

B EYOND THE W ALL AND OTHER ADVENTURES



HEARTHS
AND HOMES

HEARTHS AND HOMES

This booklet gives you further rules for telling stories in and around the village in games of *Beyond the Wall and Other Adventures*. The GM can use the information contained herein to help run the “Troubled Village” Scenario Pack, or just to develop the characters’ home village in further detail.

If there is one thing which most defines the type of fantasy represented by *Beyond the Wall*, it is the village. Our heroes must have a home, and they must have friends and families in that home worth fighting for. This booklet should help the GM and group learn more about that home and run more games within it. Adventures within the village offer a different kind of gaming experience from those in a dungeon; this is a chance to explore human relationships, to end old rivalries, to tell a love story, or to learn about the histories of friends. The drama within a village is usually social and not physical, and in such cases the hero who swings his sword has already lost.

The chapter titled the Village Expanded gives some tools and suggestions for the group to customize their own village. Using this chapter, the group can further flesh out some of the NPCs around town, add special characters to the village, and detail the customs and festivals celebrated in their homes.

Next there is a chapter giving an extended example of play using the Troubled Village Scenario Pack. This chapter can help a gamemaster get an idea of how to use the Scenario Pack multiple times and to think on her feet when dealing with troubles at home.

The last section gives gamemasters a new Threat Pack to use in longer campaigns. Full rules for using Threat Packs to run a campaign of *Beyond the Wall* are provided the *Further Afield* supplement. This particular Threat Pack represents a dangerous and evil organization of tradesmen who are making trouble in and around the characters’ village, threatening to destabilize the region and ruin feelings of fellowship.



THE VILLAGE EXPANDED

Every group's village is different, but there are certain core assumptions introduced in the Character Playbooks and Scenario Packs for *Beyond the Wall and Other Adventures*. This chapter lays out those assumptions and expands on them, then gives numerous ideas for ways a group can customize its own village.

The group could go through this chapter as part of their village creation process, perhaps after they have finished making their village map, and take the extra time to bring their characters' home even more fully to life. Alternatively, the group could get straight to an adventure as normal and then revisit the information in this chapter as needed; there is no reason that the players have to know about all of the village festivals and residents before play begins.

Beyond the Wall assumes that the characters' home village is small and self-sufficient, and that it is probably rather secluded. A population of anywhere from 100 to 500 villagers will work for the Playbooks; a smaller settlement is unlikely to have many of the NPCs mentioned in the Playbooks, while a larger one starts to approach the size of a small town and is likely to lead to a different sort of game. The inhabitants of the village live in family homes, often with three or more generations under a single roof. The whole village, then, probably has fifteen homes on the smallest end and as many as 100 on the largest. Most of these homes will be in the village itself, with surrounding farmland that the villagers go out to work, but there are also probably a few larger farms held and worked by single families scattered about within a mile or two of the village proper.

The village has good farmland around it, a river somewhat nearby in which the men go fishing, mountains (or at least large hills) in which the shepherds roam, and, of course, dangerous and frightening woods nearby. The villagers are mostly farmers, fishermen, and shepherds, and are rather self-sufficient; they probably make their own clothes and even shoes as needed. They are likely

to barter with one another for most things, but have some coin on hand for trade with other villages and wandering merchants and peddlers. There are but a few specialized craftsmen or professionals in town: a miller, a smith, an innkeep, and the witch.

The group is encouraged to change any of these assumptions that they wish for their own games of *Beyond the Wall*, but should be conscious when doing so; if the GM or the players decide that there is no river or forest near their home, or that the village is without a smith, they will likely need to make some adjustments to results found within the Character Playbooks and Scenario Packs.

VILLAGE REGULARS

The Character Playbooks mention many possible inhabitants of the village. One player might find that his character's father was an outcast and another that her heroine was raised by a local merchant. When characters such as these arise during character and village creation, they naturally lead to many questions which can help the group learn more about its village. Why was one man in the village cast out? Can he redeem himself? What does the merchant sell? Does he have contacts in larger places? Does he travel the roads often?

Other village inhabitants are mentioned several times during the Character Playbooks. These villagers are likely to appear during a game of *Beyond the Wall*, and it would not be unusual for more than one character to have connections to them. Therefore, while every village does not necessarily have an outcast, we assume that all of the following characters or groups of characters are present in the village unless the group explicitly decides otherwise. Each of these characters is described below, and each is accompanied by some suggestions about how the group or GM might personalize them. For each there is a list of simple descriptors that the GM or group can apply to the character.

GRANDMOTHER WEAVER

This ancient matron is as old and wise as anyone in the village, save perhaps the witch. Unlike the witch, however, Grandmother Weaver's wisdom, power, and knowledge are born of the natural world. She has lived this long and learned this much by good health, a keen mind, and a little luck.

Grandmother Weaver keeps many of the old stories. She knows everyone in the village and likely knew their grandparents as well. If there is a haunting, a forgotten curse, or an old feud, she is a good source of information for the characters.

Your Grandmother Weaver might be: gentle, gossiping, manipulative, quick-tempered

Your Grandmother Weaver might have: a book, a dilapidated house, a magical item, a sweet granddaughter

THE INNKEEP

The inn in your village can house the occasional traveler, but mostly serves as a common house for the locals, offering food, drink, and fellowship well into the night. It is very likely that the characters meet here regularly because most of the villagers do. This is where the community comes together to tell stories, make plans, and celebrate their neighbors' successes.

The innkeep runs this establishment, but the Playbooks do not tell the group much more about him. Is the innkeep solitary or does a family run the inn? One or more of the characters might be children of the innkeep. Has the inn been in this innkeep's family for generations or is it new? Is the innkeep himself new, having arrived to the village from foreign lands?

Your innkeep might be: boisterous, kind, knowledgeable, quiet

Your innkeep might have: a heroic past, a secret, a strange pet, a troublesome family

THE MILLER

There is perhaps no more important trade in the village than that of the miller. It is by his work that the village grain is turned to flour, and he feeds the entire community as much as the farmers do. He has a large family and is likely one of the most prominent inhabitants of the village.

The miller appears often in the Playbooks. The characters might be about to marry into his family, or they might have saved him or one of his kin in the past. A prominent man like the miller remembers his debts and can help the characters immensely. On the other hand, he is unlikely to have much use for silliness and is probably uninterested in adventures. There is another side to the miller in some of the Playbooks as well; it may be that the miller has a hidden agenda and meets with unsavory thieves or even a cult.

Your miller might be: ambitious, fatherly, overly generous, protective

Your miller might have: a difficult child, a hidden treasure, a mistress, a secret enemy

THE SMITH

A good smith is vital to the life of any village. While the villagers are able to make most things for themselves, it takes a skilled laborer to make and repair farm instruments, shoe horses, and, possibly, craft simple weapons for home defense.

Characters might be children of the smith, or might have simply worked with him when they were younger, learning a bit of his trade. As an important member of the community, the smith also shows up in several special events in the Playbooks.

Your smith might be: distant, taciturn and grim, very helpful, intimidating

Your smith might have: his own horse, a lump of meteoric iron, an old dog, a warrior's past

THE WATCH

A dangerous world surrounds the village. While all of the locals who are of age can probably arm themselves and rush to the defense of their homes when there is need, the villagers have also selected some of their number to serve as a town watch. This is a difficult job; the watchmen must often be awake at hours when their neighbors are soundly asleep, and they must be ever ready to raise the alarm or confront an interloper or a wild beast.

The village might have a single watchman or as many as three or four, depending on its size and how dangerous the surroundings are. They are there to warn

of impending danger, to serve as a first line of defense if necessary, and to gather the militia when there is an attack. When time permits, they do keep a rough kind of peace, investigating problems as needed and helping unruly drunks find their way home from the the inn.

Your watchman might be: arrogant, forgiving, just and honorable, simple

Your watchman might have: a fine weapon, a hound, a swift horse, a thieving friend

THE WITCH

The village has always had a witch and it always will. She is the healer, the namer, and the protector. She is also a source of fright for children and often adults. Her powers are strange and sometimes unseemly. She lives on the edge of the village or just beyond it, and always sits somewhat apart. She is also the most likely patron of the characters within the village; no one else is more likely to take an interest in the actions of foolish adventurers or to have more uses for them.

Two Character Playbooks, the Witch's Prentice and the Assistant Beast Keeper, are directly tied to the witch as her pupils. However, she makes an appearance of one sort or another in most of the Playbooks. She will take particular interest in characters who know any sort of magic, though she may not approve of magic other than her own.

Your witch might be: distant, surprisingly energetic, scheming, senile

Your witch might have: a new apprentice, a predecessor, a rival, a wandering garden

OTHER PROFESSIONS

As stated earlier, each village family is rather self-sufficient and mostly make what they need for themselves. However, it is probable that there are a couple of skilled craftsmen or professionals in the village besides the smith and miller. For every 50 or so villagers, the group can consider adding another professional to the village.

Your village might have: an artist, a baker, a carpenter, a cobbler, a cooper, a fishmonger, a furrier, a jeweler, a mason, a poet, a ropemaker, a tailor, a tanner, a vintner, a woodwright

THE WITCH IS DEAD!

If someone in the group is playing the Witch's Prentice, it is possible that the witch will have died as the result of an event described in the character's Playbook. This can be great fuel for games, but it can also present problems if the witch makes a prominent appearance in later Scenario Packs. If she happens, the group has several options.

First, the gamemaster can simply think on her feet and replace the witch with another NPC. This has the advantage of honoring the events of the character's past and making it really matter that the village has found itself without a witch. On the other hand, there is no one else in the village as likely to have an expertise involving the unseen world as the witch, and it may be hard to work another villager into the witch's role.

The GM can also consider simply having the witch return alive. She is a strange lady who may have been in the village for generations. There is no need to explain how the witch survived or returned from her harrowing experience.

Of course, the GM may decide that the village looks to one of the PCs to fill the witch's shoes.

Finally, the group can simply decide that there must always be a witch, and so a replacement has been found. Perhaps one of the village matrons was the witch's apprentice long ago and now takes on her former mistress' mantle. Perhaps a new witch arrives from a distant land, already seeming to know that the village has need of her. The new witch may even be young!

UNUSUAL VILLAGERS

Sometimes the village might be home to an unusual wanderer, craftsperson, or other sort. This section provides five examples of such unlikely villagers. Most villages will have none of these people. The group might decide to add one of these folk to their village, but should be aware that it will likely change the flavor of the game.

THE FAE EMISSARY

Usually we assume that the characters and everyone that they know are human, and that faeries interact rarely with the lands of men. Even if one of the players chooses to make an elf, dwarf, halfling, or gnomish character, the Playbooks suggest that they are rare and unusual and that other fae are seen infrequently.

This NPC, however, represents a non human inhabitant of the village sent on a mission of some length from the lands of faerie. She might be an elf or a dwarf, or she might be an uncategorized type of fae. The villagers may be distrustful of her, or they may have fully integrated her into the village. The gamemaster should decide just why the emissary is in the village and what her true motives, or those of her master, are.

Your fae emissary might be: fickle, gentle, watchful, quick to anger

Your fae emissary might have: a faerie helper, great wealth, a strange home, a way to and from faerie lands

THE GUARDIAN

Instead of relying on their own bravery and the help of the watchmen alone, the village may be home to a special guardian. This is likely a skilled warrior, perhaps a knight or a gruff ranger who has sworn to spend her life protecting the village. Groups wishing something more fantastical could consider a watchful treant or golem, or a spirit who protects the village.

The guardian might be a mentor of sorts to the characters, though she is unlikely to encourage them risking their lives and would disapprove of them leaving the village to go on a quest or adventure. She can make things difficult for the gamemaster, as the characters may rely on her too heavily when there is trouble at home.

Your guardian might be: devout, overprotective, suspicious, unwavering

Your guardian might have: a dangerous foe, a hidden curse, a magical weapon, a mighty steed

THE OLD PRIEST

This holy man or woman worships the old gods and may tend the altar of a temple in or around the village, or may simply perform sacred rites at a natural place

or in a room or basement within town. His relationship with the villagers might be strained, or he could tend them as a shepherd does his flocks.

The group may use the Devout Acolyte Character Playbook found in *The Village* and *Heroes Young and Old* to learn about this priest and his gods; several tables in that Playbook give sample deities. Alternatively, the group may simply brainstorm ideas about the religion together, using examples from history or fiction as inspiration.

Your old priest might be: difficult, honorable, judgmental, reclusive

Your old priest might have: a band of followers, the lord's ear, a rival sect, a sacred altar

THE SEER

Living away from the village, even more so than the witch, the seer has secluded himself from ordinary human contact. He probably lives in the forests near the village, or in the mountains. He may come to town for a festival or wedding, or to beg for a bit of food or cloth, but otherwise the villagers must seek him when they wish to hear a prophecy.

The presence of such a seer may make the village famous, leading travelers and other adventurers to seek out the characters' home so that they might ask questions of its prophet. The seer could have come by his powers naturally, he might be a sorcerer, or he may have made a dark and terrible bargain years ago.

Your seer might be: courteous, demanding, elusive, extremely protective

Your seer might have: contacts with other prophets, a pack of ancient cards, a scrying pool, a talking goat

THE SUCCESSFUL MERCHANT

While all villages, even secluded ones, have a little trade with their neighbors, the assumption is that they do not depend on this trade in their day to day lives. If their village houses a successful merchant, however, it will begin to feel more worldly and connected. There are probably more traders who come through, and the village may produce an important good that is worth money or trade from elsewhere.

The merchant might have made his own fortune, or he could have inherited most of his wealth and be just one in a long line of such traders. He might be the parent of one of the children (one of the Playbook childhood results does suggest that the character's parents were merchants), or he may need their help getting his goods to market.

Your merchant might be: brave, foolish, honest, unscrupulous

Your merchant might have: a caravan, a dark secret, a hired mercenary, the largest house in town

VILLAGE CUSTOMS

A village is more than a collection of people. Over the course of generations, each village will have naturally developed its own unique set of customs and traditions. A particular village may practice all of the customs described below, or only some. The GM or group can work through the list and answer some questions about how their particular village handles important ceremonies.

WEDDINGS

Most of the cultures depicted in *Beyond the Wall* engage in monogamous relationships, the culmination of which is a formal wedding ceremony. What makes a particular village special is just how its inhabitants go about celebrating such a union. Other practices are, of course, possible.

The wedding might be held at: the parents' home, the couple's new home, the village square, a sacred place

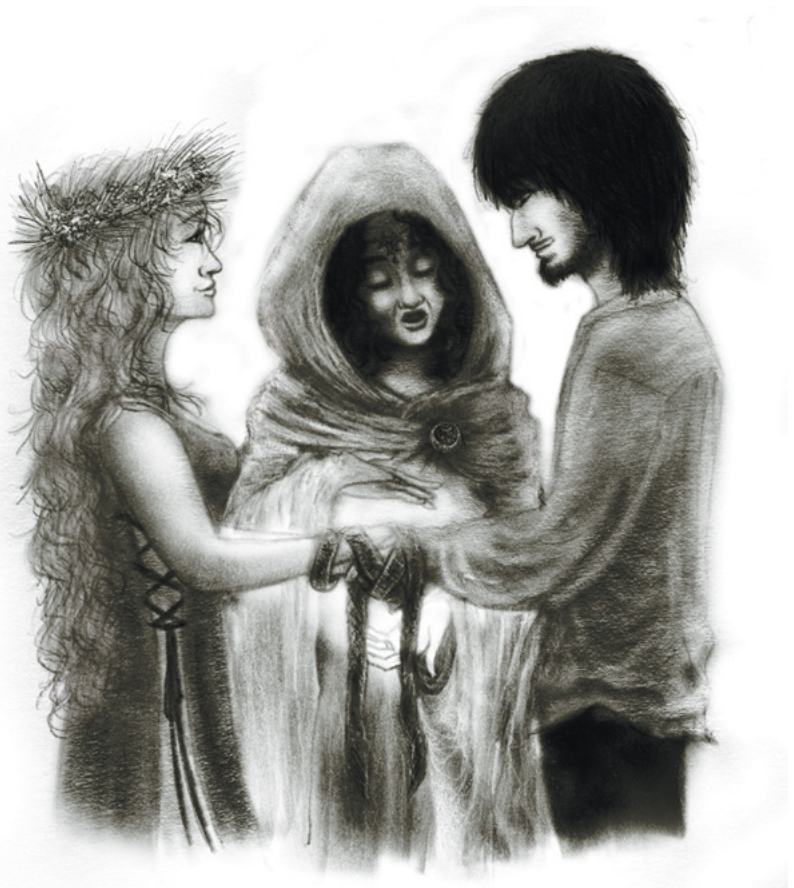
The wedding might be performed by: the witch, the village elders, the parents, the couple themselves, an official

FUNERALS

All mortals must die. At such a sad time, it is usual for the community to gather and remember the departed. Customs vary in terms of how the body is handled and in what ways the survivors display their grief.

The body might go to: a funeral pyre, a cairn, a barrow, a graveyard

Villagers might mourn by: drinking, telling tales, silence, a funeral procession, games or sports



NAMING CEREMONY

The giving of a true name is a momentous occasion, one that marks a person's passage into adulthood or greatness. In some cultures, all children are given true names upon coming of age, while in others only heroes or noteworthy people receive such an honor. In some cultures, true names are not given at all. Some cultures make such a naming a public occasion, in the presence of all, while in others this is a solitary affair.

The name might be given by: parents, the recipient, the witch, a village elder, the village elders, the crows

The name might be given: at home, in a sacred spot, in the village square, in the witch's hut, in the wilderness

BEATING OF THE BOUNDS

What marks a civilization is its borders. In many villages, the act of renewing and remembering these borders is practiced in an annual gathering called the Beating of the Bounds. This is often a raucous occasion, at which time the villagers together walk the boundaries of their territory, typically marking them with signs and ceremonies.

The group might be led by: the witch, the village elders, a special appointee, the head of the watch, the most recently named villager

The villagers might mark the boundaries by: leaving offerings, cutting hedges, mending walls, singing traditional songs, leaving border markings, ritual combat

VILLAGE MILITIA

While the villages depicted in *Beyond the Wall* are too small to have any organized military of professional soldiers, the villagers know that they live in a dangerous world, and they count upon one another for mutual defense. In addition to this, a local lord might require the villagers to drill for his levies. Some villages ask that all able-bodied folk train in arms, while others look only to a few strong souls for such service.

The militia might consist of: all adults, only men, only women, landholders, members of the five largest families

The militia might train: every week with bows, in formation on a field, by sparring with wooden swords, by hunting dangerous game

SUPERSTITIONS

All folk have superstitions. Of course, in *Beyond the Wall*, many such customs are born of truth. The villagers often remember old hurts and dangers in their own peculiar practices, and the young would be wise to remember their elders' warnings.

The village might have a prohibition against: drawing water at night, killing game during a particular month, wearing a certain color, mentioning the fae

The villagers might always: offer hospitality, leave the last morsel of food, garland their doors on the full moon, chant the names of the dead before bed, lie to strangers about the location of the village

VILLAGE FESTIVALS

While life can be hard for villagers, there is also joy and merriment, and all folk look forward to special holidays. When such celebrations occur, work is set aside, and many special traditions are observed.

GREAT MARKET

Some villages are too secluded for frequent trade with outsiders, but most are connected to other towns, cities, or lands. For people so connected, a great market often marks the coming together of different folk and a time of plenty, when foreign goods and entertainers find their way to the small village.

The great market might be held: in the fall, every season, once every four years, when a particular star shines in the night sky

The market might be attended by: lords and ladies, the bravest merchants, the folk from many neighboring villages, mummers and players, the fae

HARVEST FESTIVAL

In an agrarian society, the wealth and well-being of a village is almost entirely dependent upon a plentiful harvest. Harvest time requires great effort, and, of course, great celebration. When a major crop comes in, all rejoice.

The occasion might be marked by: ritual dances, a sacrifice, a remembrance of the dead, a celebration of children

During harvest all the villagers: gather at the inn, dry and store surplus, bring trees into their homes, burn a wicker man

SOLSTICE

For all folk who watch the skies and mark the passage of time, the changing of the seasons is a momentous occasion. At the solstices, the world turns from light to dark, and the villagers mark these times in special ways.

During solstices the villagers might: be frightened, elect a fool as head of the village, keep vigils, rise to meet the sun

To prepare for the solstice the villagers might: don special clothes, prepare feasts, hold a great dance in the village square, tell stories of their ancestors

EQUINOX

In opposition to the solstices, the equinoxes mark times of balance. They also mark times when the worlds of men and spirits are closest, and can thus be dangerous for the unwary.

During equinoxes the villagers might: stay awake and fast, bar all doors with iron, elect a chief elder, bathe in the river

To prepare for the solstice the villagers might: pay taxes, bake special breads or cakes, weave effigies, paint masks

USING THE TROUBLED VILLAGE

The Troubled Village Scenario Pack requires a little more improvisation from gamemasters than many of our other packs, but offers great replayability. The Scenario Pack generates a set of seemingly separate problems occurring in the village, some of them quite mundane, and then assists the gamemaster in determining what is tying all of the problems together. This means that, even more than any of the other published Scenario Packs, the Troubled Village can be used many times, but it also means that the GM will have to be quick on her feet.

This chapter provides an extended example of using the Scenario Pack to give the GM an idea of the ways that she can work things together with the Troubled Village Pack. Jesse is running the game for Lori, Peter, and John, and he is going to run two separate adventures.

THE FIRST ADVENTURE

Lori is playing Esther, the Adventurous Trader. Peter is playing David, the Witch's Prentice. John is playing Hector, the Would-Be Knight. Jesse rolls for the name of the village, gets Sabero, writes it on the village worksheet, and puts the sheet out on the table for everyone to see. We won't walk through the character creation process, but Jesse makes certain, as they go, to fill the blanks in the scenario pack with important (or interesting) NPCs and locations that the players introduce. Once the characters are made and the home village discovered, Jesse turns to the Troubled Village Scenario Pack.

Rolling a 1, he finds that the Great Market is coming. He decides the Great Market is an annual affair: a centerpiece of the local economy and a tradition going back time out of mind. Needless to say, the whole village will be abuzz preparing for it. The characters will get a +1 bonus to Charisma for haggling rolls, everything will cost about 10% less, and unusual items will be for sale.

Jesse figures out the connection between the village problems. Getting a 2 on the next table, he discovers the cause of the troubles: a possessing spirit. He makes a note that chasing a possessing spirit through a crowd could be fun.

Jesse fills in the blanks in the next table with locations the players created, then rolls a 4, where he'd written "The Shield Master's Keep," which John had introduced as a village location. He wonders what kind of possessing spirit might care about a training ground for young warriors, but doesn't come up with an answer right away.

On the fourth table, he can choose an NPC to learn something about. He picks Teresa, Esther's helper. Since Teresa is Lori's character's ally, Jesse wants to introduce her with a great story hook. And he gets one. Rolling a 5, he finds that in Teresa's history is an evil pact, much regretted. This fits in well with the possessing spirit that's been haunting his imagination. Maybe Teresa could have been involved with the people who released the spirit?

Jesse already has the blank lines in the event tables filled in with NPCs and locations the others came up with during character creation. He sees that they've got a couple hours left to play after character creation, so he decides on two complicating events.

For the first event, he rolls 7, 2, then 1 on the tables: A family member of one of the PCs has gone missing in Sofia's Woods. John had mentioned his character Hector's younger brother, Rafel, and Jesse remembers this.

For the second event, Jesse rolls 2, 1, and 8. Inigo the grizzled mercenary is involved in a disrupted trade route in Shepherd's Pass northeast of town. Jesse thinks about Inigo assisting the characters with a dramatic rescue in the pass.

While John, Lori, and Peter go fetch sodas and snacks for the game, Jesse flips through the Bestiary, looking for something that has the power of possession. Rather than use a Phantom, he finds the rules for demons, and realizes that a minor incorporeal demon of fear will provide a lot of opportunity for the characters to be brave, and could become a possible nemesis for future adventures. With this, the background comes together.

Jesse decides that Teresa became involved with a group of students at the Shield Master's Keep who had been tricked by a dark spirit into freeing it from its prison in the dungeons of the Keep. So he rolls up Calsum, a minor demon (Minor Demon: 10% magic resistance, causes fear, and vulnerable to iron). Teresa fled the room during the ritual that summoned the demon. She hasn't talked about it since, and will try almost anything to avoid going back to the Keep.

The spirit lurked there for years, lost in the maze-like tunnels beneath the Keep, until just this morning, when a porter gathering supplies for the Great Market accidentally showed Calsum the way out.

The first event will reveal the demon's existence: It possesses a visitor from the South and tries to flee town through Shepherd's Pass, but a freak rockslide stops him and blocks the pass. Inigo is nearby, and will come to the village for help, while Calsum goes looking for a new host. Since the Market opens today, and Shepherd's Pass is a major way into the village of Sabero, Jesse knows that something will have to be done. He doesn't make any final decisions about how to solve the problem, but makes a note that two hard skill rolls ought to be a good baseline difficulty for this task, maybe two Strength

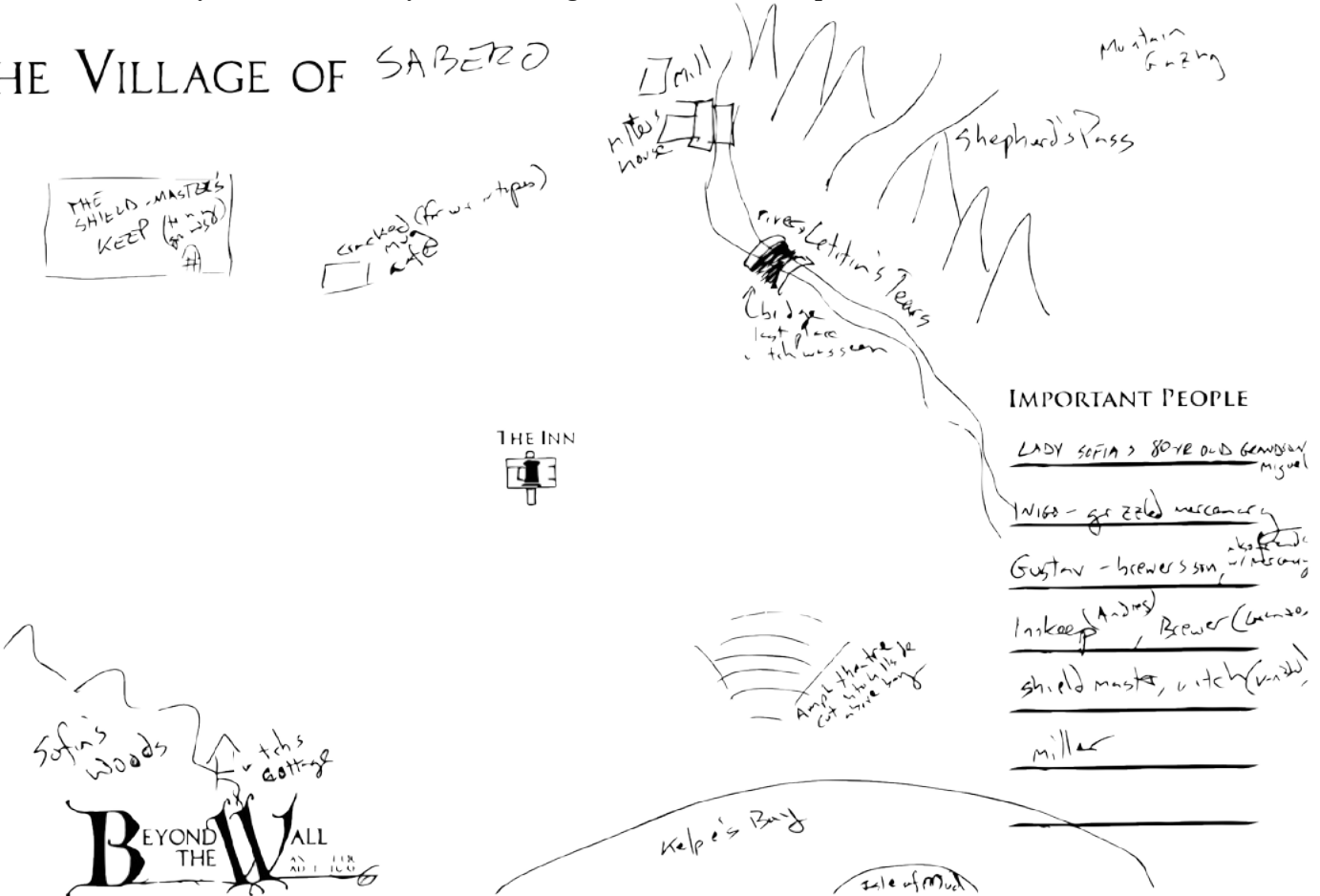
checks if the players decide to muscle the rock out of the way, or a ropes and Intelligence skill check to build a pulley system to help clear the debris.

The second event will be caused by Calsum's next dash out of town, when it possesses Hector's younger brother Rafel and uses him to flee through Sofia's Woods. Jesse knows that tracking and hunting skill rolls would help with this. He decides to have Hector's parents interrupt his work on the rockslide to beg his help finding Rafel. If the players find Rafel, they'll be able to confront Calsum. Jesse puts Calsum's stats down on scratch paper, along with the stats for Commoner and Soldier.

Once everyone gets settled down with chips and drinks, Jesse has the players take turns rolling on the recent events table. Lori, with a 4, talks about Esther's encounter with a pickpocket. She passes her Wisdom check, so Lori describes her pointing out the pickpocket to the innkeep and earning everyone free food and drink at the inn for the rest of the Great Market.

Peter, rolling a 3, describes his character David's argument with the Brewer while setting up market stalls. He flubs his Charisma roll badly, so the Brewer is mad and won't help them no matter what.

THE VILLAGE OF SABERO



- IMPORTANT PEOPLE**
- LADY SOFIA > 80-YR OLD GRANDMAY Miguel
 - Wiss - ge zed mechanic
 - Gustav - brewer's son, also brewer - interesting
 - Innkeeper (Andros) / Brewer (Gustav)
 - Shield master, witch (unseen)
 - Miller

John, rolling 10, got his character Hector pressed into service helping the carpenter. He passed his Dexterity check, and the carpenter decides he owes Hector a favor. Jesse notes that this would be perfect for clearing the pass and wonders if the players will think of it. He starts: “It’s the morning of the Great Market, and ...” the game’s afoot!

After they save the day for the Great Market and banish Calsum to Sofia’s Woods (a problem for another day) the group decides to keep the game going for future adventures. Jesse rolls on The Road Goes On tables.

For their reward, Jesse rolls a 2: The heroes are rewarded with their own home or farmstead. For the adventure seed, Jesse rolls another 2: Neighboring villagers are experiencing troubles of their own and send for help.

Since the adventure ended with the characters revealing the troubles beneath the Shield Master’s Keep, the Shield Master grants the characters a farm on its holdings, naming them its protectors and partners. Since the only thing faster than light is gossip, word gets around. They haven’t even finished moving out of their parents’ houses before a ragged messenger from Oencia, the next village downstream, comes begging for help with a problem of their own. Jesse looks at the Goblin Infestation Scenario Pack and grins

Our heroes set out to help the village of Oencia, but that’s a story for another time.

THE SECOND ADVENTURE

Many adventures later, after saving Oencia from a band of beastmen and journeying deep into the fae wood to battle a Questing Beast, our heroes go home hoping to rest, but life is never that easy. Jesse decides to dust off the Troubled Village Scenario Pack as a break from the quest for the city in the southern lands.

Rolling a 1 on the very first table, Jesse puts the events on the day of next year’s Great Market, just like the first adventure. This may become a motif on their visits home. With a 6 on the next table, Jesse finds out that the troubles are connected by gambling debts, extortion, or family secrets.

Jesse rolls a 3 for the location, ensuring the characters will visit Shepherd’s Pass on this adventure as well.

Since the last adventures featured Hector’s trapping of a Questing Beast, and David’s discovery of a magic circle, Jesse picks an NPC Lori introduced: Lady Sofia’s 80 year old grandson Miguel, who taught Esther how to play chess.

A quick glance at the clock shows that they have time for about two events in this evening’s adventure.

For the first, Jesse rolls 7, 5, and 6, giving him a PC’s family member involved with a sudden food shortage at the Cracked Mug Cafe near the Shield Master’s Keep.

For the second, Jesse rolls 3, 4, and 2. Gustav, the brewer’s son, who’s another friend of Inigo, the grizzled mercenary, is involved with a fire spreading in the village from the amphitheatre above the bay.

Hrm, gambling debts... While our players fetch snacks, Jesse puts together the backstory.

Miguel knows about a “friendly game” of Chaturanga, or “gambler’s chess,” held in the back room of the Cracked Mug. He was there the night two rival gangs of robbers showed up to play. And cleaned them out.

They want their money back, and will take it from the village if they can’t get it from Miguel. With hideouts along Shepherd’s Pass, the gangs are in a position to ruin the Great Market if their feud isn’t settled. One gang’s started robbing the Cracked Mug. For now, they’ve waylaid the trader who supplies that tavern with its better liquors and the sausage for its famous meat pies. The other band of brigands has tricked Gustav into setting the village amphitheatre on fire to distract the everyone while they break into Miguel’s house.

The players will have the fun of identifying the culprits, confusing the gangs, and, just maybe, getting a decent meal in their favorite cafe at the end of it all. Let’s just hope the fire doesn’t scare buyers away from the Great Market.

Jesse jots down stats for the brigands, grabs Miguel’s “village elder” stats from *Heroes Young and Old*, and gets the group ready to roll on the recent events table and start the evening.

THE WICKED TRADESMEN

Sometimes there is nothing worse for a people's happiness than the simple and daily evils of the marketplace. Bad men, acting selfishly, can bring a village to its knees as easily as a sinister wizard in a far-off tower. A network of wicked tradesmen has grown up in the area of the characters' home and are attempting to control the village and surrounding lands, and they will use all the means at their disposal to do so. This threatens the characters' homes, their families, and all of the tradesmen in the region.

This Threat Pack provides a group of crooked traders looking to increase profits. While their powers may not be fantastical, they are not to be underestimated. The characters cannot slay a business the same way they would a dragon, and they will be drummed out of town if they take up arms against their neighbors. This Threat gives non-combat characters a chance to shine.

DURING CHARACTER CREATION

When the group is designing the village and coming up with significant NPCs, it is important that one or more of them have ties to the wicked tradesmen and their organization. The gamemaster should feel free

to embellish on this relationship as the players create NPCs. Perhaps Richard, the farmer, had a season of failed crops and is now in debt to the tradesmen, or perhaps the Miller's family has been bullied by the organization's thugs. The PCs will know some, but not all, of these connections.

If, at the end of village creation, there are not any NPCs with such connections, the gamemaster should introduce one or two herself. The GM should be sure to connect these NPCs not just to the tradesmen but also to the players' characters.

Should any of the PCs end up with trade or crafting skills as a result of their Character Playbooks, the group should make a note of where the character learned these skills and what his apprenticeship was like. It is likely that the character learned his craft inside the village. If this is the case, make sure that the character's old master is listed as an important NPC and that the master's workshop or home is on the village map.

Finally, at least one character should make a roll on the following table as their fourth roll during character creation.

1d6	How did the tradesmen cheat you or your kin?	Gain
1	You spent a lot of your childhood hungry because of a crippling debt owed to the tradesmen.	-1 Con, Skill: Foraging
2	One of your siblings has gone to work for the tradesmen and loves it there.	-1 Wis, Skill: Haggling
3	One of your parents was put out of work and publicly humiliated by the tradesmen, much to your family's shame.	-1 Cha, +1 Wis
4	When you were more foolish and younger, one of the wicked tradesmen sold you some "magic" beans.	-1 Int, +1 Cha
5	You worked in the tradesmen's stables until one of the mules kicked you and broke your leg. You were dismissed and the witch nursed you back to health.	-1 Dex, +1 Con
6	For several winters, you kept books for the tradesmen and learned their methods.	-1 Str, +1 Int

ON THE CAMPAIGN MAP

When the players are ready to start making the campaign map, but before they begin to place major locations, the group should work together to build a trade network between small villages on the map. This will involve everyone taking turns placing a village on the map and saying a couple of things about it, then determining how the villages connect to one another. This process will also set up some of the geography for the campaign map.

The gamemaster should determine how many villages to include in the trade network before starting. We recommend having every player, including the gamemaster, be responsible for one new village. If you have a particularly small or large group, however, this may not work. Five villages is ideal, but nine would be too many.

The trade network will begin in the characters' home village and move outward from there. Each player will make a village within the network in turn. When a player does this, he must first determine the direction to move from the starting village. For direction, the player may simply pick or roll 1d6 to determine a random hex edge from which to move.

Now the player picks up a d4, a d6, and a d8 and rolls them. Using these dice and the tables below the player will learn how far away the village is, what sort of trade route connects it to the starting village, and what the village's primary industry is.

1d4	Distance
1	one day (20 miles, 2 hexes)
2-3	two days (40 miles, 4 hexes)
4	three days (60 miles, 6 hexes)

1d6	Trade Route
1	ocean or lake
2	river
3-4	road
5	pass (mountain, swamp, bog)
6	bridge

1d8	Village Industry
1	craft
2	minerals
3	fishing or ranching
4	grain farming
5	hunting or logging
6	orchards
7	vegetable farming
8	commerce

Using these results, the player should feel free to embellish on the new village a bit. In particular, he should name the village and one important NPC within it. This might be someone with a lot of clout in the village, like a mayor, elder, or guild master, but it is just as likely to be a simple person whom the player's character met at market last winter.

Each time you add a village, start from the most recent addition. Sometimes, while following these steps, the network will end up with a very strange result, like an overlap, or a village off the edge of the map. If this happens, the group may either move the village to a sensible location, or return to the characters' home village as the new starting point instead. The trade network will be uninteresting if it just goes in a straight line in one direction, for instance.

After completing the network, the group should discuss the results with one another and add any appropriate additional routes. The type of routes and industries the group has come up with will say a lot about the terrain around the area of the characters' home village.

If the process of creating such a network of villages seems complicated, see p.16 to see some step-by-step examples.

Once this process is complete, the group can move on to placing major locations around the map as normal, described on p.6 of *Further Afield*.

THE WICKED ORGANIZATION

The gamemaster will need to determine the particulars of the tradesmen's organization. She can roll on the following tables for inspiration or choose the results

that she prefers. The tables will tell you what trade the organization's founding members first practiced, who the current leader is, and what that leader's dark secret might be.

An organization made with these tables represents a trade cartel run by a particularly powerful merchant. Like any other chimera or money-making organization, cutting off the head will just make room for a new one to grow, so direct force against the leader is not usually effective. However, learning the leader's secret may give the characters leverage over the organization.

Knowing what sort of group the characters are dealing with is very important to using this Threat Pack. Different guilds of wicked traders will have different motives and different favored means of control, and the GM should give some thought to the character of this particular group. The gamemaster may even want to use this Threat Pack more than once in a single campaign to represent multiple guilds in opposition to each other. This can create several Threats for your particularly capitalist campaigns.

1d8 What trade did the group practice in the beginning of their rise to power?

- 1 carter
- 2 milling
- 3 smithing
- 4 innkeeping
- 5 herding
- 6 forestry
- 7 shipping
- 8 fishing

1d8 What is the group's mark or standard?

- 1 a fist
- 2 an eye
- 3 a coin
- 4 a stag
- 5 a scythe
- 6 scales
- 7 a tree
- 8 a field of stars

1d6 How did the group's current leader come to power within the organization?

- 1 good business sense
- 2 blackmail, extortion, or forbidden secrets
- 3 bribes
- 4 fraud
- 5 hired muscle
- 6 whisper campaign

1d8 What is the dark secret of the head of the organisation?

- 1 possessed by a minor demon
- 2 raising ransom for loved one
- 3 is a changeling, and follows a fae agenda
- 4 haunted - by whom, or what, and why?
- 5 magic Item - has it, wants it, or wants to destroy it?
- 6 secretly fighting another threat. (working against other threat pack used in campaign)
- 7 exiled nobleman from distant land
- 8 thinks he's bringing stability and order to the region, if not nicely, then effectively

IMMINENCE AND SCHEMES

The Wicked Tradesmen begin with an Imminence rating of 3. The organization affects the characters' home village and all the other villages in the trading network in several ways.

First, the actions of the organization can change the mood of the local populace, and this results in bonuses or penalties to all Charisma related rolls made by the PCs while within the trade network. The Wicked Tradesmen worksheet has a simple tracker to help the gamemaster remember the mood of the NPCs within the trade network. Many of the organization's activation results affect the peoples' mood, thus making it harder for the PCs to make friends, get proper housing, or gather information. While interacting with NPCs within the trade network, characters receive a bonus or penalty to all Charisma checks equal to the mood rating.

The second way in which the organization's actions affect the trade network is, unsurprisingly, by upsetting the local economy. This is, after all, the organiza-

tion's main goal. Their actions and growing centralized base of wealth make it harder and harder for the PCs and their friends to find certain items, and prices rise throughout the network. As with mood, there is a simple scarcity tracker on the Wicked Tradesmen worksheet. As scarcity rises, so do prices; each point of scarcity raises the cost of a good by 25%. Round up all fractions of a copper cost. For example, a pint of oil for a lantern normally costs 1 copper, but at even +1 scarcity it would cost 2 coppers.

The organization's Imminence can fluctuate quite a bit over the course of the campaign, and always does so as a result of its activation table below, or as a result of PC actions. Sometimes the organization's own plans backfire and it finds itself weakened as a result.

When the Wicked Tradesmen manage to pull off a scheme, the GM should refer to the charts above and think about the character of the organization and its leader. Some groups will be more inclined to using muscle or intimidation, while others prefer to give bribes or spread rumors. Use this information to color the game when the PCs ask what happened and why all their neighbors are so sad.

If the organization activates, it always adds its Imminence rating to the activation table below, and takes any penalties as mentioned below under 'Player Actions.' This result cannot be less than 1.

The Wicked Tradesmen use the activation table on this page.

PLAYER ACTIONS

Some groups may try to solve things the simple way, dispensing their own justice and attempting to kill the head of the organization. This is ineffective. If players kill the leading tradesman, not only will they have assassinated a supposed law abiding citizen, but another will simply rise in his place. The organization is a hydra and cannot be foiled so easily. Characters who have taken part in such an act are likely to find former friends and neighbors distrustful or frightened of them, and may have to deal with legal repercussions.

More effective is helping neighbors and other NPCs deal with the negative effects of the tradesmen, including

1d8 Threat Effects (1d8+Imminence)

- 1** The people grow tired of the tradesmen and attempt to do business without them as much as possible. Imminence -1, Scarcity -1, Mood +1.
- 2** The organization has made a blunder and lost out on a deal of some import. Imminence -1, Mood +1.
- 3** One of the organization's plots backfires. Mood +1, Scarcity -1.
- 4** The leader of the organization intervenes personally in a neighboring village, bringing his thugs with him. Mood -1, Imminence -1.
- 5-6** The organization blocks trade from one distant village to another, increasing the scarcity of goods (except, of course, the ones they have in their own warehouses). Scarcity +1.
- 7** The organization pulls off a scheme in a distant village. Mood -1.
- 8-9** The organization pulls off a scheme in a neighboring village. Mood -1, Imminence +1.
- 10** The organization blocks trade from one nearby village to another, increasing the scarcity of goods (except, of course, the ones they have in their own warehouses). Scarcity +2.
- 11-12** The organization pulls off a scheme in the characters' home village. Mood -1, Imminence +1.
- 13+** The organization takes over all commerce in one of the villages in the network. This will always happen to the farthest village in the network first, and then get progressively closer to the PCs' home village, which will always be the last to fall. Mood -1, Scarcity +1, Imminence +1.

gifting or investing money from their adventures. When players invest in their home village, or successfully organize the villagers, this will hinder the expansion of the organization in the region. If the players do so, it will certainly give a temporary penalty to the Wicked Tradesmen's threat effect rolls (that is, the roll the Threat makes if it activates). Simple, kind acts and small gifts give the organization a -1 to its threat effect roll, while significant acts, like large feasts or the gifting of a new anvil to the smithy, give a -5 to the next such roll.

If the PCs wish to deflate the organization in more permanent ways, they are going to have to find a way to beat it at its own game. By using large sums of money found while adventuring, the characters can help their friends and neighbors (or even each other) to set up new businesses and trade deals not beholden to the organization at all. Each such action requires a large investment (at least 2,000 silvers worth, depending on the type of business in question), but will permanently decrease the organization's Imminence by one. Be warned: these new ventures will require protection, which may mean that the PCs get personally involved or that they hire their own muscle to guard their investment.

Should the organization's Imminence be reduced to zero from such actions, it has been disbanded and the PCs have saved their friends and family from the Wicked Tradesmen.

TRADE NETWORK EXAMPLE

Making a trade network using this Scenario Pack can seem a bit confusing at first. This example should help the GM and group see how things work.

Lori is playing Esther, the Adventurous Trader. Peter is playing David, the Witch's Prentice. John is playing Hector, the Would-Be Knight. Jesse is running the game.

Lori goes first, rolling a 1d6 for the direction of the first village in the trade network. This means it will be to the south-east. She then rolls 1d4 for the distance, getting a 4, for three days travel (or 6 hexes), 1d6 for the key feature of the trade route, getting a 5, for a pass, and rolls a 1d8 for the village's primary export, getting a 5 for logging. The group decides that the village lies in old forests over a mountain range. Lori names the village Elderham, and places it six hexes to the south-east, amidst a forest, with a ridge of mountains just before it.

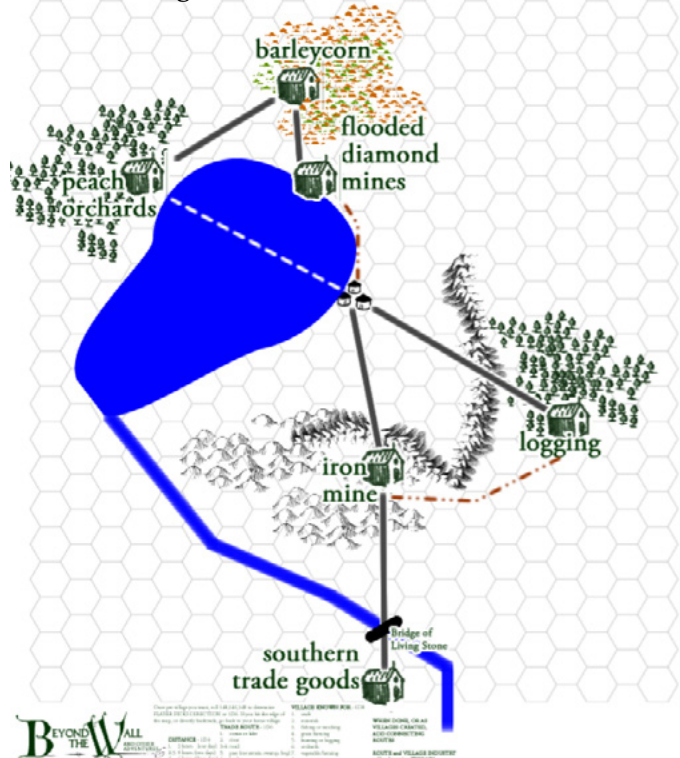
Then Peter goes, rolling a 6 for direction - north-west. Since this would have the road retrace its path, instead they reset to start the path from their home village. He then rolls a 4 for distance - six hexes, a 1 for the trade route - an ocean or lake, and 6 for the village's primary industry, getting orchards. They decide that the village is named Groveholm, and lies across a great lake, near a forest of fruit trees, some cultivated.

John rolls 2 for direction, sending the network to the north-east, where he discovers that it is only two day's travel (a 2) along a flat road (3), and is known for its fields of grain. He names it Barleton, after the barley-corn they grow, and passes the dice back to Lori.

She rolls a 3, putting the next village south, towards their home, then a 1, 3, and 2. Seeing that they're still near the lake, she decides that Lakehaven is known for its flooded diamond mines.

Peter rolls another 3 for direction, which would put his next village too close to home, so they reset again. He next rolls a 3, a 5, and a 2, so two days south of their home village, he places the mining village of Irnborn, across a mountain pass. Since it, too is separated from Oxley by mountains, and is known for its mines, they group decides that it must live along the foothills of the same mountain range as Elderham.

John, for the last village, rolls another three, sending the path south again, then changes out the group's d6. He rolls a 4, 6, and 8, giving him a village three day's journey from Irnborn, across a bridge, and famous as a center of commerce. Jesse mentions that this must be the Bridge of Living Stone, crossing a mighty river flowing from the great lake on Oxley's shore. John names the town Goldwatch, and mentions it is famous for its trade goods from far to the South.



THE WICKED TRADESMEN

IMMINENCE

MOOD

SCARCITY

PARTICULAR GOODS UNAVAILABLE

THREAT EFFECTS: 1D8+IMMINENCE

- 1** The people grow tired of the tradesmen and attempt to do business without them as much as possible. Imminence -1, Scarcity -1, Mood +1.
- 2** The organization has made a blunder and lost out on a deal of some import. Imminence -1, Mood +1.
- 3** One of the organization's plots backfires. Mood +1, Scarcity -1.
- 4** The leader of the organization intervenes personally in a neighboring village, bringing his thugs with him. Mood -1, Imminence -1.
- 5-6** The organization blocks trade from one distant village to another, increasing the scarcity of goods (except, of course, the ones they have in their own warehouses). Scarcity +1.
- 7** The organization pulls off a scheme in a distant village. Mood -1.
- 8-9** The organization pulls off a scheme in a neighboring village. Mood -1, Imminence +1.
- 10** The organization blocks trade from one nearby village to another, increasing the scarcity of goods (except, of course, the ones they have in their own warehouses). Scarcity +2.
- 11-12** The organization pulls off a scheme in the characters' home village. Mood -1, Imminence +1.
- 13+** The organization takes over all commerce in one of the villages in the network. This will always happen to the farthest village in the network first, and then get progressively closer to the PCs' home village, which will always be the last to fall. Mood -1, Scarcity +1, Imminence +1.

THE CARTEL

HEADQUARTERS:

ORIGINAL TRADE:

MARK OR STANDARD:

THE CARTEL'S LEADER

NAME:

RISE TO POWER:

DARK SECRET:

LIST OF OUTRAGES

Keep a list of the effects of the Wicked Tradesmen here, as well as any actions or investments by the PCs that undermine them.

A free addon for *Beyond the Wall and Other Adventures* centered on the characters' home village.

- Sugestions for expanding your village, its customs, and the folk that live there.
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- The Wicked Tradesmen, a new Threat Pack.
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