



# HONOR AMONG THIEVES

By Ree Soesbee

**N**o one ever said the job of a hero was an easy one...

The young daughter of a local Count is missing, kidnapped by unknown forces. Her young life hangs in jeopardy, and her father cannot pay the impossible ransom that has been asked for her return. Desperate to find his daughter, he has promised gold, riches, magic treasures to anyone that can rescue her from her captors. She is only twelve years old.

You prowl the streets of Desburg by night, seeking anyone that might know the whereabouts of Princess Alexandria. Her caravan left only three nights ago, filled with retainers and servants, and guarded by her father's own men. The wreckage of the caravan was found one day's ride south of the city, destroyed and bloodied. Only the body of the Princess was missing.

Suddenly, there is a scream. A terrified young girl in torn garments races toward you from the darkness, pleading for her life. Behind her, five black-garbed figures spring from the shadows in pursuit. Hurlled from a distance, a dagger pierces the young woman's leg and she falls. "Please help me," she cries out. "My name is Lady Alexandria, Princess of Desburg..."

# HONOR AMONG THIEVES

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Requires the use of the Dungeons and Dragons® Player's Handbook, Third Edition, published by Wizards of the Coast®

Honor Among Thieves



\$1.00  
+TX



## HOW TO USE THIS PRODUCT

This adventure is designed to be easily dropped into your existing *Third-Edition D&D* campaign. It can be run in a just a single session and makes for an excellent evening's gaming. To prepare yourself to run the adventure, you should read it completely at least once to familiarize yourself with the material. You may wish to photocopy the map in the center of the book for ease of use as well. The text on the back of the book can be read to your players to introduce them to the adventure. After that, you're ready to begin. Good luck!

## DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS

This module requires the use of the *Dungeons and Dragons® Player's Handbook, Third Edition*, published by Wizards of the Coast.® You won't be able to run this adventure without it.

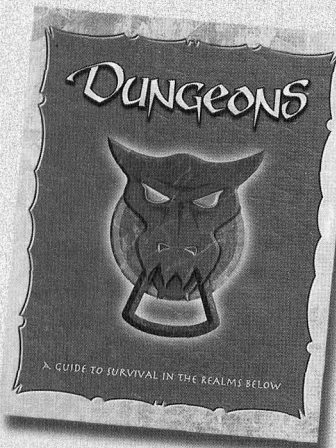
# EXPLORE THE DEEPS!

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The *Dungeons* sourcebook contains a plethora of tips tricks and rules to help make your adventures the stuff of legend. It includes essays on design and construction, overviews of different dungeon types, player advice for surviving underground perils, and a host of new rules, spells, monsters, and magic items.



## GAME MASTER BACKGROUND

Honor Among Thieves is an adventure designed for a group of four to six characters of fourth to sixth level. After reading the Player Background (*found on the back of the outside cover*), read the module at least once to familiarize yourself with the various encounters before proceeding to play. The player characters can be of nearly any race or class.

The adventure begins as the party searches the grand city of Desburg, looking for clues to the whereabouts of Count Sebastian's young daughter, Alexandria. She is the only daughter of the widowed Count, and he is desperate for her return. The PCs know that the daughter's caravan set out three days ago, but was attacked just one day south of the city. The caravan was found, torn into pieces, and everyone traveling with the Princess was dead. Only the Princess was missing. A ransom note was delivered by anonymous courier to the Count's palace, demanding the heads of all the nobility in the region in exchange for the Princess's safe return. Unable to comply, Count Sebastian has sent a call to any adventurers in the area: "Bring back my daughter safely, and you can have baskets of gold — nearly anything you desire — as your reward."

Princess Alexandria is twelve years old, and had been traveling to her aunt's manor house in the country. She has made the journey several times, with no troubles, and although she was guarded, the caravan was completely decimated. There were no survivors. Her servants and guards seemed to have died from multiple stab wounds — they were killed swiftly, and professionally. The PCs search the area, and find only a faint trail leading back into the city of Desburg, away from the slaughtered caravan.

While searching the city, the PCs should discover rumors that the local Thieves' Guild (the Minutemen) have been acting very strangely lately. They are holed up beneath the city, armed to the teeth and strangely paranoid. A local wizard, Favrnal, has gone missing. Lastly, a beggar at the south gate saw two members of the Minutemen sneaking into the city just two days ago (the night of the attack), carrying a large, wrapped bundle of cloth that could easily have been the Princess's body.

Then, from the darkness of a nearby alley, there comes a terrified scream.

## BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE

The city of Desburg can be any known city within your campaign world, or it can be a new location for the PCs to visit. Design the upper areas of the city as you see fit, and you can easily slip the map in this module into the location. All this module requires is an Inn, a fortified palace, and an as-yet-undefined sewer system.

After the PCs have spent some time searching through the area, and speaking to the local peasantry about the kidnapping, they are ready to begin the events of this adventure.



## 1. A PITCH BLACK ALLEY

**Encounter:** Five thieves are chasing a young girl through the dark alleys of the city. She wears ragged garments, the remains of once-rich clothing, and a broken iron manacle wraps around her arm. The girl seems pale, terrified, and as she rushes toward the PCs, she screams again, in terror. One of the thieves hurls a dagger, striking her in the leg and making her tumble to the ground.

A terrified young girl in torn garments races toward you from the darkness. Behind her, five black-garbed figures spring from the shadows in pursuit. Hurling from a distance, a dagger pierces the young woman's leg and she falls. "Please help me," she cries out. "My name is Lady Alexandria, Princess of Desburg... please." Behind her, the five men draw wicked-looking short swords, and move swiftly forward to attack.

Behind you, you hear the distant whistle of the Town Watch... but they are still far off, and there is no time to wait for their arrival.

**Minutemen (5):** Male Human Rog 6: CR 5; SZ M (humanoid); HD 6d6+6; hp 30; Init +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft; AC 16 (+3 Dex, +3 Studded Leather Armor mw); Atks Short sword +6, (1d6+1); SA Sneak attack +3d6, evasion, uncanny dodge; SQ *cloak of elvenkind*; SV Fort +3, Ref +8, Will +2; Str 13, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 9; AL N; Skills: Bluff +7, Climb +13, Disable Device +13, Hide +12\*, Listen +11, Move Silently +12, Open Locks +14, Search +11, Spot +11, Tumbling +12, Use Magic Device +8. Feats: Alertness, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (short sword).

**Tactics:** The Minutemen (identified by a double 'M' tattoo on their left shoulder) have four rounds before the Town Watch arrives. They seek to kill the Princess and are willing to give their own lives in the attempt. The PCs should learn two things from this fight: first, that these men are better fighters than they are, and secondly, they are fanatical about Alexandria's death. The GM should ensure, however, that the Minutemen do not succeed. The Minutemen will flee, cursing, before the Watch can destroy them. Along with the Watchmen comes the Captain of the Guard, **Sir Ishan (hp 109)**. Use this fight as an opportunity to cut the PCs down a peg, without crippling them, before the real adventure begins.

**Ishan:** Male Human Ftr 14: CR 12; SZ M (humanoid); HD 14d10+28; hp 109; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 30 ft; AC 25 (+1 Dex, +2 *full plate*, +2 *shield*); Atks Longsword +21/+16/+11 melee (1d8+8); SQ +2 *longsword*, *cloak of resistance* +2, *ring of protection* +2; SV Fort +12, Ref +7, Will +7; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 12; AL LE; Skills: Climb +14, Jump +14. Feats: Cleave, Dodge, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (longsword), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Sunder, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword), Precise Shot, Run, Spring Attack, Track.

Sir Ishan, a tall, muscular man with a long moustache, kneels respectfully before Alexandria and kisses her small hands. "My lady! Thanks be to the gods that you are alive!"

"I am alive," the little Princess says gratefully, "Because of the intervention of these brave heroes. My father must be told of their deeds, and reward them for their valor."

"By your will, my lady," he says gladly.

## 2. THE COUNT'S REWARD

The PCs are brought to the palace, where they are greeted by an extremely relieved and thankful Count. To celebrate his daughter's return, Sebastian announces he is holding a grand ball in his daughter's name and the heroes' honor. All of the local nobility are invited. At that gala, the Heroes will be awarded the *Star of Desburg*, the nation's highest honor. A reward of gold is bestowed as well.

Princess Alexandria only remains for a short time, pleading weariness and shock. She retires to her chambers as soon as it is comfortably possible, hopefully without drawing too much attention to herself. When she leaves, her nurse Matilda offers to go with her, but Alexandria refuses. She is sharp at first, but then, as if remembering herself, speaks to the old woman kindly, inviting her along.

After Alexandria leaves, Count Sebastian provides the PCs with rooms in one of the city's best inns (the Golden Goblet). He gives them each a purse of gold (150 gp) in order to get appropriate clothing for the celebration. In the morning he sends their formal invitation. His guards escort the heroes to their suite at the Golden Goblet, and a Herald announces the news of Princess Alexandra's return to the city of Desburg. The rooms at the inn are lovely, the city is at peace, and the remainder of the evening is joyous.

## 3. DURING THE DAY

During the next day, the PCs are treated like heroes, allowed the run of Desburg, and have the honor of being greeted and thanked by the local nobility (Barons, etc.,) as they arrive for the evening's gala event. If they try to see Alexandria, they are told that the Princess is resting after her ordeal, and cannot be disturbed. Should the PCs ask for Matilda, she is nowhere to be found.

Throughout the city, the Town Watch begins an active assault on the Minutemen at the Count's command. The Thieves' Guild is publicly declared the cause of the kidnapping, and its members are ruthlessly hounded and imprisoned. Many leave the city. Most are incarcerated. Anyone in the city that is known to be a sympathizer, suspected of dealing with the Minutemen, or even accused of being involved with the local Thieves' Guild, are taken to the local prison by the Town Watch.

If interrogated, none of the prisoners knows anything about the events of the last few days. They know nothing about the Princess' kidnapping. A Sense Motive check (DC 15) verifies that the men appear to speaking the truth. The assailants are not among those in prison.



#### 4. AS DARKNESS FALLS

**Encounter:** A Master Thief slips into the PCs room. He is holding a ‘flag of truce,’ and claims that if the PCs don’t listen, hundreds of people will be murdered tonight.

When you enter your room, arms laden with packages, you are surprised to find a middle-aged man sitting in the chair by the mahogany desk. “Before you scream, or attack me,” he says. “I’m not here to fight you. I’m here because you’ve condemned over a hundred people to die tonight, and I think you’re the sort that might to set things right before it happens. If I’m wrong about you, tell me now. I’ll leave peacefully, and you can watch Desburg bathe in blood at the stroke of midnight. Your choice.”

“But before you make that decision, hear me out. I’m called John Swift, one of the Masters of the Minutemen’s Society. That girl you’ve ‘rescued’ isn’t a girl at all. The real Princess Alexandria is dead. Congratulations,” he says sarcastically, “You’ve rescued a Terror Fiend. A type of vampire, but not undead. Terror Fiends can only feed on noble blood... and guess who’s been invited to that party they’re giving for the ‘little Princess’. Nobles. A real feast of rich blood for the fiend to take... courtesy of the heroes of the city.” He bows.

“Let me give you the real story. A wizard named Favrnal summoned that thing. It escaped, killed the Princess’s caravan, and took her form after it destroyed her. We captured it and brought it back. We had it locked in our freehold under the city so Favrnal could send it back to wherever it came. But, it attacked him. It nearly killed him, actually. Most of the rest of us as well. Then it escaped. That’s where you come in.”

“Favrnal’s too weak to send it back now and all my men are either dead or in prison. The Count isn’t going to believe my story, but I can prove it to you. I have the body of the girl, and the wizard — but he’s too hurt to be moved. If this party goes on, that fiend will feast on the blood of every noble there.” John looks earnest, clenching his fist.

“When that happens, we’ll have anarchy in Desburg. I don’t have the men to send in there. My men are in chains, as you well know. You have to help, or we’re all doomed.”

After the party has had time to deliberate and talk to John Swift, he takes them to meet with Favrnal. If the party refuses, he leaves them, unmolested. Either way, a member of the Town Watch (Ishan’s son) sees John Swift leave the PC’s room. He quickly runs to tell his father. At this point, the GM’s trap is closed. The players should be encouraged to work with John — he is telling the truth, and can substantiate his statements.

#### 4A. REFUSED ENTRANCE

**Encounter:** If the party attempts to enter the palace by the front gate, they will be rudely surprised. The Captain of the Town Watch, Sir Ishan, is escorted by twenty members of the guard. They will force the PCs to halt, and Ishan will address the PCs formally, but angrily. The party will not be allowed to pass.

As you approach the gate, Sir Ishan steps forward and commands you to stop. “You have been accused of consorting with the Minutemen,” he says angrily. “And frankly, I believe my *son’s* word over anything you might have to say. You were visited by John Swift, and for all I know, you worked for the Minutemen, just to get the reward. Until I can prove something, though you are not allowed to pass. The Count will meet with you in the morning to sort this out. Until then, I recommend you wait in your rooms. My guards will escort you to the palace in the morning.” His men rest their hands on their swords warningly, and Ishan continues. “Move along.”

#### 4B. HELP FROM THE SHADOWS

After the party has left the Town Watch behind, John Swift comes out of the shadows with one of his men. He explains that there is no other way into the palace — with all those nobles inside, security has gone up threefold. There is only one way into the palace now, and that is through the sewers.

John can’t go with the party because the Town Watch is planning on ‘executing’ three of his best men in the town square tonight. He can provide them a map of the sewers, however, and even show them the entrance, but from there the party must continue on their own.

As GM, encourage the party to trust John. He’s genuine, and honestly believes that the Terror Fiend is going to butcher the noble court. He wants the party to trust him, and will do whatever is necessary to gain their alliance for the sake of the city.

#### 5. INTO THE SEWER

The opening into the sewer beneath Desburg is a small storm-cellar in the lower area of the city. There is an abandoned building that was once an inn, but is now nothing more than a half-standing wreck. Nevertheless, it has a stone foundation, and the storm-cellar is in good condition. After skillfully picking the lock on the outside door, John shows the party how to open a hidden trap door in the floor of the room below. By torchlight, the party can see swift moving water, and a small ledge that runs alongside the thick waste of the sewer system. John’s map shows a route north, under the city and toward the foundation of Count Sebastian’s palace.



“That’s the best map we have,” says John. “But be careful. Some things have changed, and there are some creatures left down there from Favrnal’s ‘experiments’. It could be dangerous, but I know you can handle yourselves. Watch for this mark on the wall,” he draws a symbol on the edge of the map. “When you see it, you’ll know there’s a trap ahead. Be safe, good luck... and thank you.

From all the innocent people — noble and peasant — whose lives you’ll save tonight... thank you.” With that, he is gone, and there is nothing to do except enter the water below as it slowly sludges past.

## 6. ENTRANCE TO THE SEWERS

The trapdoor leads into the sewers, a dank, slimy place filled with the stench of refuse. If you managed to hurry the party successfully, then they have on their best clothing, and only a minimum of equipment. That’s exactly where you want them.

The sewer is high enough for a normal human male to stand, and is over 6 feet wide. Four feet of that, however, is taken up by the stream of sewage passing by in a deep trench. There is a two foot wide path along the right side of the passage, and the PCs can walk down the slippery stone path in order to follow the sewer.

It is dark in the sewers, but any natural flame light there will sputter and flame up irregularly from the dampness and the gases that permeate the air. The map given to the party can be found on page #8 of this module. You should notice that while the Minutemen have indicated on the map the places where traps can be found, they did not indicate what those traps entailed. The following traps are scattered throughout the dungeon at appropriate locations, denoted where a marker is located on the map. If the GM wishes, further markings or traps can be added to the map, to keep the party occupied. Also, traps or creatures which are not indicated on the map can be found, added by rival gangs in the city. Two creatures have been included below to indicate that they wander through the sewers by night; these beasts can ‘discover’ the party at any time, but will be drawn to their location by any loud noise or strange smell.

Lastly, the sewer water moves fairly rapidly. Anyone who enters the stream must make a Reflex save (DC 14) in order to avoid being swept along by the current. Characters who fail immediately proceed to the next sewer grate (*refer to the Map in the middle of this adventure*), and suffer 2d6 points of damage from inhaling sewage and slamming into the slippery stone sides of the channel. These grates cannot be removed without actually breaking apart the masonry of the sewer. Players will have to travel around them, and cannot go through them.

## 7. BRIDGED PASSAGE

**Encounter:** A bridge, crossing the sewer channel, has been sabotaged. At any cross-passage on the map, the PCs should find one of these ‘sabotaged’ bridges. The GM has free reign to add more, if he feels the party is getting along too swiftly.

The passage stops at a 15 foot gap in the passage where a grate above pours water down a chute into the sewer. The path that the PCs have been following ends, and they must cross the sewer channel to continue. There is a small bridge on the far side of the sewer water, and a valve beside the path. The stone is slippery, and will be almost impossible to jump across without falling.

The passage ends at a 15 foot gap where dirty water pours down from a grated chute above. The raised path ends and the PCs must cross the sewer channel to continue. There is a small bridge on the far side of the sewer water, and a valve beside the path. The stone is slippery and is almost impossible to jump across without falling. There is not enough room to get a running jump.

If the PCs choose to turn the valve, the bridge on the far side will extend until it reaches the stone beneath their feet. However, the bridge itself has been sabotaged. It collapses if more than 40 pounds of weight rests on it at any point. Hidden in the water below are a series of sharp iron spikes, pointed upward.

**Bridge Trap:** CR 3; No attack roll needed; Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 25).

**Iron Spike Trap:** CR 2; No attack roll needed; 2d6 damage; 75% chance of contracting a disease; Reflex save (DC30) avoids; Search (DC 30); Disable Device (DC 30).

A similar valve on the other side retracts the bridge.

## 8. CHAINS

In the sewers is a large room, the floor completely washed out by time and the wearing waters. In the center, covered by raw sewage, are the twisted iron remains of a catwalk that once crossed this room. It is now useless and covered in rotting filth.

Thirty chains of various lengths and sizes hang from the ceiling. In order to cross the chamber without falling into the water, PCs must use the chains to swing to the other side. While this sounds easy, some of the chains are attached to traps set by the Minutemen. These traps trigger when any weight beyond 40 pounds is placed on the chain.

Three Climb checks (DC 16) are necessary to make it across the chamber on the chains. For each chain that a PC uses to cross the water (three in all) roll a d20 once on the following chart. Because the chains swing so much and because there are so many that look the same, trying to grab a chain that someone else just used is impossible.

**Chain:** 1/2 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 15; AC 7; break DC 28.

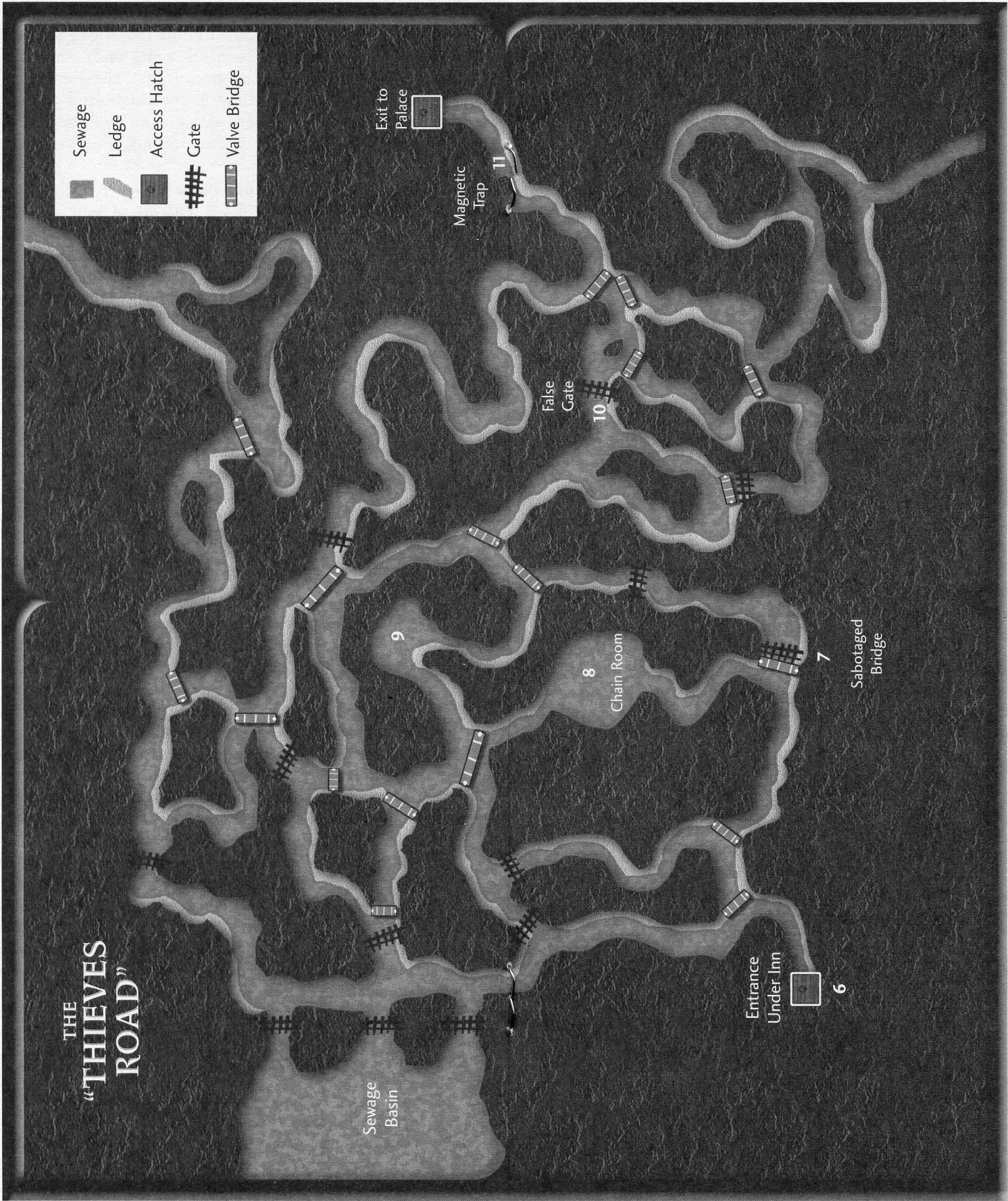
**Chain Trap:** CR 3; No attack roll needed; damage varies, Search (DC 30); Disable Device (DC 30).

1-5: This chain is safe.

6-7: The chain is a fake and rips from the ceiling. A Reflex save (DC 16) is necessary to grab another chain while falling. If the PC fails this roll, they fall into the water (*see below*).



	Sewage
	Ledge
	Access Hatch
	Gate
	Valve Bridge





**8-9:** A crossbow bolt fires from the ceiling (ranged +10; damage 1d10) striking the PC when he pulls the chain.

**10-11:** The chain is covered in small blades. A Fortitude save (DC 15) is required to hold the chain. Otherwise, the PC instinctively releases his grip and falls into the water.

**12-13:** A gout of flame shoots from the ceiling. The fire ignites the gases around the PC. damage 3d6. A Reflex save (DC 20) saves for half.

**14-15:** The chain is covered in a painful contact poison. The PC suffers 1d6 points of damage immediately and must make a Fortitude save (DC 12 + damage dealt) or let go of the chain.

**16-18:** This chain is magically trapped. Should the PC grab it he becomes affect by fear. The character refuses to release the chain or move further while affected. He simply hangs from the chain, petrified. The spell lasts for one minute. A Will save (DC 18) negates the effects. The spell is triggered every time this chain is touched.

**19:** The chain is covered in small hooks that imbed themselves into the PC's clothing and flesh. If the PC fails a Reflex save (DC 16) the hooks snag, binding her to the chain as if affected by a snare spell.

**20:** This chain is actually an illusion. A Reflex save (DC 20) allows the PC to safely grab another chain (rolling again). If the save fails or the PC rolls another 20 on this chart, he tumbles into the water below.

If for some reason a PC enters the water (5 ft. deep here), a Reflex save (DC 15) is required to avoid being slammed against the catwalk (1d6 points of damage). In addition, there are is a **Carrion Crawler (hp 19)** that has adapted to the sewage, waiting in the filthy water for a meal to come its way.

**Carrion Crawler:** (Large Aberration) CR 4; HD 3d8+6; hp 19; Init: +2 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft, swim 15 ft; AC 17 (-1 Size, +2 Dex, +6 Natural); Atks 8 tentacles +3 melee (tentacle paralysis), bite -2 melee (1d4); Face/Reach 5ft by 10ft/5ft; SA Paralysis; SQ Scent; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 1, Wis 15, Cha 6; AL N; Skills: Climb +10, Listen +6, Spot +6. Feats: Alertness.

**Tactics:** Because the Crawler has been living in sewage with filth for so long, it's paralytic attack is much weaker than it once was. The Fortitude save is at DC 12 and its effects only last for 2d6 rounds instead of minutes. Paralyzed PCs must still contend with drowning, but at least they have a fighting chance.

## 9. LAIR

**Encounter:** This bend in the sewer system should look natural and should not cause the PCs any concern. At this point make secret Spot checks for each of them (DC 20).

**Tactics:** The PCs have just been ambushed by a **Chaos Beast (hp 50)**; another of Favrnel's mistakes. Those failing their Spot check may not act during the surprise round. The chaos beast is hard to fight, moving every round, using mobility, and tumbling to its advantage when possible.

**Chaos Beast:** (Medium-Size Outsider) CR 7; HD 8d8+8; hp 50; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 20 ft, swim 20ft; AC 16 (+1 Dex, +5 natural); Atks 2 claws +10 melee (1d3+2 corporeal instability); Face/Reach 5ft by 5ft to 10ft by 10ft/5ft; SA Corporeal instability; SQ SR 15, immune to transformation, immune to critical hits; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10; AL CN; Skills: Climb +12, Escape Artist +11, Hide +10, Jump +10, Listen +9, Spot +9, Tumble +10. Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility.

## 10. FALSE GRATE

The PCs can see on the map that this grate is false. With the right answer, they can move it and continue toward the palace. It is the only path to the palace entrance, so the PCs have no choice but to find a way through.

To the right of the grate, at eye level, is an alcove with a small silver dagger lying in it. Written on a small plate on the back of the alcove wall is the following sequence of letters, written in the common tongue:

**T N E S S F F T T**

In order to open the false grate, the PCs must decide what letter to write in the blank ( ). The plate is sensitive to the touch of silver, and will respond to the dagger or any silver item. If they scratch in the correct letter ('O'), the grate opens. The letters stand for: Ten, Nine, Eight, Seven, Six, Five, Four, Three, Two, and One.

Should the PCs enter the wrong letter three times in a row, the magic of the plate shuts off, stopping further attempts to open the grate. This failsafe is designed to stop someone from trying every letter in the alphabet.

**Grate:** 2 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 15; AC 7; break DC 28.

## 11. MAGNETIC PRESENCE

**Encounter:** Most thieves wear leather armor; most of the Count's guards wear chain mail. This trap takes advantage of that disparity.

The left side of the wall (above the rushing sewer water) is covered by a huge magnet, made to look like normal iron gratings installed tightly against the stone. While walking through a corridor, all the PCs with large amounts of metal (armor, weapons) must make a Reflex save (DC 18), or be pulled across the water, sticking suddenly to the wall. Once the PC is 'caught,' the trap functions like an *snare* spell, with the following addition: anyone who manages to break free of the magnet falls into the stream. A PC carrying a weapon must make the same save, or lose his grasp on the weapon as it flies from his hand and sticks to the far wall.



## 12. THE PALACE

No matter what time they entered the sewers, the PCs should arrive at the palace only a few minutes before midnight, to heighten tension.

The hidden door from the sewer into the palace leads between the castle's stonework and empties into a dark corridor fairly near the main ballroom. Through a slit cut in the stone, you can hear the laughter and revelry of the Count's gala. The party is taking place in a huge ballroom with large stone pillars and cloth draping scattered artfully around the opulent room. From the far end of the chamber, you hear the high-pitched voice of Princess Alexandra as she rises to give a speech to the assembly. As you push the door aside, you hear her say, "...and thank you, noble guests, for your final gift. The gift of..." The Princess's features change and sharpen, as her body twists and grows like a strange tree. Her skin blackens and her mouth grows rows of long teeth as she continues, "...your lives!" Screams break out among the gathered throng, and the Terror Fiend attacks gleefully, killing the surrounding palace guards with a mere swipe of its terrible hand.

The Terror Fiend feeds on the blood of nobility, and is in a frenzy of hunger and lust with so many nobles about. The guards in the room are dead. It will be several minutes before more arrive. Providing the Fiend enough time to kill the nobles assembled here.

**Tactics:** Although several of the nobles try to help, the general panic of nearly a hundred people is certainly going to affect the fight. The Terror Fiend has no problem using the nobility as hostages, putting them in danger, or even slaughtering them outright (most die from a single strike). It gets stronger as more nobles die to its claws. Use this to the creature's advantage during the fight. Put your PCs in positions where they must save the lives of nobles instead of directly battling the creature. The fight will be more interesting that way.

## 13. THE COUNT'S GRATITUDE

After the battle is finished and the Terror fiend is defeated, Count Sebastian calls together the nobility and listens to the PCs' story. Once he is convinced of the truth, he commands the Minutemen in his prison be released. He asks that his daughter's body be brought to the palace for proper burial. It is a sad day in Desburg.

A few days should pass before the grateful count awards the PCs with the *star of desburg* (funerals and all). After the ceremony, John Swift approaches the party to thank them for their efforts. He rescued his men while the party was in the sewers. He and his men are truly grateful. Swift shakes their hands and says, "You have a friend in Desburg." He smiles and adds, "and a few Minutemen as well."

"But don't worry about the sewer map," John laughs. "It's already useless." He gives the PCs a broad wink, and then leaves them to celebrate their well-earned victory.

## NEW MONSTER

### TERROR FIEND

*Large Monstrous Humanoid*

Terror Fiends are not actually devils of any form, but are monstrous creatures that feed on the blood and fear of nobility. Their senses are so acute that they can tell if someone is descended of noble blood simply by their scent.

They are huge creatures, nearly nine feet tall, but gangly and strangely jointed. Their skin is a greenish-black, and their features resemble that of a very ugly elven humanoid. Their arms and legs are covered with barbed spikes which gives them a form of natural armor, and they have huge barbed tails that are split like a cat o' nine tails at the end. They are dangerous and cunning, and capable of taking the form of an individual that they have just killed.

Terror Fiends are merciless and utterly evil, preying on humanity's elite in order to quench their thirst for blood. Worse, they grow stronger when they feed on such blood, and thus often seek to hunt nobles as a predator seeks prey.

Ad intelligent beings, fiends speak Infernal, Human, Elven, Dwarf, and Common. They gain no memories of





their host after they have killed someone and assumed the victim's form, but are often clever enough to pass themselves off successfully for a number of days while they gather information about their new form. Their new form can be any race, size or sex, although most Terror Fiends prefer to hunt within their own gender to make duplication that much easier.

## COMBAT

A Terror Fiend prefers to lure its victims into solitude, and then devour them and take their form. This way, it can be supplied with an unending feast of noble blood as it moves from unsuspecting royal house to the next.

In melee, however, it is a terrible opponent, lunging with both claws and using its tail to tangle opponent's weapons. It has the ability to silence the area in which it fights, thus giving it even more advantage and removing its prey's ability to scream for help.

**Silent Scream (Sp):** The Terror Fiend can create a circle of silence in a ten-foot radius around its body. No sound can exit this shield, although those inside the field can still hear the normal sounds of the world outside.

**Polymorph Self (Su):** Similar to the wizard's spell *polymorph*, the Terror fiend can take the form of the last creature that it killed. Once assumed, the Terror Fiend can retain this form indefinitely. This form is not an illusion; while in the new form, the Terror Fiend has no access to its physical abilities, although it may still manifest its Silent Scream. The fiend may return to its original form at any time, and may return to its current 'attained form' at will.

**Regeneration (Ex):** A Terror Fiend regenerates 2 hp per round. However, when it is infused with noble blood, it regains an additional hit point for each point of damage dealt to someone born of noble lineage. This effect works on those that aren't aware of their true heritage.

Hit Dice: 6d8+10

Initiative: +5 (Dex & Imp Init)

Speed: 40ft

AC: 23 (+1 Dex, +12 natural)

Attacks: 4 Claws +7 melee, bite  
+5 melee, barbed tail +8  
melee

Damage: Claws 1d6, bite 1d8,  
tail 2d4, entangle on a 15  
or higher.

Face/Reach: 5ft by five ft/five ft.

Special Attacks: Silence, tail  
entangle, polymorph ability

Special Qualities: Regeneration  
2+ (see description)

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +7

Abilities: Str 19, Dex 13, Con 17,  
Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 9

Skills: Varies

Feats: Alertness, Improved  
Initiative, Mounted Combat

Climate/Terrain: Any

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 6

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral evil

Advancement Range: 9-16 HD  
(Large)

## NEW MAGIC ITEM

### STAR OF DESBURG

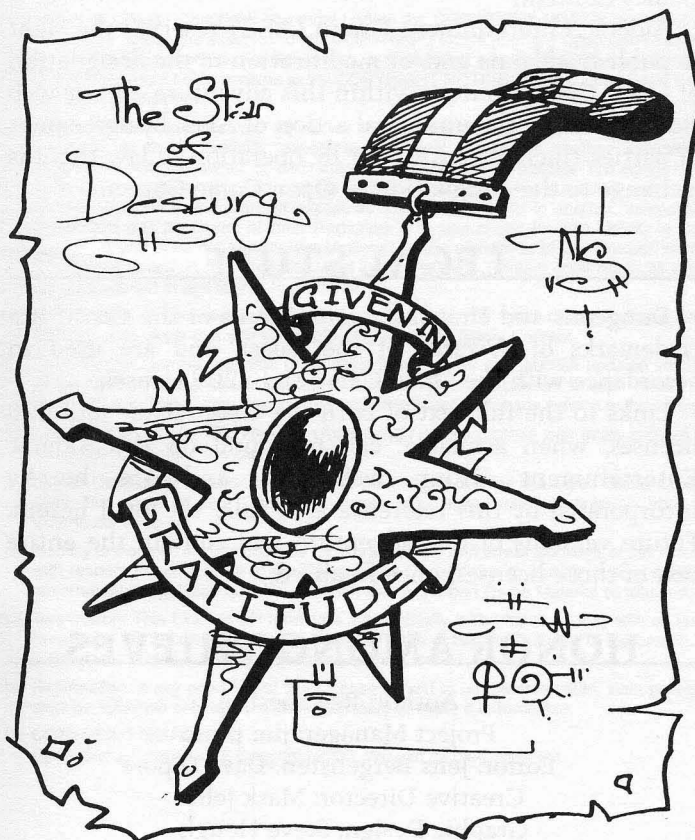
This award is the highest honor in the country. It comes with a small badge to all those inducted into the noble order of the *star*. This badge itself is magical, crafted by Count Sebastian's mages in order to reward valor and service to the county. Anyone within the Kingdom that sees a PC wearing the badge treats him very well. Merchants offer lower prices and better merchandise, and the common peasant doffs his hat to him.

At the end of the adventure, each of the PCs that contributed will be awarded the Star of Desburg.

The badge is a small eight-pointed star made of worked platinum and gold, with a single flawless sapphire at the heart. Written on a banner entwined through the star's points are the words 'given in gratitude.' The badge hangs from a small blue ribbon that is designed to be pinned on the recipients chest.

This badge has two magical functions, both active only when it is worn. First, it grants the wearer an enhancement bonus of +2 to their Charisma. This bonus increases to +4 when dealing with any city officer, guardsman, or official representative of the city of Desburg.

*Caster Level:* 12th; *Prerequisites:* Enchant Wondrous Item, charm person; *Market Price:* 10,000 gp; *Weight:* -.





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## HONOR AMONG THIEVES

Author: Ree Soesbee  
 Project Manager: jim pinto  
 Editor: Jens Bergensten, Dave Lepore  
 Creative Director: Mark Jelfo  
 Graphic Design: Steve Hough  
 Cover Illustration: Cris Dornaus  
 Cartography: Cris Dornaus  
 Interior Illustrations: Cris Dornaus

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