

A Shortcut to Fortune

A Basic Fantasy RPG campaign for the Ropecon 2011 Scenario Competition

Players: 5+DM

Duration: 4h

Abstract

What is the shortest way to fortune? A small reduction in the vast riches of a castle lord is surely something that ought to go unnoticed. The temptation of bending the law is too much for Keldar, a retired trap master and expert in securing personal belongings. After some gossip spreading and rallying at local taverns, Keldar has four compatriots. Or, four men that are greedy enough to risk a 'castle job'. How short will Keldar's way to fortune be? Or will the way of his troupe be cut to a short end? The heist still needs to be planned and followed through. This campaign offers surprises and cutthroat elements, not requiring the knowledge of the game mechanic.

Introduction

This document describes a role-playing campaign intended to be played with 5 players in addition to the Game Master (GM). The length of the play is approximately four hours. The campaign is designed to be played with Basic Fantasy RPG rules, although it can quite straightforwardly be run by GMs who have knowledge in e.g. Dungeons & Dragons Cyclopedia rules. The campaign is originally written for Ropecon 2011 role-playing campaign writing competition. The author acknowledges help related to issues in technical realization of this campaign.

The campaign is designed to be newbie friendly, so that no advance knowledge of the game mechanic is required from the players. All the characters are pre-made. Only character descriptions are distributed to the players, and all the dice is rolled by the GM. However, both the GM and the players should be aware of the campaign's cutthroat nature, and that it contains elements not suitable for children.

Before the game, the GM should briefly interview the players in private, so that he may make a more informed decision on how the characters should be assigned to the players. For instance, it is of crucial importance (for the sake of maximum fun) that the player responsible for Keldar, the party leader, is fully comfortable with his character. In addition to the character descriptions, the GM should provide the players a copy of the town map that is attached at the end of this document. Cradel's player should have an opportunity to view the castle blueprints in private for sixty seconds before the game. He must not have a printed copy.

This campaign invokes special rules for argumentation between the characters that are explained in the 'rules for argumentation' section.

The characters will plan and attempt a burglary in the castle of a knight of an Order, Sir Winfrey. Keldar, the leader of the party, is a former expert-in-security, who has decided to secure a decent pension before an early retirement. Keldar has been acquainted to this possibility by Cradel, a member of the party, who is the son of the knight, and has plans to have some early heritage. Naturally, Cradel does not want his family to get hurt, even though he has grudges with them. He has identified himself as a former low-order guard of the castle, thus not revealing his true identity.

The campaign contains several plot elements that may get things complicated.

- ⤴ Another party member, Yunu, knows that the family members are good kidnapping targets.
- ⤴ Wadar the Magic-User is aware of an evil artifact that bears great power lying in the basement of the castle.
- ⤴ Verner the vigilante has infiltrated the party to obtain opportunities for satisfying his hunger of revenge towards outlaws.

It is even possible for Sir Winfrey himself to notice the robbery and come to stop the party.

Campaign description

The campaign will contain four Chapters. In the first Chapter, the players plan how they are going to rob the castle. In the second Chapter, they follow their plan and enter the castle. The third Chapter starts when the players enter the main treasure hall and ends when the players escape the town. The fourth Chapter is the aftermath, where the hidden elements of the plot are revealed, and the GM and the players may freely discuss the game. The game ends if the characters escape the town, die, become incapacitated or are captured by the guards.

Chapter one: Planning the heist

The players need to draft their plan on a paper, how they will attempt the burglary. Bullet points are good (max 5 lines), and drawing should be allowed. A start time needs to be declared, and where the players are positioned at that time, so that the GM knows where to begin. See that all the characters are in agreement with the plan, or use the 'rules for argumentation' to make them be. The consensus is important, and trying to reach it is an opportunity for fun. The GM should stress that arguing is limited only onto what methods are used.

The information on weather and the town (see below) are common knowledge. Use the contents of this Chapter to give further clues.

Deadline for the preparation

Give the players 24 game hours to prepare the job. Although they are new in town, they do not raise suspicion, since travelers and merchants are common here. However, staying in the town for multiple nights, while conducting surveillance on the castle, would definitely raise suspicion. Therefore, the heist must take place as soon as possible. The players are considered to have enough money to buy whatever common supplies (ropes etc.) they need. Boats are not for sale.

Weather (known)

The sky is clear, as it seldom rains here. A thin moon crescent offers a dim light during the night. During the day, the sun raises the temperature to around 38 °C.

The town (known)

The castle is located inside a town called Ylaruam, ironically bearing the same name than the much larger capital of the Ylaruam Emirates. The town may be imagined to be at the east edge of the Ust-Urt valley, where the hills in the north meet the desert that continues east and south.

GM note: The town location mainly concerns those GMs who are experienced in the D&D world, and want to give some additional texture to the campaign. The campaign itself is a four-hour stand-alone version that follows the red line in this text.

The nearby landscape is shaped by hills that continue to the north. The plains and small forested areas of the west turn into a desert that covers the view till the horizon. Two roads connect the town to the surrounding world, one leading to cities in the northwest, and other to the south-southwest. Occasionally, trade caravans crossing the desert leave from here, bearing precious metals and returning with silk, dyes and spices.

GM note: There are taverns, shops, etc. in the map that the players may want to visit during Chapter One. Consider the players to have enough money to buy common supplies and equipment.

A small river descends from the northern hills, dividing the town into two halves, before it continues to the west. The castle stands on the eastern half of the town, just on the riverside, where the river forms a “pond”, taming the current almost into a halt.

The river

The river is wide and deep enough to be traveled with a small boat. Boats are rowed upstream to the mines, and filled with precious metals such as gold and silver before they are guided downstream. The river is boat-friendly about ten kilometers upstream. The current gets faster after the town, and is followed by a waterfall located about one kilometer downstream. The drop of the waterfall is something between thirty and fifty meters (~20% survival). After that, the river slowly flows through a large forest to the fertile lands of the west.

GM note: not all characters are able to swim

The castle

The castle is surrounded by the river to the west, and two streets to the south and the east, see the castle map. The northern wall of the castle joins the town wall that protects the city.

The castle is surrounded by 6-meters (20-feet) high walls, and has two entrances: the main gate to the south and a service door to the west. The main gate is usually open, but guarded day and night. The guards, 2 during the day and 4 during the night, are stationed at the ground level. The service door opens to a small river dock, and is barred from the inside when not in use. The door of Tower “A” opening to the ramparts of the city wall is also barred from the inside, because the city wall ramparts are commonly accessible. The castle ramparts are accessible from the castle yard, using the stairs behind the garden, and from inside the keep, using the doors at level 2.

The barracks that are located inside the castle offer a home for about forty guards. The other watch houses in the city contain another about twenty guards. Five officers live in the officers’ quarters inside the castle keep. GM note: Stats and descriptions for NPC guards and officers are provided at the end of this document

The stables contain 4+d6 horses at the time.

The castle garden contains a small orchard, a fountain and some palm trees.

The Winfreys

Sir Odel Winfrey is a templar knight and a known war hero. He has fought in several foreign wars, although keeping the details of those wars to himself.

Although the town guard is partly run from his castle partly, the Winfreys seldom get involved in the local matters. For some of the town folk, this is a positive thing, because Sir Winfrey is legendary for his harshness on those who commit even small sins. As a templar knight, he has an absolute belief in law.

The town gold smiths trust their possessions to be guarded in the castle.

Because he is not running the administration, Sir Winfrey is apparently retired. He lives in the top level of his castle with his wife, Sara, and they are known to have both children and grandchildren. Lady Sara Winfrey is known for her kindness, and her miraculous abilities of healing.

Chapter two: Entering the castle

The Chapter begins when the characters say they are ready to do the job. The characters enter the castle following their plan. A blueprint of the castle for the eyes of the GM only is attached to the end of this document.

The Keep: Level 1

The following list contains the noteworthy things that are present. Common furniture and mundane things are typically excluded from the list.

- Entry hall: large banner with Winfrey coat of arms hanging from the east wall
- Main hall: fine wooden furniture (tables, chairs, benches), fine paintings describing Winfrey ancestors at the walls, large fireplace, 4d4 silver candle holders (5 gp each).
- Storage: upon searching, players find 2d6 silver plates, 2d8 silver forks and knives, 2d4 lead goblets
- Food storage: stored food including cheese, sausage, dried fruit (e.g. dates, bananas, pineapple), dried meat, salted meat, smoked meat, potatoes, and vegetables
- Kitchen: some prepared food, e.g. grilled pheasants with red wine sauce and sheep chops with mint and garlic. Usual kitchen equipment. The kitchen has a large oven and a cooking hearth.
- Study: books about history, art, swordplay, religion, war, farming, etc. Upon search, the players discover the secret door.
- GM note: Chapter Three begins when the players descend to the basement.

The Keep: Level 2

- Hall: a man-sized bronze statue of Sir Winfrey, fine paintings (representing the family members), a golden candelabrum, d4 silver candle holders
- Servant rooms: d100 copper per room.
- Officers' quarters: d200 gold coins and d400 silver coins per room, one diamond ring

The Keep: Level 3

- The toilet is a typical castle toilet: a seat with a hole
- Trophy hall: stuffed animal heads (one lion, two antelopes, one panther, two gnus), a golden candelabrum that is embedded with 3 sapphires, old military maps in showcases, four suits of steel armor (different sizes), worn garnished helmets in showcases, fine arms hanging on the walls (sabers, rapiers, two-handed swords), five bronze and two golden miniature statues with ruby eyes
- Kids' bedroom: nothing
- Other bedrooms: an abundance of fine nobleman clothes and shoes, fine noblewoman dresses and shoes, d10 gold coins per room, jewelry worth 2d5000 gp.

Events during this Chapter:

- If the heist takes place at nighttime, Cradel's little cousin, Carl, is standing guard at the main gate with another soldier. Cradel recognizes him at sight or by voice, and vice versa. Yunu is also able to recognize Carl at sight - as a potential kidnapping target. Carl has arranged the meeting place for Hurst and Maya.
- Sir Winfrey, Cradel's father, sleeps with his wife in the master bedroom of the castle. His sleep is light, and he keeps his arms nearby. If awakened by noise, he will gear up, and inspect the reason for the disturbance. GM note: only noises from the keep level 3 can awaken him, unless an alarm is raised.
- The cook is working late in the kitchen, preparing the dishes for a feast that will be held two days from the present. Therefore the lights are on in the kitchen, and the kitchen door is open.
- A young nobleman, Hurst, is paying a visit to Cradel's sister, Maya, in the middle of the night. They are meeting in the western officer's quarters, so the creaking of the bed remains unnoticed by her light sleeping father. At some point during the night (GM choice), Hurst gets thirsty and hungry, and heads for the castle kitchen. Hurst will use the stairs inside the keep, and will be wearing but a loincloth. He is sweaty. If Sir Winfrey discovers Hurst, Hurst will be beaten.
- Officers (d4) sleep in the eastern officer's quarter.

- Cradel's brother, Earl, and his family live in the castle. Earl has two children, Lancelot (6 years) and Eve (8 years). The children like to play hide and seek at nighttime. In fact, Eve is hiding behind a leather couch in the study, when the players enter. Lancelot will also come by shortly, from the direction of the Entry hall. The children do not recognize Cradel, as he has been away for a while, but Cradel knows who the kids are.
- Four servant maids sleep in the servant chambers.
- Guards patrol the main gate of the castle. If they see or hear anything suspicious, one pair will investigate and the other will stand ground. If the first pair is gone missing for more than five minutes, an alarm is raised by the other pair.
- Guards are not very smart, and they can be fooled in various ways. However, engaging in an open fight with the whole garrison ends not well for the robbers. Guard stats are provided at the end of this document.

Alarm

Alarm is raised, when even one guard shouts "Alarm". Sir Winfrey and the men in castle barracks wake up. Sir Winfrey's commands wake up the rest. Any guard in front of barracks or tower A or B will ring a bell to alert the guards at the city gates and watch houses. Each city gate is guarded by 7+d6 men, of which one may be an officer (if the officers were not in the castle). The city gates are normally closed at nighttime.

If Sir Winfrey is not present, there is a 50% chance that the guards do not accept surrender from the party. An officer decreases this chance to 20%.

Chapter three: The treasure and the escape

Part I, the castle dungeon

In entering the castle dungeon, the players do not need to worry about happenings above the dungeon. Even if alarm was raised, the guards keep out of the basement; in this case, they will be waiting in the main hall, fully armed.

The Keep: the Basement

The basement walls are of grey stone. The air is chilly, but dry.

- GM note: Chapter Three begins when the players decent to the basement.
- The door below the stairs is locked, and trapped with a hideous laughter spell (wiz lvl2, trap 40% difficulty, lock 20%). Anyone attempting to grab the door handle falls prone, laughing maniacally for one round. The laughter does not raise an alarm, it is just to scare the players.
- The altar room of the basement contains several chests. All the chests are located behind the pillars, when looked at from the location of the altar.

- The gold chest that is marked on the map, is the largest inside the room. It is a dud chest, just a bulk of steel. It still looks like a fine steel chest, with a real lock, hinges and ornaments. If the players try to carry it, it weighs 12.400 cn.
 - Thirteen small wooden chests are filled with gold coins, 1.000+d100 each (locked, 30% difficulty).
 - Four similar small wooden chests contain gems (locked, 50% difficulty). For each opened chest, randomly choose four gem types from the gem to gold conversion table at the end of the document, and roll 5d10 for each gem.
 - One small steel chest is filled with 1000+d100 platinum coins (locked, 60% difficulty).
- A weapon rack is in the southeast corner of the room. The weapons are secured with chains and locks (60% difficulty for each weapon):
 - garnished trident +2
 - 2x dagger +1
 - silver dagger +2
 - 2x scimitar +1
 - extra large two-handed sword +2 (-4 to hit if the wielder's height is under 7 feet)
- Pillars of white marble, garnished with vertical grooves, rise to the ceiling
 - The altar is of white marble, and the chalice is on top of it.
 - Two large stone statues of a dirty white hue dominate the room from square-shaped granite pedestals. The statues are unbreakable, and represent bat-winged creatures with fierce looks and long teeth. The granite of pedestals is white with black dots.
 - The Holy Chalice of Empowerment is made of gold, and has thumb-sized green amethysts embedded on it. It can grow the strength (muddy water, use dirt), the wisdom (boiling water) or the height (normal water) of anyone who drinks. The trick is that to stop the grow effect, and hence avoid being killed by e.g. over expanding brains that burst your skull open or muscles that tear your flesh and bones apart, one must drink a kind of tea. The extraction of a certain rare mountain lily must be infused with water. This extract is unavailable to the players during the campaign, because those mountains are too far, with the exception that Verner has one bag of this particular tea that he was managed to obtain from a stolen shipment. Because so few know of the tea, the chalice usually kills those who try to drink from it in less than one hour.
 - The secret door is found upon a successful search (60% difficulty). The door is disguised as stone, but is made of steel. It is both locked (70% difficulty) and trapped (70% difficulty). An attempt to pick the lock or open the door will trigger a fan of darts being shot in a 120 degree horizontal V-shape from the center of the door towards north. Anyone standing in front is shot by d6 darts (THAC0 18). Each dart is poisoned (save vs. poison or die in one minute).

Part II, the secret chamber (optional)

After opening the secret steel door, the players enter a secret chamber that contains the mask of Obteron.

- Chest with the Mask: the reinforced steel chest is both trapped (70% difficulty) and locked (70% difficulty). The trap triggers if the lock is being picked, exploding a fire ball centered at the chest (10d10 damage, spell save: half damage). The chest contains the Mask of Obteron.
- The Mask of Obteron is golden, covers the whole face, and is carved to display a sad appearance. Upon will of the wearer, up to INT-12 dead raise to obey him. After each month of training, the wearer can command +50% additional undead creatures. The bonus is cumulative (explaining how some undead armies rise). The mask causes addiction to power, and is hard to remove (save vs. paralysis, may be attempted only once). Treat the raised undead as having half of their original levels when they were alive. Only natural creatures can be raised from the dead. Using the mask requires some concentration, but does not restrict movement.
- Taking the mask from the chest will awaken the gargoyles.

Part III, the escape

The party members attempt to escape from the castle. If they have planned their escape, good for them. It is intended that the players have several choices of escape:

- two roads, heading northwest and south
- the river, in a boat. The players probably want to land the boat before the waterfall (if they know about it). Use swimming in rowing skill checks if needed.
- the desert, with a properly equipped caravan that is prepared beforehand

If the players want to invent something else, it is up to GM to decide whether the choice leads into a successful escape or not. If the players try to stay in the city for longer than one day after the heist, they will be found by a large-scale manhunt.

Chapter four: The aftermath

The nuances of the plot are revealed. Hopefully, the players (as well as the GM) have had a good time.

- inform the players that the game is over
- let the players discuss the game and reveal their knowledge
- go together through the personal objectives of the characters
- feel free to answer any questions about what-ifs, and reveal anything written on this document
- please gather the feedback required for Ropecon 2011 campaign competition
- please save the plan made by the players

Rules for argumentation

These rules of argumentation should be used to overcome situations, when the characters do not agree what course of action they should follow. Before any die rolling takes place, the conflicted players and the GM must agree on what are the explicit options that the die rolling can produce. No adjectives, nor values, are to be used in the determination of these options. Neither should they contain any general expressions. Examples:

“A thinks that climbing the wall is the best way. B thinks that it is not.”

Problem: If B wins, no course of action would be selected.

Solution: B needs to suggest some explicit course of action, e.g. breaking through the gate.

Now there are two conflicting options:

”If A wins the debate, B will be convinced that they ought to climb the wall instead of breaking through the gate, and vice versa.”

”If A wins the debate, then B is convinced that the mission is more important than any other thing.”

Problem: The statement ”mission is important” is value-based, containing an adjective.

Problem 2: The expression ”any other thing” is too general.

Solution: “A” needs to suggest something explicit.

Preferred outcome:

”If A wins the debate, then B is convinced that the mission needs to be completed before they start

to drink for celebration.”

The players choose whether they want to try to win by rationalizing things in their favor (INT) or by stripping the credibility of their opponent by humiliation (CHA, works only with audience).

The debate is fought in rounds, and is won by whoever first bests two. Let the players advance their argumentation and make amends between the rounds.

For each round, the GM rolls d8 adding it to the chosen stat and a bonus of 2 from each justified skill use. An additional bonus for role-playing may be added (bonus: 0-3, GM's call). The highest total wins.

The debate can also be resolved with the D&D wrestling rules, so that STR is replaced by either character's INT or CHA (player's choice).

The party of five

Each character has unique information on what treasures lay in the castle. Some have more than others, some only rumors. These hidden goals that remain only in the knowledge of individual party members pose a real challenge of leadership for Keldar's player, in whether he is able negotiate the other players to follow his course of action. That is, if he becomes aware of what is going on.

GM notes:

- The characters are human males. The players may use their imagination on how they look.
- The players are supposed to obtain further (common) equipment in the first Chapter.
- The characters may be proficient also with other weapons allowed to their class (40% chance).
- Cradel is not too bright; he didn't understand to use a fake name.
- The character skills are not included in the Basic Fantasy RPG rules. However, they are self-explanatory, and meant to be used for role-playing purposes. The GM may also use skill descriptions from other systems, e.g. Pathfinder.

Keldar – the party leader

Keldar considers himself as a master thief. He might be the best expert in matters related to security in this part of the world. Also, his talent of negotiation allowed him to form a network of over a hundred pickpockets, beggars, muggers, and burglars. He even had established a mutual understanding with the law keepers. Yes, had, as every plot and plan that he had weaved suddenly crumbled down, because of that one errand. The one errand that captured the attention of too high authorities, and that put an end to his business. Oh well, that is history now. A sad history, indeed.

Although Keldar managed to escape the manhunt that uprooted his secret organization, the one after which many ended up to the gallows or a lifetime of hard labor, he was bit by a sense of cynicism. The joy of an entrepreneur is gone, and now he wishes but to do the one last job to secure his pension. A reasonable amount for him would be things worth at least 2000 gold coins. In the end, it doesn't matter how it is obtained.

For the job, you have got together a bunch of dirt bags that seem suited enough for the job. You collected them in a nearby town to the south and ordered them to travel here one by one.

Cradel was talking broadly about a 'castle job', when you intercepted him. It is never wise to spread the word recklessly. Cradel said that he had been a low-order castle guard, and therefore knows the place. Cradel's information about the castle seemed accurate enough for you to recruit a full bunch.

Wadar showed up, and cast some cantrips in the tavern to show Keldar that he is a Magic-User. He spoke in the sense that he could do a lot more, were they're not in a public place.

Yunu seemed like a capable thief. It is always good to have someone else than yourself to check for traps.

Verner appeared a bit desperate to get in for this job. Well, he has some muscle in case you need it.

Caution with thugs is always necessary. The lot needs to be kept together until there is no sign of danger. You know that the best way to do bonding among thugs is to commit a serious crime together, perhaps a killing of a guard.

You have performed a quick survey of the town and drawn a map (GM will give it).

Now, you have to get your colleagues to agree on how the heist will take place. You are aware that the castle contains dozens of well-equipped guards led by the mighty castle lord and his officers, so that rushing in and raising an alarm is definitely out of the question. There is but one day to do the preparations, as staying in the town for longer would raise suspicion. Your colleagues may be used to gather the necessary supplies for the job.

Skills: Bargain, Sense Motive, Lay Trap, Danger Sense, Bluff / Cheating, Persuasion, Leadership, Swimming, and Various thieving skills

Equipment: dark brown leather armor, hooded cloak, shortsword, dagger, thieves tools with special trap removing & installation kit, shoulder bag

Verner

Verner's family was mugged to death by robbers during afternoon, while he was coming home from work. After that he swore that he will make criminals pay, by adopting a life of a vigilante. However bitter he might be, his means still remain subtle and do not involve direct confrontation. Also, his moral code binds him to only punish those that he knows guilty. The level of the punishment should not overly exceed the severity of the crime. In gathering evidence, he doesn't have to witness everything by his own eyes. "Confessions" are not usually too hard to obtain, since bragging is a bad habit for scumbags.

Verner's personal agenda is to get the party (excluding himself), if not caught, killed. There should be plenty of opportunities, if the castle walls are climbed with ropes, or certain doors might get locked at the wrong time. It might not be a bad idea to get some useful items before the showdown.

Almost for a year, you have been pursuing rumors. They tell of an item of great power, one that would be of great help in your cause. In a distant bazaar, you bought a pouch containing a special kind of tea: one that would guarantee the safety in using this powerful item. The merchant didn't know where the item was, but he mentioned the word 'Chalice'. He also mumbled something about drinking mud.

Months later, you offered drinks for an old veteran, who said to have served under a templar knight, and witnessed amazing things. This and some other clues that you got imply that the 'Chalice' is located inside the dungeon of the castle that Keldar is planning to rob.

You met Keldar in a tavern in a town couple of days south from here, and you agreed then to meet here. You assume that Keldar is a thief. He mentioned that he would bring some others along.

Finally, an amount of 500 gold coins would secure his near future of crime fighting. It is of lesser importance, from where the coins are drawn to support his good cause.

Personal objectives:

- observe the capture or death of at least two party members without breaking your code of moral
- obtain 500 gold coins
- secure the 'Chalice' or use it to gain power (if possible)

Equipment: Worn dark platemail, hooded cloak, sword, shortsword, Light crossbow, backpack, a pouch of special tea (one portion)

Skills & Abilities: Alertness, Blind shooting, Quick draw, Two-handed fighting, Bluff / Deception, Disguise, Acting

Wadar

Wadar has practiced magic for quite some time. His parents were not rich, so they couldn't afford his studies. After several bad experiences from both mean and lousy masters, Wadar has decided that he shouldn't be mopping the floors anymore. It is time that he would secure the appropriate resources for his studies. He will be the master who commands, not the slave who obeys. He will siege power!

In spending some illegal time in the study of his master, Wadar has managed to obtain hints of a powerful necromancer artifact that is guarded by a templar knight in his castle. It once belonged to the grand necromancer Obteron, who held these lands under a reign of terror. The artifact is certain to be well hidden, and guarded by traps, magical means, and more.

Wadar cannot accomplish what he desires alone. Therefore, it seemed like a good stroke of luck that this Keldar fellow, who so obviously is an experienced thief, started to spread rumors of a 'castle job'. Having those friends in the low places finally paid up! This party is a good tool to get to the artifact. Then even your former masters should beware.

The best way to escape after the job might be with a trade caravan over the desert.

You met Keldar in a tavern in a town couple of days south from here, and you agreed then to meet here. You assume that Keldar is a thief. However, you have no knowledge of who the others might be.

Personal objectives:

- secure the artifact
- secure fortune worth at least 1000 pieces of gold

Equipment: Robe, loose cloak, spellbook, staff, dagger, Amulet of Charm Person (as spell, 6 uses left), backpack, 3 bottles of oil

Skills & Abilities: Heal, Read & Write, Bargain, Knowledge (Ylaruam, Heraldry, Nobility genealogy, Magic)

Spells: Shield, Ventriloquism, ESP, Phantasmal force, Clairvoyance (ask GM)

Cradel

Cradel is the son of the castle lord, the templar knight, Sir Winfrey. His father has been too hard on him, telling what to do and how to live his life. Cradel wasn't even allowed to meet his bride candidates, but was supposed to live in celibate until marriage. Nonsense! That old fool! And the last time Cradel got into an argument with his father and kept his will, his father beat him like he was still a boy. No more, thought Cradel and moved away from his father's castle.

After five years of living on his own, Cradel is starting to yearn for the luxuries of his past life. He wishes to draw an early heritage from his father, and at the same time, give him a symbolic slap on the cheek.

Your people skills were able to catch the interest of a criminal mastermind, Keldar. Things were set in motion by your cunning ideas, and the fact that you know a lot about the castle. Irritatingly and regardless of this, Keldar assumed a leading role in the party. How is it possible that you were not given this honor, taking that you are a great man?

Wisely, you have not revealed your true identity, that you are Sir Winfrey's son. You presented yourself as a former low-order guard. You even have the appropriate equipment ready.

You have to be careful, so that you are not recognized by your own family. Therefore, you should wear a mask or a hooded cloak inside the castle, and perhaps restrict or alter your speaking, if family members or familiar guards are encountered. The guards should all be new recruits by this time, but better safe than sorry. The heist should absolutely take place at nighttime.

You have an opportunity to view the castle blueprints in private for a couple of minutes before the game begins (ask the GM). If you do not remember everything about it during the game, it is because you have been away from the castle for such a long time. And all the drinking didn't go easy on your memory.

You know that anyone rowing down the river will end up in a huge waterfall.

You met Keldar in a tavern in a town couple of days south from here, and you agreed then to meet here after Keldar had recruited others. You assume that Keldar is a thief, and Wadar, who just showed up, looks like a Magic-User.

Personal objectives:

- gather property worth of at least 3000 gold coins
- obtain a praise related to your skills, leading abilities or intelligence from the other party members
- leave an anonymous note at the crime scene with the sentence: 'nobody is safe'

Equipment: Standard guard chainmail, fancy sword, guard shield, dagger, hooded cloak, wineskin

Skills & Abilities: Command (one action), Intimidate, Military / Tactics, Law & Justice, Swimming

Yunu

Yunu is a street-child, or was. His age is not known, even by himself. Albeit he is young, being at the very first steps of adulthood, he is skilled: a self-learned very potent thief and an expert survivalist. He is among the best breed the slums can offer.

You are a wanted expert, and possess skills that are constantly called for. You get offers from various employers, most of which you turn down. Only the most challenging and most profitable jobs are good enough for you. Nothing beats the feeling of having thrilling action, while the sound of the heart beats fill your ears.

Keldar, an old timer, came to you with a proposition. A 'castle job' would take place in a town a couple of days north. No biggies, sounds like a simple enough job; just go inside, grab the loot, and run. Other than that, the members of the royal family are good kidnapping targets. The ransom is probably bigger than what ever can be found inside the castle.

You met Keldar in a tavern in a town couple of days south from here, and you agreed then to meet here with some others fellows he recruited.

The instant that Verner steps in, you remembers a past incident. At that time, you were roaming around another part of the world. You offered anonymously to help Keldar, the local mobster. You got a nice bargain for a "wet job", doing a couple of random killings during the daytime. Keldar probably just wanted to make a point for somebody. Just as you had wiped your tracks and were home free, this Verner guy rushes in and starts to hug the corpses. And now all three of you are working together. World sure is full of coincidences.

The best way to escape after the job is definitely downstream with a boat. After all, it might give you a refreshing opportunity to swim.

Personal objectives:

- get into a life-threatening situation and survive (the threat does not necessarily have to come to your life, your party members' lives are also at stake)
- gather belongings worth at least 1000 gold coins

Equipment: Worn but flashy overcoat, trousers and boots, several rings, bracelets and necklaces (total value 120g), rapier, dagger, ring of defence (AC-2), thieves tools, 2 sacs.

Skills & Abilities: Lip reading, Stealth (Urban), Charm Person (only affects opposite sex), Escape Artist, Acrobatics, Swimming, and Various thieving skills

For the GM:

Keldar (6th level Thief)

AC	Move	#At	Dam	Save	AL	THACO
5	120'(40')	1	1d6-1/ 1d4-1	T6	N	15
St	Int	Wis	Con	Dex	Cha	Hp
8	16	10	10	16	17	21

Equipment: Dark brown leather armor, Hooded cloak, Shortsword (dam 1d6-1) & dagger(1d4-1), Thieves tools with special trap removing & installation kit, Shoulder bag

Open Locks 40%, Find traps 35%, Remove traps 34%, Climb walls 92%, Move silently 44%, Hide 32%, Pick Pockets 45%, Listen 54%.

Verner (5th level fighter)

AC	Move	#At	Dam	Save	AL	THACO
2	90'(30')	2	1d8+1 1d6+1	F5	N	16/18
St	Int	Wis	Con	Dex	Cha	Hp
14	16	8	13	15	9	41

Equipment: Worn dark Platemail, Hooded cloak, Sword, Shortsword, Light crossbow, Backpack

Two-handed fighting negates THACO penalties to 2.

Wadar (5th level Magic User)

AC	Move	#At	Dam	Save	AL	THACO
8	120'(40')	1/spell	1d6-1/ 1d4-1	MU5	C	18
St	Int	Wis	Con	Dex	Cha	Hp
7	17	14	6	14	10	10

Equipment: Robe, Loose cloak, Spellbook, Staff, Dagger, Amulet of Charm (as spell, 6 uses left), Backpack, 3 bottles of oil

Spells: Shield, Ventriloquism, ESP, Phantasmal force, Clairvoyance

Cradel (4th level Fighter)

AC	Move	#At	Dam	Save	AL	THACO
3 or 2	90'(30')	1	1d8	F4	C	16
St	Int	Wis	Con	Dex	Cha	Hp
16	10	6	15	13	12	21

Equipment: Standard guard chainmail, fancy sword, guard shield, dagger, hooded cloak, wineskin

Command one mundane action, save vs. paralysis+2.

Yunu (4th level Thief)

AC	Move	#At	Dam	Save	AL	THACO
5	120'(40')	1/2	1d8+1 1d4+1	T4	C	17
St	Int	Wis	Con	Dex	Cha	Hp
13	14	7	14	16	14(16)	16

Equipment: Worn but flashy overcoat, trousers and boots, several rings, bracelets and necklaces (total value 120g), rapier, dagger, ring of defence (AC-2), thieves tools, 2 sacs.

Open Locks 35%, Find traps 30%, Remove traps 30%, Climb walls 91%, Move silently 40%, Hide 28%, Pick Pockets 40%, Listen 50%.

Charm Person only affects opposite sex, as the spell, but save+2

Monsters and NPCs

- 20+2d8 guards and d4 officers in total are present in the castle at the time of the heist.
- Carl, who is at the main gate, is treated as a guard with 15 hp.
- Earl, who is sleeping, is treated as an officer.
- Hurst, who is visiting Maya, is a level 2 bard with 9 hp. See the event in Chapter Two.
- The cook is a level 1 fighter with a meat-cleaver, THACO 20, 6 hp. Non-aggressive, scared.
- Sir Winfrey has used the Holy Chalice to gain supernatural strength and wisdom. His secret sworn duty is to guard the Mask of Obteron from ever being used again. Level 15, Strength 22, Wisdom 22. He is the reason, why the players should not raise an alarm.
- Lady Winfrey is a level 8 cleric, who will help his husband if necessary.

Guard (Lvl 2 Fighter)

AC	Move	At	Dam	Save	MI	AL	THACO	Hp
4	90'(30')	1	1d6	F2	8(10)	L	19	14

Chainmail, shield, sporting short swords, spears or short bows. Morale 10 as long as an Officer is with them. If the guards encounter armed enemies, they first sound the alarm, and keep back. Then they wait for the reinforcements and only when in numbers, take on the foes.

Officer (Lvl 4 Fighter)

AC	Move	At	Dam	Save	MI	AL	THACO	Hp
3	90'(30')	1	1d8	F4	8(10)	L	17	26

Platemail, Sword, Dagger. Typically accompanied by 1d6 guards. Morale 10 as long as leading guards or on horseback. Good riding and jousting skills.

Gargoyle (4" HD Monster)

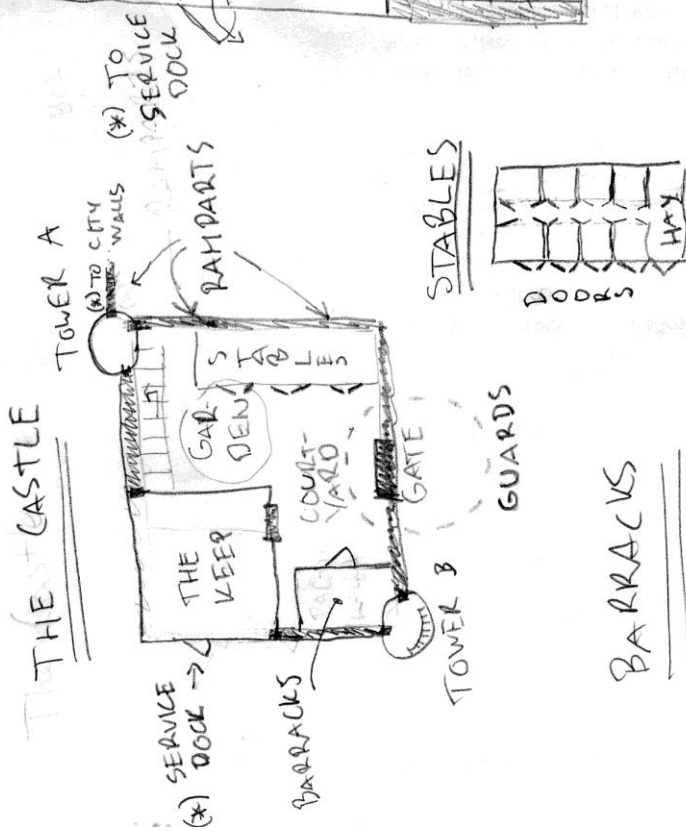
AC	Move	At	Dam	Save	MI	AL	THACO	Hp
5	90' (30') / 150' (50') flying	2 claws/1 bite/1 horn	1d3/1d3/1 d6/1d4	F8	11	C	17	26

Gargoyles can only be hit with magic or magical weapons and are not affected by sleep or charm spells.

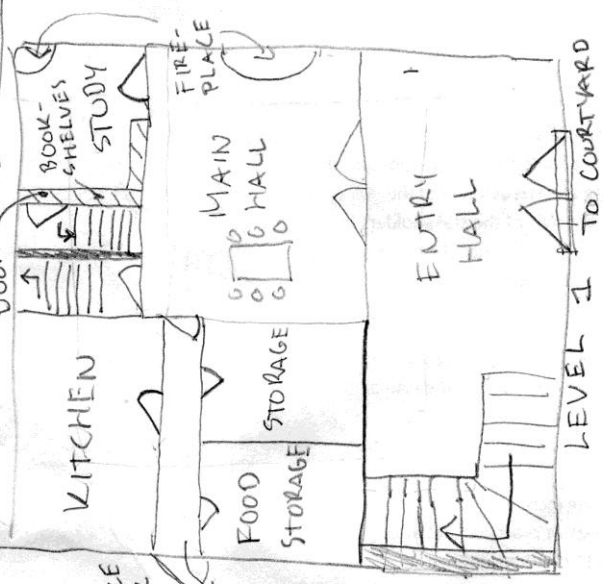
Gem to gold conversion table

Value (gp)	Gem type
10	Agate, quartz, turquoise
50	Crystal, jasper, onyx
100	Amber, amethyst, coral, garnet, jade
500	Aquamarine, pearl, topaz
1,000	Carbuncle, opal
5,000	Emerald, ruby, sapphire
10,000	Diamond, jacinth

THE CASTLE

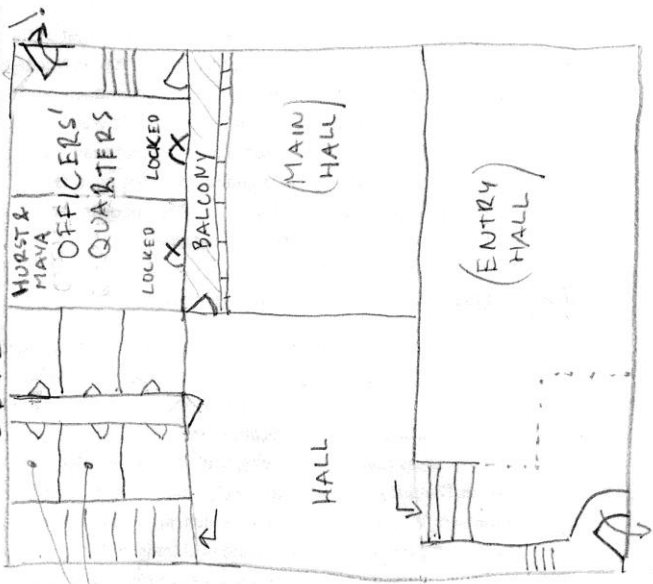


SECRET THE KEEP



LEVEL 1 TO COURTYARD

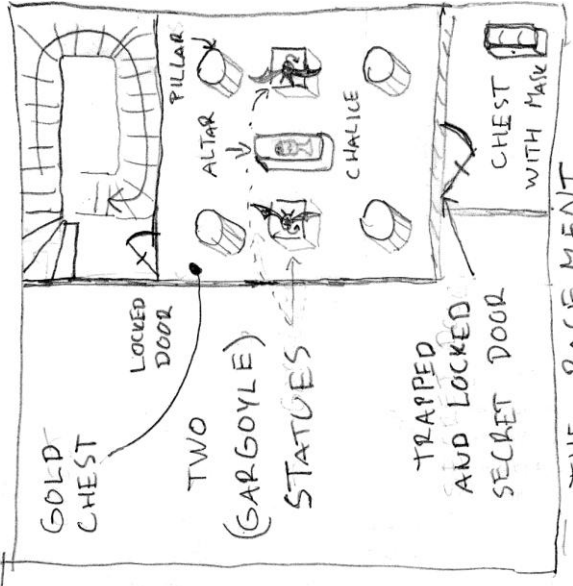
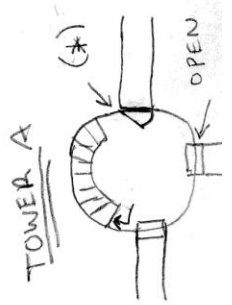
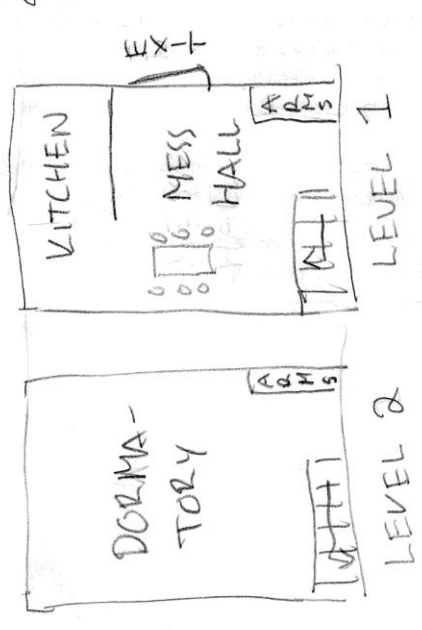
LEVEL 2 TO RAMPARTS



(*) : DOOR IS BARRED FROM THE INSIDE

TO RAMPARTS

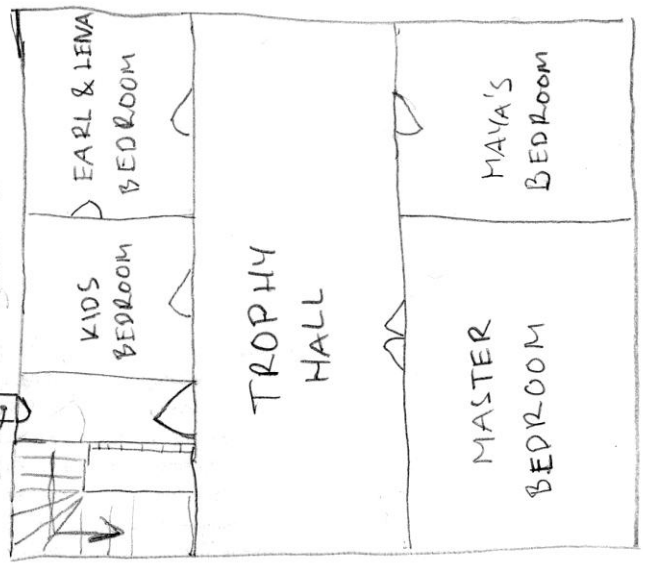
BARRACKS

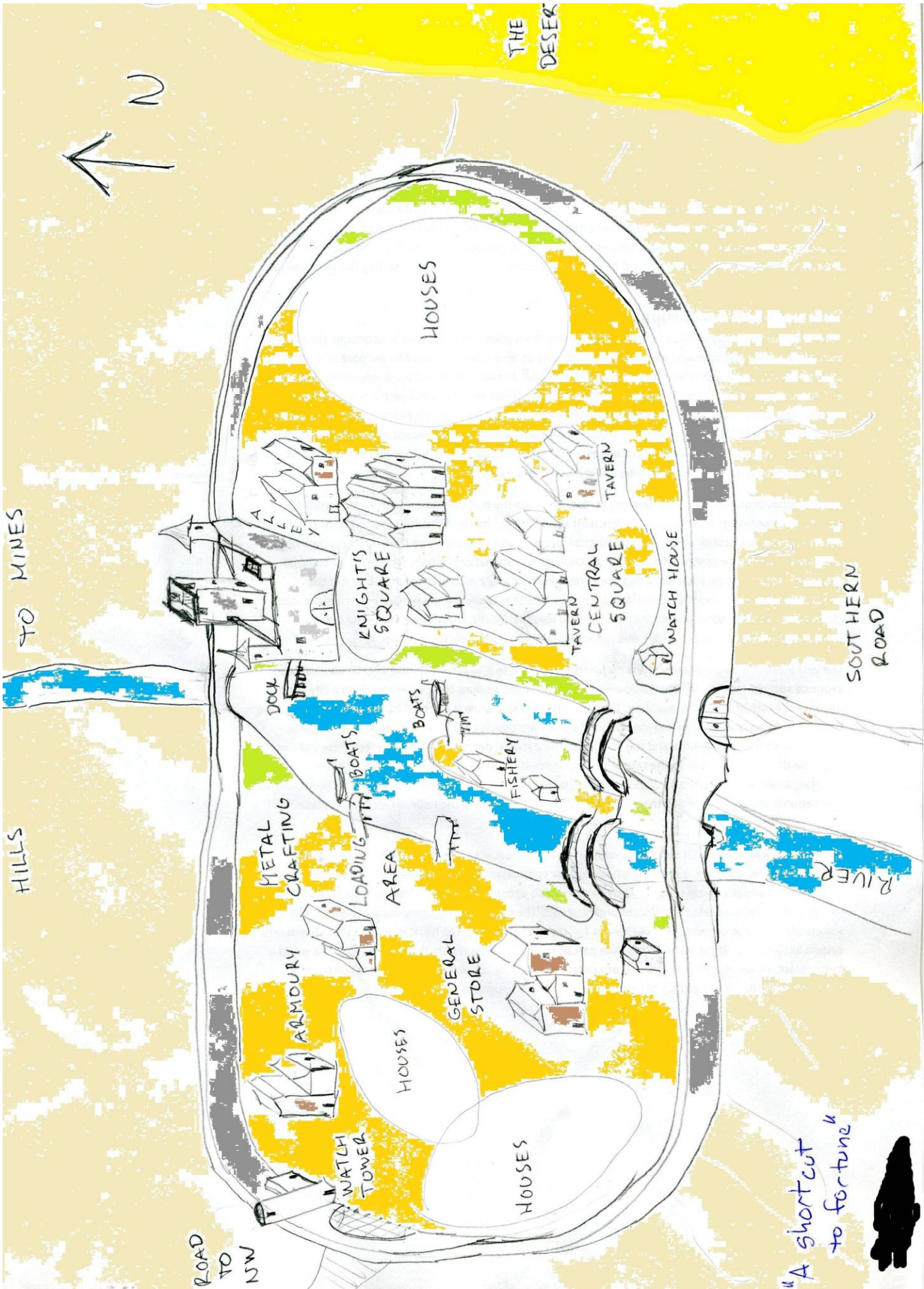


THE BASEMENT

"TOILET"

LEVEL 3





"A shortcut
to fortune"