream flows from the base of Rellholdt falls through the lower portion of the city, dividing it in half. Where the stream forks at its eastern reach is Fork's Rest Tavern. The tavern is owned by the human *Davus Sarek*, though his three daughters tend to it. Many enjoy taking their meals here, as the food served at Fork's Rest is perhaps the best in the city (spurring the phrase, "Your fork won't rest at the Fork's Rest!"). The Sarek family charges 1 gold piece a night for comfortable lodgings and a fine meal.

Goblin House

While technically named "The Twisted Serpent," everyone knows this inn as "Goblin House," due to its owner. The goblin *Gek'Gek* (see **NPCs**) won the deed to the tavern in a game of dice three years ago from its previous owner, the drow *Thanir Wyvernkiss*. Goblin House has a reputation for giving lodgings to those of ill repute, which means most go out of their way to avoid it. *Gek'Gek* may never have turned a man with money away, but he knows the inn's dubious reputation isn't good for business. He's trying to clean up his reputation. He charges 4 silver pieces a night for modest lodgings.



Gek'Gek (Goblin, male)

Gek'Gek is a fat goblin nearly three feet in height. He usually keeps a cigar lit and reeks of ash even when he isn't smoking. The residents of Rellholdt have grown accustomed to the goblin innkeeper over the years, and *Gek'Gek* has proven himself to be a savvy businessman. He has a scratchy, high-pitched voice and dresses in ostentatious vestments; he prefers bright blues and yellows and gaudy jewelry as a display of his affluence.

Riverrise Inn

Appropriately named for its location on the high portion of the cliff, the Riverrise Inn mostly sees travelers entering the city from its northern routes. The trek down to the larger, lower portion of the city is an arduous task, something owner *Nor Firebelt* is quick to point out to weary visitors. *Nor* is an adult, male dwarf, and has owned and run Riverrise Inn for two decades now. He charges 8 silver pieces for fair lodgings and a meal "that'll give ya a proper beard," as he puts it.



Longshadow (Drow, male)

"Longshadow" is the alias of *Thanir Wyvernkiss*, the former proprietor of The Twisted Serpent before he lost it to the goblin *Gek'Gek*. Longshadow has since taken residence in Riverrise Inn, bent on reclaiming his former property. He keeps to himself in the inn, almost always cloaked, and never uses his real name.

Twin Timbers

This tavern is actually two separate buildings, each a mirror image of the other. Each is operated by business partners *Hollstu Thimbleleaf*, an adult male halfling, and *Crux McGreggor*, an adult male human. *Crux* is the son of a logger, and the Timbers are two of the few wooden buildings in the city, the majority of the others being fashioned of stone. Regardless which "twin" visited, the duo charges 7 silver pieces for a comfortable bed and a hearty meal.

Points of Interest

The Bottle & The Blade

Formerly a tavern, this establishment has transitioned to a gathering venue for the intrepid. Ran by the dragonborn *Iri Cyaneye* (see **NPCs**), those that call themselves adventurers convene in its halls to discuss their craft, trade information, buy and sell unearthed relics, and band together. *Iri* organizes weekly meetings, making a handsome living for herself by providing drinks and adventuring gear to those in attendance. Anyone with a job that needs doing and the coins to pay for it is also welcome to attend these gatherings, as the clientele of The Bottle & The Blade are usually the right men and women for the task.



Iri Cyaneye (Dragonborn, female)

Iri is imposing; she's taller than most full grown human men. Her scales range in color from light turquoise to a deep azure. She bears a small horn over her snout similar to that of blue dragons, a feature she takes pride in. *Iri* is almost always here; she employs several workers to post bulletins about town regarding meetings or to acquire equipment for her to resell. When she sees new people enter The Bottle & The Blade that she recognizes as adventurers, she happily engages them in conversation to see if they're worth her attention.



Adventure Hook

During a meeting at The Bottle & The Blade, news is brought forth that a cave hides behind Rellholdt Falls. It's unknown what lies therein, but it has ostensibly been hidden to the city's residents forever. Different adventuring parties begin taking bets on which group will be able to explore the cave first.

Maia's Miracles

This stone building is cluttered with dozens of pots, each bearing odd plants and flowers. *Maia Mayview* (see **NPCs**) is an herbalist, and she makes a living creating herbal remedies and potions. The woman is eccentric, to say the least, and usually keeps to herself and her craft when someone hasn't called upon her.



Maia Mayview (Human, female)

Maia is a middle-aged woman with curly, graying hair. She dresses conservatively and keeps odd hours; it's common to see lamplight spilling from her home all through the night. She rarely leaves this place, spending a large portion of time tending to the more than 130 unique types of plants she grows as ingredients for medicines, salves, and other "curiosities" that she sells.



Judd Shorthorn (Dwarf, male)

Judd is a portly dwarf with a long, black beard. He wears a tunic of dwarvish fashion, and prefers a horned helmet to cover his balding head. Judd is a bit embarrassed to be here today; the dwarf has sought out Maia for a special request, speaking to her with hushed tones. He's asked Maia to create a love potion for him, for he's madly in love with woman who barely notices him.



Adventure Hook

If the party happens upon Maia and Judd discussing the dwarf's problem, Maia confesses she can make such a potion, but doesn't have the ingredients to do so. She needs a stock of *heartthistle* to make the concoction, but the plant grows miles from the city and she has no means of harvesting it. Judd is willing to pay what he can for capable hands to retrieve the plant for Maia.

Market

Rellholdt City's market is a collection of general and specialty stores which occupies an entire section of the lower portion of the city. Here, one can find fresh fish, forged steel, sparkling jewelry, baked bread, toys, pots, rope, seeds, and anything one needs for day to day living.



Bellanus, the Weeper (Elf, female)

Bellanus is an enigmatic elf, with satin black hair and a graceful figure. She dresses in dark, flowing gowns, and carries with her a jet-black staff. She comes to the market not to buy, but to give. Whenever she arrives, beggars throughout Rellholdt flock to the market, where Bellanus hands them coins and food whilst weeping for their plight. On rare occasions, the elf will select one of the downtrodden to return with her to her homeland, where they can escape a life of squalor. She arrives without warning, and never stays the night before she's off again.



Adventure Hook

Bellanus is actually an evil warlock, and her routine display of magnanimity is a clever ruse to curry favor with the residents of Rellholdt City. The elf has been using a cave, hidden behind the waterfall, as a base of operations for necromantic rituals. Any beggar she "saves" from the streets of the city quickly becomes a cadaver for her experiments; little do the people of Rellholdt know her undead abominations lurk so near the city walls.



Chortle (Halfling, male)

A mainstay and attraction of the city's market is Chortle, a fool. The halfling dresses in motley patchwork, donning a jester's cap of bells and feathers. Chortle has a myriad of performances he puts on to the bemusement of the market-goers, everything from juggling to tumbling to joke-telling is in his repertoire.



Gespyn De'Ala (Human, female)

Among the newest vendors to market is Gespyn, a young woman who sells fresh fruits from her cart. Gespyn has a stock of fruit not normally grown in the region, which makes her both popular and suspect at the same time. She has short brown hair and wears a pair of dainty spectacles. She dresses in plain clothes and never burdens herself with jewelry. If asked, she tells people she gets the fruits from a friend of the family, and that she has to make the trip outside city limits to restock once weekly.

Memorial Park

At the foot of Suffrenia Castle is a small park, dedicated to the memory of Rell Suffrenia and the adventuring party he made his fortune with. The park contains a cluster of trees and marble statues of the late adventurers. Many residents travel to the park to take a meal in the shade, listen to the bird song, or teach their young about the city's history.



Adventure Hook

The statues in the park are actually connected to an elaborate mechanism buried underground. Metaryn Suffrenia had the device built in secret to hide a portion of his father's wealth away from the coffers known to the city's builders. Twisting each of the statues along their bases operate the device's gears. If each statue is set to the unlocking position, a large portion of earth is funneled away in the middle of the park, revealing access to an underground vault. This vault is a secret even to the royal family today, lost somewhere along its lineage long ago. There's no telling what treasures or horrors lie within.

The Mithril Compass

Founded by the gnome *Tiberius Fizznock* (see NPCs), The Mithral Compass is the city's cartographers' guild. The Compass has attracted a fair share of members, men and women traveling far and wide to join its ranks. The guild displays maps of all the reaches of the world, even the least notable of places. From common caves and valleys to the insides of volcanoes, the guild prides itself on these maps, and is willing to sell them to adventurers or collectors... for a fair price, of course.



Tiberius Fizznock (Gnome, male)

Tiberius is a scrawny gnome, somewhere between adulthood and old age. He wears heavy, beige vestments that hide his meager frame, and almost always dons a droopy hat to match. His tufted eyebrows have grown into his graying hair and beard, hiding his face behind a hairy mask. Tiberius is extremely proud of The Mithral Compass, and bears an equal passion for both exploration and map-making. If someone tells him of an interesting place, he's curious to see if he has a map of it.

Cities & Towns



Adventure Hook

The prospect of a new map for the guild is endearing to Tiberius. If the party speaks of exploring an area he has no records of, the gnome will near insist one of the cartographers in the guild accompany them. He's willing to pay the party for their trouble - assuming, of course, anyone he sends into their company survives the trip and produces a map worthy of the Compass.



Quill (Half-elf, male)

Never far from Tiberius is Quill, a scribe and the gnome's personal attendant. Quill's real name is unknown to the brotherhood, but this doesn't seem to be a concern. He's shown he has suitable skills, keeping detailed records of the guild's activities, finances, and history. He has short black hair, an angular face that appears more elven than human, and wears fine, yet practical, garments. Appropriately, Quill always carries a couple ink vials, parchment, and quill pens on him should the need arise to write something down.



Prince Meranas & Princess Taen (Half-elves, male / female)

The young prince and princess have yet to be reared for court; Meranas is merely 8 and his younger sister Taen is 6. The two are generally watched over by their various keepers while their parents conduct royal duties, though the pair have escaped the watchful eyes of their babysitters on more than one occasion. Meranas is slightly plump, though charming and confident with brown hair and eyes like his father. Taen has a round face and a dainty nose, with long, brown hair tied with ribbons. She frequently discards her shoes, preferring to walk barefoot.

Rellholdt Falls

The city's adjacent waterfall careens off the highest portion of the cliff, clearing each of its tiers as it collects into a small lake below. The gentle sound of the waterfall carries throughout the city at all times, a white noise that travelers quickly grow accustomed to.

Suffrenia Castle

The hallmark of the city, Suffrenia Castle is far and away the largest structure in Rellholdt, perhaps one of the largest structures in the land. Its halls have a reserved decadence; an air that is overwhelming without being gaudy. It is here the royal family lives, as well as hundreds of servants, councilors, and guards. Many of the halls of the castle are open to the public, but the Suffrenia family's private chambers are barred from entry and well-guarded at all times.



Lord Attendant Nesir (Elf, male)

While the king and queen busy themselves with running the city and kingdom, Lord Attendant Nesir sees to the day-to-day maintenance of the castle, meals and lodgings of its attendees, and the comfort of the royal family. He has served the family faithfully for more than six decades now, and was there to help deliver King Leto (a fact he playfully reminds the king of often). The elf is tall and lean, and always dressed in fine attire. He wears an electrum brooch, fashioned in the shape of a waterfall, which signifies his station.

Sure Sundry

"Quick" Kal Cassduram owns and operates this general store a fair distance from Rellholdt's market. The human sells an eclectic selection of goods, everything from buckets to bearskins. Most customers stop in Sure Sundry if they're in need of something they can't find at the market, or if they're nearby and use it for convenience. If Sure Sundry doesn't have something a customer is looking for, Kal can usually acquire it given a week or so, thus earning him his nickname. The cost of this service varies from item to item, but there's rarely something he can't get his hands on eventually.

Sunmaw

The canyon is hot and dry, though a steady wind keeps it from being absolutely miserable. The horizon is broken apart by large and wind-cut sandstone formations rising from the ground. Up ahead, nestled within a cluster of these rocky outcroppings, lies Sunmaw. The town is mostly just shacks and shanties, with the exception of the ancient arena that stands at its heart. A thing of the past, it is built of limestone, brick, and marble. Judging from the clang of steel and shouts carrying over the canyon, it's in use today too. In Sunmaw, blood and gold spill forth with regularity; here travelers are just as likely to win their fortune as they are to lose their heads.

In another age, a forgotten civilization built a grand colosseum, using it for a variety of festivals and events. No records exist of what became of its creators, as the arena is the only piece of their culture that survived. Its remote location and the canyon's arid climate made the arena nothing more than a talking point for centuries, until 32 years ago when a group of exiled criminals found themselves on its doorstep.

Fortunate enough to have procured a source of water, tools, and trade materials, the outlaws set up Sunmaw's first shacks in the shadow of this arena. Within time, the site attracted the eyes of other unsavory characters, tempted by the freedom of laws and lawmen. They would make the trip through the canyon to construct homes of their own there as well.

Today, Sunmaw has grown to a respectable size, with its own unique businesses, residents, and culture. It can be a welcome site to those traveling through the relentless heat of the canyon, though as many travelers *do not* stop to there as those that do. Sunmaw knows no walls, no laws, and no remorse.

Information

- **Population:** Approximately 960. Sunmaw is old enough that it is seeing its second generation of natives being born within its limits, and many of its original founders still roam the town today. Anyone willing to take up residence in town only needs the means to build shelter nearby.
- **Resident races:** Human (22%), Half-Orc (19%), Dwarf (17%), Tiefling (15%), Gnome (7%), Halfling (7%), Dragonborn (6%), Half-Giant (4%), Elf (2%), Other races (< 1% each). Sunmaw's remote location and harsh reputation has granted it a diverse lot of inhabitants.
- **Government:** While it's lauded that Sunmaw has no formal laws or government, its not entirely without order. In general, peace is maintained by a certain honor among thieves. While an occasional tavern brawl or fleeced traveler may be overlooked, blatant theft, murder, or other misdeeds don't fair well with Sunmaw's established residents. Egregious offenders find themselves at the mercy of an angry mob.

The closest thing the town has to a ruler is the half-orc *Thorn Twicemaul*. Thorn is a wanted criminal himself, always seen with a pair of daggers at his sides and his half-giant bodyguards in tow. The half-orc operates with ruthless efficiency, and the town's populace usual adheres to what he says during pivotal decisions. Upon Thorn's word, those that cause too much chaos in town are sentenced to Sunmaw's arena to fight for their lives.

- **Defense:** Sunmaw is poorly equipped to defend itself. It has no walls, no army, and no scouts to alert it should an enemy approach. Its best defense is its location far from other civilized lands, in the center of an inhospitable canyon, although these factors wouldn't stop a determined force from overtaking it. Should such a force appear on the horizon, its residents would be more likely to flee to safety than they would be to stand and defend the town.
- **Commerce:** Nothing is taboo to sell, say, or do in Sunmaw. Here travelers can indulge in its gaming houses, openly purchase weapons, poisons, and slaves, enjoy the company of prostitutes, or bet their coins on the lives of prisoners forced into the arena. Ironically, it can be quite difficult to procure some of the most mundane items of daily life here, given Sunmaw's location. Water is at the top of that list. A cup of water currently costs 1 electrum piece, a price that has more than doubled during harsh droughts.

Lodgings

Kozer's Rest

When the dwarf *Kozer Ironfoot* first arrived in Sunmaw in need of a place to stay, he was surprised to see the town did not have an inn for him to rest. With more and more people traveling to the burgeoning town, Kozer took the opportunity to establish Sunmaw's first public house. The dwarf unceremoniously left town nearly six years ago, but his namesake inn is still in operation under his son, *Mazer* (see **NPCs**). Mazer charges what he insists is a fair 2 gold pieces a night for rudimentary lodgings, although the price does include a meal and stein of water or dwarvish ale.

Cities & Towns



Mazer Ironfoot (Dwarf, male)

Kozer's son, Mazer, has lived in Sunmaw his entire life, one of the first generation born here. He's still quite young by dwarf standards, though old enough to run his father's business competently. Mazer dresses in light apparel, he is stout yet muscular with a short, red beard. He finds life in the canyon burdensome and plagued with heat. He enjoys hearing stories from immigrant dwarves that stay at the inn about their ancestral homes.



Thorn Twicemaul (Half-orc, male)

Thorn is a known criminal and escaped convict, and perhaps the most notorious person in all of Sunmaw. He keeps two half-giant bodyguards near him, and a pair of fine steel daggers sheathed at his hips. The half-orc has grown into a kingpin of sorts, and the unofficial leader of the town. When punishment is needed, the people of Sunmaw often look to Thorn's judgement.



Adventure Hook

Thorn suspects someone in town is spying on him, but he doesn't know who. This has brought on a paranoia in the half-orc, and has caused him to react violently when startled as of late. He suspects the elf Dawn Gwenlithniel, who spends her time at the Hunter's Circle, as he found a pendant of an elven goddess among his personal affects recently. He could certainly use another set of eyes on her.



Misaria Mahr-Edek (Tiefling, female)

Thorn employs Misaria to keep Watercask Inn running, and the tiefling does an excellent job. Misaria is broad faced, with long horns that protrude from her forehead and curve to the side. Her skin is a pale lavender, with dark hair that runs down her back. She is Thorn's lover and is fiercely loyal to him. Misaria uses her discerning eye to root out any would-be patrons that might cause trouble at his inn.



Karlvon Kahos (Half-orc, male)

Sunmaw doesn't see much in the way of bards or minstrels, and Karlvon is a poor excuse for either. Thorn has joked that whoever told the half-orc he had a gift for song or storytelling should be thrown in the monster pits. Karlvon dresses in fancy garb, and carries a lute he has no earthly idea how to play. His songs and stories are often predictable and short, thought not entirely bland, and the half-orc often forgets their endings, forced to improvise new ones.

Stoneloft

Stonelof is built atop the large rock outcropping to the north of town, accessible by a spiraling set of steps carved into the sandstone. It is Sunmaw's newest inn, the product of its proprietor *Rory From the Far* (see **NPCs**). Rory's three wives Inea, Lola, and Sacra tend to patrons' rooms and meals, while he sees over the inn's finances and inventory. Stoneloft is smaller than the other lodgings in town, but it is well constructed and offers Sunmaw's most comfortable sleeping quarters. Rory charges anywhere from 1 to 5 gold pieces per night, basing his price off how much he agrees with a customer's face when he or she arrives.



Rory From the Far (Human, male)

Though Sunmaw is a melting pot of many races, Rory still feels like a foreigner among its residents. His speech is flavored with the accent of a far away land, and his three wives barely speak the Common tongue well enough to communicate with the guests of Stoneloft. The human doesn't reveal much about his homeland, and residents of Sunmaw don't care to ask. Rory wears the clothes native to his homeland, heavy and dark, a poor choice for the heat.



Adventure Hook

Stoneloft is only one of Rory's business ventures; he makes most of his money by running a slave market in Sunmaw. Though slaves are not uncommon in the town, they are usually comprised of nomadic humanoids native to the canyon. Rory finds his slaves in a different manner, drugging select patrons of Stoneloft and then smuggling them away to sell under the cover of night. Rory is smart about his selections though, never choosing a victim whose absence would be noticed, and never making these sales himself. To this end, Rory is about to "procure" another victim to sell into slavery, and is looking for someone he can trust to make the handoff, or somehow trick into doing so.

Watercask Inn

Named for the massive cask on display in its meal room, Watercask Inn is the largest and most popular lodging in Sunmaw. Though it is operated by the tiefling *Misaria Mahr-Edek*, it's common knowledge that it is owned by *Thorn Twicemaul* (see **NPCs**). Thorn sleeps and takes his meals here, but is otherwise about town. The inn has always been a reliable source for water, sometimes rationing out its grand supply at gouged prices during times of drought. Misaria charges patrons 3 gold pieces for a night's stay of fair lodgings, a meal, and a two cups of water.

Points of Interest

Bloody Run

Outside of the arena, stretching along its southwest arc, a series of wooden stakes jut from the ground in a grim forest. The decaying heads of those that die in the arena are posted here. The heads are left to bake in the canyon sun until they slough to the ground, bloated with maggots and swarming with flies. It stands in constant reminder of what happens to those that disrupt the tenuous order in Sunmaw. Because of its macabre nature (and horrid smell) most residents avoid it.

The Dice Pit

The Dice Pit is exclusively a gaming house, though it does serve drinks and small bits of food to patrons spending their coins there. Here, Sunmaw's residents convene to play games of dice, cards, and luck. It is operated by *Arakeen Reese* (see **NPCs**), a crafty human always looking for new games to bring into his business. Local favorites include *King's Grave Sixes*, *Black Basilisk*, and *Dead Man's Ante*.

Sunmaw



Cities & Towns



Arakeen Reese (Human, male)

Arakeen has always been a merchant by trade, but he truly made a living for himself when he relocated to Sunmaw. He is an averaged-sized human with a short, frizzy beard and unkempt hair, preferring to wear airy, comfortable clothes that complement the heat. He loves games, and is a skilled player. It's considered a great honor if he sits down at a table with you at The Dice Pit, and he never bets conservatively. Arakeen doesn't lose often, but he is a gracious loser, a trait that has made him one of the few trustworthy men in the entire town.



Trae Costantine (Half-elf, female)

Trae is a slender and cheerful half-elf, and though she spends most of her time in Sunmaw's gaming houses, she's never been known to spend a single coin in one. Instead, she roams and watches the action, and her presence is considered lucky. Secretly, Trae has been sent to Sunmaw under orders to locate the convict Thorn Twicemaul, and return him to her authorities. So far, Thorn has proved too well-guarded to apprehend, though she has managed to break into his room and investigate his personal affects.



Dawn Gwenlithniel (Elf, female)

Dawn represents one of the few elves in Sunmaw, though she does not find the town to her liking. She thinks its customs and residents are most deplorable. If not for a vision from her goddess, instructing the elf to travel to the town, she would be far from it. Dawn wears clothes of elvish make and has short, silver hair. She chooses to wear gemmed rings, necklaces, bracelets and anklets on most occasions. Dawn is a cleric, and routinely spends time conjuring food and water for the Circle. This earns her a cool place to sleep at night and the hunters' protection.



Kurd (Human, male)

The barbaric Kurd was born to a band of canyon nomads. His tribe traded him and many others for water and supplies. Kurd was then sold into slavery, and when he revolted years later, he was thrown into Sunmaw Arena to be executed. However, fate smiled upon him, and the young Kurd single-handedly slayed his opponent, a captured thri-reen. This feat earned him a spot in Razorscorn Academy, and today he is renowned monster hunter. Kurd is tall and muscular with long, brown hair. He wears studded leather armor and wields a greatsword named "Carla".

Hunter's Circle

Hunter's Circle is an area of Sunmaw set aside exclusively for monster hunters (the elite graduates of Razorscorn Academy). Hunters use these lodgings for rest, discussions of monster sitings, and planning new expeditions. They keep a stock of food, water, and beds available here as well. Adventuring parties traveling to Sunmaw are welcome within these buildings that make up the Circle, though common men and women are turned away from its doors. The hunters enjoy conversing with intrepid adventures about monsters they've encountered, and gladly offer their hospitality in exchange for helpful information.



Adventure Hook

The hunters have been tracking a bulette they call "Direfin" for the past two months. The landshark was last sighted near a small oasis northwest of town a week ago. Thorn Twicemaul has put a bounty of 3,000 gold coins on Direfin, but only if can be brought back alive to Sunmaw's monster pits. The bulette has already killed thirteen monster hunters trying to capture it. If able-bodied adventurers are up to the challenge, they can find information regarding Direfin from one of the hunters here.



Tungsten, Strength-of-Boars (Goliath, male)

The only goliath that lives in Sunmaw is Tungsten, Strength-of-Boars. He is nearly as tall as the half-giants that occupy the town, with dark, hairless skin decorated by tattoos. Tungsten is an accomplished ranger. He dresses lightly, equipping himself in leather armor and a pack of survival tools. He is currently spending his nights at the Hunter's Circle, but is preparing for an expedition beyond Sunmaw's limits in search of Direfin.

The Lucky Lizard

The Lucky Lizard is best described as a "house of indulgences," where crude alcohol, strong tobacco, gambling, and prostitutes are all available to suit one's appetite. The place is operated by the halfling *Zeke Valentine*, and is one of the more popular attractions of Sunmaw. An iconic wooden sign of a smiling lizard, smoking a pipe, hangs above its doors.



"No Way" Nuro (Half-giant, male)

The half-giant Nuro guards the door to The Lucky Lizard during business hours, making sure none too young of age or light of wallet enters the premises. Zeke has also provided the half-giant with a short list of people not allowed in. The only words in Common Nuro can speak are "no way," which he often says shortly before physically removing someone from the pleasure house's grounds.



Adventure Hook

The Lucky Lizard hosts many of the games popular in Sunmaw, but Zeke has cooked the cards and the rigged dice to ensure the House wins more than its fair share. If the party does any gaming here, checks are made at disadvantage, and it becomes apparent to the most perceptive members that the staff is cheating. Accusing the House of such is, of course, grounds for "No Way" Nuro to get involved.

Monster Pits

Three stone buildings occupy the eastern side of the grand arena, each constructed over caged pits. These pits connect to the tunnels that lead into the arena. Sunmaw's monster hunters pen the beasts they capture in these pits. The beasts are given meager meals and stoked to frenzy, often starved before they are let loose in the arena against the unlucky few sent there to die. As such, this makes the pits a dangerous place, and only ranking members of Razorscorn Academy are allowed inside.



Cor Beslesek, the Key Keeper (Gnome, male)

Cor is three feet tall with wispy, white hair. He sports a thick pair of glasses and a heavy ring of brass keys which open pit cages. The gnome usually spends his time traveling from pit to pit, inspecting his monsters, and arranging their meals and care. When Cor is brought a new monster he knows little about, he excitedly studies the beast as long as he can.

Razorscorn Academy

One of the few brick buildings in Sunmaw is Razorscorn Academy, the training grounds for Sunmaw's infamous monster hunters. The academy runs a mercenary force, hunting and trapping beasts to stock Sunmaw's monster pits. A "faculty" of two dozen veteran hunters operates the academy, these men and women representing perhaps the most seasoned warriors in Sunmaw at any given time. The academy welcomes those wishing to become monster hunters, but its lessons are taught in blood. Only half its applicants survive the training. Its halls are decorated with the stuffed corpses of canyon monsters, arranged in menacing positions. Razorscorn Academy's grounds are used for education and training only; those that graduate to full-fledged monster hunters join the ranks of Hunter's Circle.



Headmaster Hilde Brandhammer (Dwarf, female)

The oldest teacher of Razorscorn Academy is Hilde Brandhammer, who wears the title Headmaster like a crown. Hilde is stout and stern, usually clad in her steel breastplate when she can escape the sun. The dwarf has seen her fair share of contests against the monsters she teaches her students to hunt, and she bears many scares as proof. Hilde doesn't tolerate nonsense or absentmindedness. In her opinion, a student that dies in the line of work was not worth her time in the first place.



Adventure Hook

Hilde has recently sent a squad of cadets to clear out a nest of giant scorpions discovered outside town limits lately. However, the squad has yet to return. She normally wouldn't fret over a couple casualties, but an entire missing squad indicates something more dangerous may be at play. She doesn't want to risk more of her students to recovering the missing squad, and is open to hiring adventurers to look into the matter.

The Silvershoe

The newest and largest gaming house in Sunmaw is The Silvershoe, owned and operated by the half-orc *Ursa Dracosdodder* (see **NPCs**). The Silvershoe hosts traditional games of chance as well as new games becoming popular in town. Ursa employs a full staff to take care of The Silvershoe, and many patrons fill her halls from sun up to sun down. While she does have spare bedrooms available in the building's loft, she reserves these only for special clientele; otherwise patrons out of coins to spend or with one too many drinks in them are kicked out.



Ursa Dracosdodder (Half-orc, female)

Ursa is exceptionally intelligent, which makes her an anomaly among half-orcs. She came to town three years ago with a bag of money and a cart of supplies, though she doesn't speak of her home, family, or past at all. Her human heritage shows stronger in her appearance, and she's usually mistaken for a human woman until seen up close.



Rak Bites-Nails (Half-orc, male)

Rak is an aged half-orc. He proudly boasts he was there the day the first buildings of Sunmaw went up. He has his own place in town, but frequently spends nights between the gaming houses and taverns. The Silvershoe is one of his favorites, as he's grown sweet on Ursa (the sentiment isn't shared, however). Rak almost always wears padded leather and carries an oversized greataxe. True to his name, the half-orc often picks his teeth with nails, a habit that has left the edges of his mouth scarred and his teeth chipped.

Sunmaw Arena

Sunmaw Arena is the most prominent feature in town, rising 150 feet into the air and visible for miles around the canyon. It can easily hold fifty times the town's current population, its seats are tiered and fanned out from the open course at its center. A network of tunnels connects from underneath the arena to holding cells. Sunmaw's residents have repurposed these cells with newly forged steel bars and locks, creating a pen for their prisoners. Other series of cells have been adopted into the town's monster pits, where trapped monsters are kept and fed. Sunmaw's favorite pastime is sending their prisoners into the arena against these monsters, putting on bloody shows to the amusement of all that attend.

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