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INTRODUCTION

or “Why Miles?”

I've been thinking about writing this book for many years now. Countless mugs of ale have gone into it, and a nearly endless supply of porridges, roasts, and stews. During all those meals, I had but one thought in mind: why has there never been a handbook, a simple one, written for a group of new adventurers so they can get accustomed to the greatest city in the world? The answer to that question is, of course, because Reynarius di Llund doesn't live here. If he did, you can bet he would have cornered this notion in a heartbeat.

But he doesn't, so it's left to lesser luminaries (like members of the Grand Conclave, imagine that!) to do this work for him. The book you hold in your hands is a (perhaps not complete) guide to the city of Miles and all its wonders. Within its pages you'll find stories and histories, legends and guidelines, even some helpful notes about places within the city to avoid.

After all, the city of Miles is a place near and dear to my heart: the Grand Conclave meets there, for one thing, and while my membership may have been an accident (a happy one!) the seat of a cabal of wizards capable of sinking continents is nothing to sniff at. If you did not know it, I, your friend and guide, am the selfsame Hamish Letterfriend who ensorcelled Thurio Aurens and defeated the famed evoker Altus vel Clauren in a magical duel. I hate to tout my experience and power, but I've been adventuring for longer than most of you have been alive!

So, adventurer! Come and share a beer with me (figuratively, of course), find yourself a seat at the renowned Taberna Poveri Hominum. Make certain you get your charter approved by the imperial temple, and do your best to foster a good relationship with the Knight's Watch and the Riverwatch and you're halfway to becoming a legend in your own right! Just don't forget to collect on all your debts and pay off all your tabs. Lukius is not fond of adventurers that don't pay.

—Hamish Letterfriend





THE HEARTLAND

The imperial city of Miles is the center of an ancient swathe of settlements known as the heartland. If there's anywhere in the north where men (and before them, giants) have been building and living since time began, it's the heartlands of the empire. The historian Andronicus said of the heartland: To understand a land you must understand its people.

The people of the Milean Heartland are a staunch lot. Descended, so they claim, from the most ancient of Zeshimites they have bred with the pale Valelans and Llerneans to the point where their flesh is dark no longer. Rather, Milean folk are of average height and somewhat fair of skin, though they tend to olive complexions. It is said in Miles that he who has black hair and amber eyes is one of the southmen come again, and they believe this is a prodigy or a mark of extreme beauty. Indeed, Mileans may either resemble their southern ancestors (and in this case be of olive flesh) or their northern ones (and therefore tend towards light flesh and light, even red, hair).

The region receives copious sunlight and warm rain in the summer and light snows in the winter. While the term "heartland" once referred to the entire alluvial plain surrounding the Inner Sea, today we use the term to refer solely to the regions behind the shield of the Auruxol Mountains.

This area, the core of the Third Empire, is comprised of both the great counties (Coer, Noranos, and Tournése) as well as the many imperial baronies that surround Miles. While copious amounts of grains are grown in the heartland, the farms and familial estates of the baronies cannot match the voracious intake of the city.

The primary feature of the region is the River Annorius, which flows from Serpent Lake down to Lake Noranor and eventually, by many mouths, to the sea. Miles sits astride this waterway which provides trade, food, and all the other things

that make Milean life possible. The very ground itself that composes the Heartland plains was deposited there by the ebb and flow of the Annorius.

Beneath the surface of the Heartland lie the ruins of the civilization that came before men. The ancient stones of the giants still stand in some places: fallen domes and ruined pillars, shattered capitols and broken walls. These are commonly mined for material by the lords of the Heartland and it is not uncommon to see a fortified manor that has been reinforced with gigantine limestone or granite.

The cool breezes of the Heartland blow off the Trade Sea, the fairwinds of Aros skirting the mountains of Mermarche and washing through the fields and the great manses of the nobility alike. The air of the countryside is clean and pure, particularly when contrasted to the ten thousand stinks of Miles. Within a rod of the city you can begin to smell it: temple incense and pomanders over the more pungent odors of nightsoil and rotten grain.

Two great highways intersect the Heartlands, slicing through it with the absolute precision of ancient Milean measurement and dwarven engineering. The first is the road that runs north-east to north-west, the Pillar Road. The second is the great Sea Road which runs from Miles all the way to the chief imperial port of Noranos where the emperor's fleet lies at anchor.

Though the Heartland surrounds the center of the world, there are still bandits and monstrous beasts to deal with. No land in Arunia is free of kobolds, which spread like a riotous and hateful vermin. The Noranian Forest and the Tourbelwood both harbor orcs and goblins, though their numbers are admittedly low. Even the ruins within a day's ride of the imperial city can be sometimes overrun with bandits or creatures best left to the nightmares of poor serfs.

HISTORY OF THE HEARTLAND

The first southmen came to settle the great lowland between Auruxol and Mermarche over five thousand years ago. Their wanderings had taken them from their homes in the steaming jungles of Zesh, through the strange lands of Mugharia and Ishtria until at last their ships landed at the southern cliffs of the Heartland.

There they found an ancient kingdom of giants which had long been in decline. Amongst those plains they chose a hilltop near a river to build their first stronghold: this was Miles.

In time, they raised the Pillar which we can see today for rods and rods outside the city. Its blood-red stone is wrought with their words, and their sorcery keeps it standing. Miles was just one of the many great mannish cities in those days, and the Pillar was her sign.

She fought for control of trade and empire with the ancient kingdoms of Llernea and Llynder, the civilizations of High Aellon and Byblos, and the other cities of southmen, Mercantis and Vaer. In the end, all those other cities passed to dust and those kingdoms crumbled. Miles still stands and while you can see the roads of Mercantis in the shallow bay of the trading city of Dolnon, the days of its power have faded.

The imperial city was the heart of the First Empire throughout its entire lifetime, and all the conquests of the southmen were eventually brought to triumph in Miles. When the empire collapsed during the chaos of the many wars fought over the throne, the city of Miles lost some of its legendary importance.

After the Civil Wars, the empire was brought back to peace (formally known as the Treaty of Bataille) but the capitol was moved nearly one hundred rods west to the plains where the final battle of the war was won. Miles became secondary, an ancient city of great renown but nonetheless reduced in glory.

Once the Second Empire (as it was known) also fell, Miles became the heart of a kingdom of its own. Thyrnesse, it was called, and the fragments of the old empire fell to warring with each other. The heartland broke into Byrne, Avaria, Westreth, Meirenia, Colona, and many other valley-kingdoms. They clashed and fought, battling vainly to inherit the glory and might of imperial Miles.

Finally, in the early 10th Age, the Grand Conclave of Wizards (long before even I joined it!) helped knit together three of the successor-kingdoms: Westreth, Avaria, and Thyrnesse. In the year X.502, the king of Thyrnesse declared the end of his kingdom and the beginning of a new Third Empire of Miles. From that day, the imperial city has been resurgent and resplendent, reclaiming its former might.





THE POWERS THAT BE

The imperial city is commanded not by any single man, but rather by a constellation of councils, deputations, and authorities. If you went looking for the single power of the empire, you'd be hard-pressed not to identify it in the emperor himself! But the emperor doesn't govern alone, and indeed it is rare that he governs the city itself at all! However, the members of his immediate household (the imperial domus) play an important role in the every-day life of the city.

Below I have laid out the most important people in the imperial administration. Most of these folks are above the pay of any average adventurer and you probably won't ever have to deal with them. Still, it helps to know their names and who they are! An informed adventurer is a live adventurer, you know.

THE IMPERIAL HOUSEHOLD

Power in the imperial city devolves directly from the emperor. The imperial domus, which resides upon Pillar Hill, is the most important building in the city. It's the center of constant activity as the imperial court is the place from which all benefices and laws derive.

However, just because Miles is the location of the imperial domus doesn't mean that the emperor has the final word about the running of the city! The emperor supervises the vast cogs of the imperial administration, and they don't interlock smoothly. A huge number of courtiers, scribes, clerics, heralds, messengers, and couriers comprise the imperial household and that number is multiplied by every single nobleman, retainer, and representative from the great families that reside in the city and attend the imperial court.

To cut through this huge administration, the emperor relies on the Mayor of the House (maior domo) to command

the day-to-day affairs of Miles. Delenda Saxa runs the city without any interference from her emperor. All of the functionaries of the city report directly to her, including the infamous Knight's Watch. While the other departments and sections of the imperial government report to the emperor, everything to do with the running of the imperial city proper goes through her.

Other important administrators include the palace officials who control the daily schedules, the feeding of the Escurae Varani and the provisioning of the city grain stores.

Outside the palace, the world is hardly any simpler! A dizzying array of lords and powerful men send representatives to Miles, most of whom dwell on Sword Hill. The most important and powerful may have houses on Pillar Hill near the domus.

Parallel to the structure of the secular state, Miles is also home to a crowded ecclesiastical atmosphere. The city houses an array of impressive figures, including the Lawkeeper of Haeron, his twelve Grand Divines, the foundational house of the Sacred Heralds, and hundreds of other, smaller temples devoted to every deity imaginable. The great clerics also loom large in city politics, rivaled only by the four great Milean wizards.

You wouldn't be wrong to think that the four most prominent wizards of Miles resent the interference of the Conclave! I've met them myself on several occasions and can tell you from personal experience that they're a stuffy lot! They are the Imperial Sorcerer Julianus, the Ishtrian sorceress Baseri, Domna the Star-reader, and the sage Beade Whitebeard. These wizards rival even High Lawkeeper Ellarent Pellán in power, sticking their fingers (and in the cases of the men, beards) into everything in the imperial court!



THE POWERS THAT BE



<i>Name</i>	<i>Role/Title/Function</i>
Tamerin Elsoín	Emperor of Miles
Leylia Elsoín	Empress of Miles
Nimellia Saxa	Imperial Seneschal, Inner Council
Doroni Sylorio	Imperial Spymaster, Inner Council
Julianus	Imperial Wizard, Inner Council
Dynas (Duke) Darius Anarjent	Dynas of Auruxol, Lord of the Coiffers, Inner Council
Prens (Prince) Balduen Galoen, the Fair	Prince of Westreth and Lomere, Inner Council
Sieur Camrose Anarjent	Grand Strategos, Outer Council
Aventius Livone	Master of Trade, Outer Council (subordinate of the Lord of the Coiffers)
Verus Bosire	Master of Rents, Outer Council (subordinate of the Lord of the Coiffers)
Divinus Ierus Olelle	Judge of the Palace, Outer Council
Ludovus Erare	Master of Revels, Outer Council
Valha Varia	Master of Scribes, Outer Council
Dulon Anarjent	Master of Tolls, Outer Council (subordinate of the Lord of Coiffers)

THE POWERS THAT BE



<i>Name</i>	<i>Role/Title/Function</i>
Delenda Saxa	Mayor of the Palace
Caprus Arantos	Captain of the Escurae Varani
Sieur Ogus Dirke	Magnai Paxata, Commander of the Knight's Watch
Sovai the Elfblade	First Sword of the Imperial Household
Baseri Nathelkesh	Member, Circle of Miles
Sieur Ector Crestley	River Warden, Rariff Master
Ellarent Pellan	High Lawkeeper of Miles
Tholfir Goldenhair	Guildmaster of Advocates
Lagante Twocoin	Guildmaster, Caravaneers
Domoni the Pale	Guildmaster, Pandar's Procurements
Andryss Grosso	Guildmaster, Bakers
Arnir Goldenhair	Guildmaster, Gold and Silversmiths
Livalia Half-elven	Guildmaster, Masons and Carpenters
Baldwen Carter	Guildmaster, Carters
Cynric Syndos	Guildmaster Hearthland Traders
Hulrin of the Claw	Guild Ambassador, Noranian Importers
Domna Star-reader	High Astrologer of the Emperor
Beade Whitebeard	Patronus, Circle of Miles



PEOPLE IN THE IMPERIAL COURT

His Imperial Majesty Tamerin Elsoin the First, Emperor of Miles

Tamerin is, of course, the emperor of Miles and the whole empire! You probably won't ever meet him, but if you do you'll recognize him at once. He's thirty-nine or forty years old (depending on who you talk to) and he dresses in outlandish elaborate ceremonial garments that swim with cloth-of-gold and royal reds and purples. You'll never see him without a sea of retainers, imperial couriers, heralds, priests, and mobs of incensed and pomander-wearing courtier-nobles seeking his attention.

He's cunning, though, so you'd best watch out in his presence! He's crowned himself emperor but his constant schemes and plots leave him haggard and drawn, underweight, and looking stretched.

Her Imperial Majesty, Leylia Elsoin, Empress of Miles

Kinder by far than her husband, Her Imperial Highness the Empress is the daughter of the former-king of Byrne. Their marriage has sealed the War of the Shield, in which the emperor consumed Byrne and declared it a Grand Duchy instead of an independent kingdom.

All that having been said, Leylia is a highly intelligent woman and given to black moods, particularly after her marriage to Tamerin. She is rarely seen in public, preferring her bower, the poor thing. She watches after their newly born child, Anastasea and has nothing to do with affairs of state.



High Lady Nimellia Saxa, Grand Seneschal of the Empire, Imperial Justiciar

The Imperial Seneschal is an echo of her emperor. She's very officious and never has the time of day for me or any of the Conclave. She's thirty-seven years old and has dark hair and amber eyes, a much valued combination in Miles. As the Mayor of the Palace's older sister and the Seneschal and Justiciar she serves as the emperor's right hand. You will

often see her (if you see her at all) wearing richly dyed purple robes of office heavily hung with gold and plate. She is always seen with a conspicuous amulet studded with sapphire and sunstone. You'll never see her without at least two of the *escurae varani* trailing her to keep her safe.

She's a pedant, and very cold. I have never had any pleasant experiences with her, as she's even more demanding than her emperor! She maintains her good looks, however, so I suppose she's alright to admire from afar.

She, along with Dynas Anarjent, has access to the Black Book of the Coffers and seems obsessed with the empire's wealth. She also has the task of promulgating imperial decrees and laws; as the Justiciar, she is proxy of the emperor and her word carries the same force as his.

Lord Doroni Sylorio, Imperial Spymaster

This Dorl is a tricky one indeed. He's tall, thin, and has dark hair and brilliant green eyes. Other members of the court call him the Green Dorl or even just the Dorl. He's always dressed in a boiled leather shirt and a long open black robe of office that has no sleeves but rather a pair of slits. He's also fond of large golden cloak-broaches and chain necklaces.

He's extremely dangerous. Beware, for though he does not look physically strong he is a master fencer and a fair schemer. He's also a well-known flirt and tends to be quite witty. The network of spies and informers he controls is simply beyond imagining.

Stay clear of his magic sword, the blade known as Doroni's Doom (simply called the Dorlish Blade around the palace) which he almost certainly stole from one of the archmages of Dorlan.

Lord Julianus, Imperial Wizard

Julianus could have been a member of the Conclave, had he chosen that path. Instead he serves the imperial court as he served Tamerin's father before him. He's a short fellow who is unremarkable looking; gray hair and hazel eyes accompany his short-cut beard. He wears the purple and blue robes of his office which are embroidered with orange sun-signs.

He likes to pretend he's a mysterious creature, and I believe he's an active enemy of Sylorio. I've not had many occasions to interact with him and when I have he always struck me as an unpleasant type. We in the Conclave have always watched him warily.

Lord Darius Anarjent, Dynas of Auruxol and Lord of the Coffers

Darius Anarjent, the Duke of Auruxol, is a fat man who has been blessed by Tallial with a streak of cowardice a rod in width. His device is five golden coins on a red field and nothing could be more appropriate for him. He wears tunics that are too tight, emblazoned with coins and embroidered with many sigils.

He wears an ostentatious golden chain around his neck with a seal of his office hanging from it, and struts everywhere

with an overweening sense of purpose.

The Anarjents were a minor house before the emperor appointed them the Dynasren of Auruxol and now that they control the gold mines of the empire they lord their importance over everyone else. He is an insufferable wretch who will pretend to be your ally, even share a drink and a pie with you, and then tell the emperor every last thing you've said!

Prince Balduen Galoen, Prens of Westreth and Lomere

Balduen "the Fair" is a kind-hearted creature unfortunately caught between the schemes of his uncle the emperor and his own desire to do what's right. Balduen values the opinions of the Conclave and I meet with him often in semi-secret (though how much stays secret from Sylorio none can say).

He is a young man, no more than seventeen, and he has the same fair hair and brown eyes as his uncle the emperor. He is almost never in Miles, as he must govern his own lands in the west. If you have a chance to meet this young man, I highly advise that you do; he is a friend to all adventurers.

Sieur Camrose Anarjent, Grand Strategos

Another of the Anarjent brood, the Grand Strategos is (surprisingly for his family name) a rather good man. He understands the dangers of war and is always hesitant to commit troops to the field. He's carried my warnings to the emperor's ears on many occasions, as he knows to respect an agéd mage of great personal power!

Camrose is a tall fellow with stooped shoulders who always wears the garments of his office: white lacquer scale and a glittering belt of golden panels replete with gemstones. He is a serious fellow, so don't try to amuse him, but simply be blunt and straightforward with him to earn his trust.

Magister Aventius Livone, Master of Trade

The masters of Trade and Rents are both appointees of the Dynas of Auruxol and are both firmly in his pocket. Aventius is the more reasonable of the two men, wearing his position with pride and dignity.

He's gone to fat but he was once a potent merchant-captain along the rivers of the heartland. He always wears a fine linen tunic of dyed red cloth and a golden chain of office.

Magister Verus Bosire, Master of Rents

Verus seems to think he's the Gods' gift to men. A thin fellow who nevertheless seems greedily hungry for coin, he is always seeking after unpaid imperial rents throughout the city. He has a squadron of rent-collectors and tax-farmers that combs the city for their due.

Don't get on Master Verus' bad side, or he will plague you until the end of all days when Night swallows the very earth, checking and double-checking to see what services or coins you owe the throne.

Divine Ierus Olele, Judge of the Palace

The Divine Ierus is the representative of the Temple of the Lawkeeper serving in the imperial domus. He is a poor, harried man who is constantly being dispatched to and from the temple law-archives to consult the ancient records of customary and imperial law.

Sallow and sickly looking, the divine wears his full vestments at all times, including the heavy cope laced with cloth-of-gold. Emperor Tamerin seems to be quite harsh on the poor fellow, taking out his irritation with the High Lawkeeper on Divine Ierus, a man with much less stamina.



Magister Ludovus Errare, Master of Revels

A better master of revels could not have been found throughout the entire city. I think that Master Ludovus Errare was once a singer himself, for he loves to belt out popular songs and chansons. He is in charge of collecting special taxes and rents during festivals and authorizing religious events throughout the city.

Rumor has it that Master Ludovus is engaged in some manner of liaison with a Rayan Roseknight, but the truth of the matter is something that I know nothing of!

Magister Valha Varia, Master of Scribes

The elf Valha Varia is the imperial scribal master and as such is in charge of the hundreds of clerks that swarm the domus every day. He's also in charge of the imperial historian, Guiliamus Escritor, who has begun writing the history of Tamerin's reign.

Valha takes his role very seriously and brooks no interruptions. He is a terse elf and is himself getting on in years. He can be of some use to you, however, as he commands the imperial scriptorium and has access to every document ever copied there.

Magister Dulon Anarjent, Master of Tolls

Another Anarjent toady, Master Dulon is the keeper of tolls on both the river and the imperial highways and turnpikes. As such, he is rarely in the city since Tamerin demands the little waddling fellow see to every problem with the imperial infrastructure personally.

JUSTICE AND THE LAW

As the center of the Lawkeeper's cult, rule of law and authority are very important in the empire, Miles in particular. The city has a wide hinterland composed of Valdis (derogatorily called Gnometown—you'd be best sticking to just Valdis, if you please!), Aripa, Saxa, and Agris. These towns, visible from the city gates and in some cases growing up directly next to the city itself, don't partake in the complex systems of justice that operate within the imperial cities' walls.

These towns have their own justices and sheriffs, though they all report to the Mayor of the Palace and all taxes are part of the Milean collections. However! It is not unheard of for cases in the sub-urbs of Miles to be referred to higher authorities within the city.

Beyond the townships are the baronies and the counties of the Heartland, which all owe their fealty directly to the imperial household. If you ever find yourself traveling the Pillar Road, you'll discover that Emperor Tamerin has re-established the old tradition of the wayhouse which is a small roadside inn that can host travelers but, more importantly, holds mounts for the Sacred Heralds, viators, and other emissaries of the empire.

The City Garrison and Its Parts

The garrison of Miles is proportionally large; just as the city is a sprawling mass of men, so too is the garrison quite a bit larger than any other. However, since the city is rarely in any serious danger from war, the garrison is mostly composed of peacetime soldiers.

It's divided into three general departments which are known as its *partes*. These are the Knight's Watch, who are responsible for keeping public order, the Riverwatch, who command all tolls and docks, and the cities' milites, or soldiers. This three-part system has its head Sieur Ogus Dirke who is the *magnai paxata* (Lord of the Peace) within the walls. He is also commander of the Knight's Watch and is entitled to wear the heraldry of any one of the garrisons *partes*.

The knightly order is further composed of two divisions: the *escurae varani* who are the emperor's praesental army and the *tagmata* that comprise the elite shock-troops of the empire. These two groups are only under Sieur Dirke's command when they are located in the city. Many *escurae* travel wherever the emperor goes and the *tagmata* are an élite standing army that supplements imperial forces in the field.

The Knights of Miles, one of the many knightly orders of the empire, serve the emperor directly and stand outside the structure of the city garrison, though they are still answerable to Sieur Dirke as the *magnai paxata* whenever they are acting in the city.



The Knight's Watch

While the *escurae* and *tagmata* serve as supplemental forces of the Knight's Watch when they're needed, the bulk of the duties falls to the knights themselves. Many of these are classical inheritances of the old Milean *armata domus*: keeping the peace of Miles primary amongst those!

The Watch has an extremely small number of knights compared to the size of the city: no more than five hundred knights serve on the Watch at any given time. They're presented with homes in the city as well as rents from outlying farms as their salary. While these knights are from noble families throughout the empire, they're given new heraldic devices to wear when they join the Watch: white-lacquered plate armor (like the old *armata domus*) and their device is a simple white field.

The modern duties of the Watch are to hire and maintain a garrison of men-at-arms (*armigeri*) to man the major walls of the city, primarily the Faberlaine Wall and the Outwall. This force of *armigeri* is broken into small platoons led by knights and knight-captains. They patrol the walls regularly, report places where the roads and walls are collapsing, and staff the imperial garrison at the base of Sword Hill.

The knights are also responsible for stopping riots and unrest. Like most cities, the knights do not perform duties of investigation or prevention; they will immediately stop any theft or violence nearby but they do not maintain a regular patrol schedule in the lower parts of the city. Rather, each of the gates of the Upper City serves as a commandery where a knight-captain is in residence at any given time. If a crime is committed, the people of the city are expected to apprehend them and then call the Watch to arrest them and bring them before the Lawkeeper's court.

Other duties of the Watch include manning the *tour wyrmai* to sound the alarm if any dragons approach the city (something that has, thankfully, not happened for over a thousand years), checking to make sure the aqueducts and public fountains are in good repair, cleaning the walls, and patrolling Pillar and Sword hill.

Sieur Ogus, like a string of commanders before him, wears the imperial black and red chevron surmounting the pillar as his heraldry. This is the sign of the *magnai paxata* which is a post technically independent from the imperial administration. In his capacity as the *paxata*, he has often supplemented the capacities of the knight's watch with hired adventurers as the manpower of the knights is simply not a large enough pool to allow them to attend to all important matters.

The Escurae Varani

This force evolved from the comital bodyguard of the kings of Thyrnese, eventually becoming the imperial *escurae varani* of modern day. They are at their most visible when the emperor is in residence and the city is considered to be a protectorate of the imperial household, which is most of the time. *Escurae* and *tagmata* are positioned along the main way of the city, the *via arteria*, where they stand amongst



the crowds to discourage violence, theft, and rapine. Their distinctive white lamellar armor, long blades, and poleaxes ensure that they stand out from the common folk, and they often wear cloaks of imperial red to remind the populace of whom they represent.

The primary duty of the *escurae*, however, is explicitly the protection of the imperial person and his household. This is a job that Lord Caprus Arantos takes exceedingly seriously. He is a very militant man, having fought under King Velas against the Bandit Lords during the rising in the Noranian Forest. He has been Lord Captain of the *Escurae* since X.495, and it is a task that he relishes.

There are 1,112 *escurae* at all times. One hundred and twelve of these are posted in the imperial residence while the rest may be scattered throughout Miles or granted temporary leave. The firstborn child of every *escurus* is drafted into the vacancy left by their father or mother upon their death. In the year 502, the emperor had a new set of armor and weapons commissioned for the one hundred and twelve praesental *escurae*, who's positions are determined by their parents so their numbers never dwindle. If you can imagine it, fathering or bearing children is a duty to all members of the *escurae* and no *escurus* is allowed to go for more than one year without a mate!

The Tagmata

Five thousand men and women comprise the *tagmata* of the emperor, his private and personal levy. It is the only standing army in the empire, and it helps garrison the city of Miles when he is in residence. This army was created in 475 and drafted from the members of the heartland nobility, the Knights of Miles, and volunteers from the noble families. The emperor has designated three thousand of these soldiers as footmen and a further two thousand as heavy knights. The *tagmata* are not well-trained at the moment, but their function mimics an ancient classical Fifth Age tradition.

The *tagmata* owe their loyalty to the emperor and do not rely on the imperial bann to be summoned up, providing the emperor a huge number of standing men who can respond to any problems that might arise within the empire. Thus, he can very rapidly deploy *tagmata* to deal with rebels or

invaders. His plan is to craft the tagmata into an elite fighting force similar to the Iron Guard of Essad.

The tagmata are nominally commanded by the Grand Strategos Sieur Camrose Anarjent. Each arm of the tagmata has its own captain, and the combined forces are led by the Tacticos Sieur Lorant Luisain. The tagmata are made up of 5,000 nobles and volunteer soldiers who are frequently garrisoned throughout the city—the emperor’s Decretal of Billeting created a garrison beneath the Span of Swords amongst the lower city. In the year 500, several tenement buildings beneath the Span were claimed by the emperor and cobbled together into the garrison tagmatorum where the army is stationed.

Three thousand of the tagmata form a heavy ground infantry. Of these, one thousand are heavily armored in half plate armor. The rest wear partial plate and all wield spears and carry tower shields. These are known as the tagmata auxilia while the heavily armed group is the tagmata armilla.

The two thousand remaining members of the tagmata are the tagmata maiora, armored and armed like knights with heavy plate. These soldiers form the heart of the tagmata and the greatest power that the emperor can call upon at short notice. They overshadow the Knights of Miles in mobility and speed; the Knights require several days at least to respond to the imperial bann while the tagmata can be summoned up in a single day.



The Riverwatch

River Hill is an extramural extension of the City of Miles, and began its life as a separate town during the Fifth Age. However, early in the Second Empire period it was integrated into the urban life of the city. A watch system was established that dealt with the river and a series of fortresses were constructed atop the hill to guard the city from raiders; the late Second Empire saw a rise of seaborne attacks from the Refusers, necessitating a larger and more complex system of defenses to be installed along all the Milean rivers. The crown jewel of that process was the completion of what is now the modern-day River Keep, a massive building of pinkish river-stone.

From River Keep, the docks and wharves of the Hill are policed and the proper trade tariffs and taxes are collected. Like the Shadow Hill, River Hill is a seedy part of the city. The Riverwatch exists to patrol and defend River Hill and was originally founded to garrison the River Keep, the two bridges that girdle the river there and prevent ships from going any further up the Annorios. This ancient duty has expanded since the days when Refuser raids on Miles were prevalent (they have not happened in living memory) and the Riverwatch now primarily focuses on keeping order.

Twin duties keep the Riverwatch busy; the collection of dues and taxes from the huge profusions of docks and warehouses as well as keeping the imperial peace on River Hill. The Riverwatch thus controls all customs along the river, the flow of traffic between the city and the far shore (where the town of Aripa lies), and the ferries that supplement traffic on the cart bridge (which can be unbearably slow).

Fulfilling the Law

One of the quirks of Milean civilization is that it delegates the powers that are most often reserved for local lords to the priesthood of the Temple of Haeron. If you’re clapped for a crime and dragged before a magistrate, that magistrate may be attended by the regional lord but he himself is a cleric of the Lawgiver.

In Miles, being accused of a crime results in a trial in the Temple of the Lawkeeper. Lesser offenses and those that don’t merit the attention of the emperor or the people are held in the side-courts while well-known criminals are tried beneath the main dome.

If you’ve ever been the subject of a trial in any other land, you’re likely to find that in Miles it is far different! For one thing, I encourage you to hire an advocatus from the temple grounds, as speaking on your own behalf is likely to get you fined. The rules and procedures of the court are labyrinthine and difficult to understand, so it always helps to have a lawyer with you.

In a civil case, both sides present their advocati before a clerical judge from the Temple who will be seated upon a high stepped throne known as a menraius: when he is enthroned in judgement, a priest cannot be gainsaid! Of course, all civil cases in Miles are also imperial cases; breach of the emperor’s peace (when he is in residence) or the peace of the

magnai paxata (when he is not) is a crime against the throne itself. The judge makes inquisition into both sides, generally posing probing questions. Your lawyer (or you, if you're brave) will make a plea for you, or against the other fellow as the case may be. The judge decides, after all arguments are concluded, who is guilty. In most imperial towns the lord is then consulted as to punishment, but in Miles the great law-archives are consulted for rulings made by previous kings and emperors and that punishment is carried out.

Beware, my friends! There are more than two punishments in the empire, unlike in most kingdoms! The first is a fine of various severity depending on the crime (and in accordance with the lawbooks). The second, more severe, penalty is consignment to the emperor's service as a slave: imperial slaves are sentenced to five years of labor in the mines or on the imperial galleys. The third sentence is, of course, death! Before you even think of committing a crime, consult an advocatus to discover what the penalty may be, I implore you: stealing from the imperial household is not worth the five years of your life (which you will probably end as a slave; rowing the galleys and mining in Auruxol are both notoriously risky propositions).

Sieur Ogus Dirke, Magnae Paxata

Sieur Ogus Dirke is the kind of man you can sit down next to and have a long drink with. He won't bother you unless you want to be bothered, and he won't ask questions unless you want to answer them.

He's a pragmatic man interested in keeping the people of Miles safe which is a refreshing feature for someone of his standing. He regularly employs adventurers to solve problems that are either too touchy or too big (or too small!) for the Knight's Watch to deal with.

Ogus has no fear of the emperor; the position, once appointed, is life-long and grants certain incomes in perpetuity. As the Knight's Watch captain you may have more time to interact with him than you think: he's a frequenter of the Taberna Poveri and he rubs shoulders with more adventurers than he does noblemen.

I believe he was from a middling family, since he doesn't seem at home with the upper nobility. Either way, he's proved his honor as a knight and the captain of the peace in the city time and time again. The Knight's Watch is unswervingly loyal to him, and he to the people of Miles.



COINS AND TAXES

Milean coinage dates back all the way to the Thyressan Renaissance. The Thyressan kings claimed legitimacy

because they held the ancient city, so the earliest Thyressan coinage was based on prominent features of Miles: platinum thrones (of the old Red Palace), golden pillars (the Pillar of Miles), silver rivers (the Annorius), and copper walls (of which Miles has many). However, these coins were reformed in X.412 by the first Galoen king, Aras.

The new coins bore the names scepters, pillars, towers, and shields; these are the coins in use in the Third Empire today. King Aras also introduced a new coin minted on the value of electrum which is known as the tradesman. In High Varan the coins are known as the sceptri, mercanti, fulcra, turre, and clype.

The city doesn't have its own mints; the right to strike coins has devolved since the time of the First and Second Empires and is instead possessed by the great dukes and duchesses of the empire. Most imperial coins are minted in Auruxol. These coins are imported to the city in great chests where they are stored in the imperial domus and used primarily for the distribution of funds and purchasing of goods throughout Miles. By this capillary action, the city is the heart of the redistribution of coinage in the entire empire.

Tax in the empire is generally paid in kind. Miles is an exception to this rule; taxation in the city is based on the formularies of marketplaces—that is, in gold. Fees are rendered when using the docks at Aripa, entering the city gates with a train or caravan, gathering in a marketplace, and the colloquial “sword-tax” on adventurers which is collected during registration at the Temple of the Lawkeeper and before which they may not advertise themselves as adventurers or mercenaries anywhere within the walls of the city nor accept payment for such services rendered. This is not to mention the standard land-tax leveled on individual heads and great landowners alike!

THE CULTS

The temples of Miles command a great number of followers amongst the city. While few people in the city are members of one of the Inner Cults, they are still wildly influential in the politics of Miles. Below you will find the very most powerful cults in the city.

The Temple of the Lawkeeper (Haeron)

Founded in the mists of time during the First Empire, the Temple of the Lawkeeper was the first temple built by the southmen after the coming of Aeldus the Prophet and the mass conversions that followed in his wake. It's seen many centuries since then! Hardly a stone of the original temple remains in place.

The priests and supplicants at the temple are the worshippers of Haeron the Hammerer, the mannish god of law and smithcraft. His worship is pervasive throughout the empire and his priests also serve as judges in many places!

The temple complex is located on Pillar Hill within the shadow of the Pillar itself. It incorporates a huge number of archives, scriptoria, courts, and sacral grounds behind its



THE POWERS THAT BE

walls and is generally under the protection of the *escurae varani* who are always out in force there.

It's the central training center for *advocati* and clerks all over the city and the imperial bureaucracy is full of functionaries who were educated at the Temple. In addition, the temple collects all judgements made throughout the empire every year and adds them to its ever-expanding law archives. Huge codices the size of my entire frame can be found within their towering libraries!

While the clergy is generally a good sort, all their services come with some fee. The *advocati* can be found hawking their services (and for a percentage will even join onto an adventuring contract to serve as a permanent lawyer, though be wary of the clauses they build in!) as can clerks and scribes.

In addition, the Temple maintains several smaller chapels on its grounds to those gods that serve Haeron but have no clerics of their own. These include Halor the Tactician, Tallial the War-Herald, and the Guardian of Roads and Messengers, Vaela.

The Sacred Heralds of Vaela

While Vaela has no clergy per say she has a (relatively) small corpus of devoted female followers who take orders as Sacred Heralds. These women (there are no more than two thousand of them throughout the whole empire) serve as messengers and *viatores*. Assault on a sacred herald is a breach of the sacral dictums of the goddess of pilgrims. It is said that even orcs and goblins fear to harm a Sacred Herald while she is undertaking a mission.

They are often used by the emperor to bear his messages, but if you have something that you simply cannot entrust to a *viatore*, the Sacred Heralds are an (expensive) option!

High Lawkeeper Ellarent Pellan

A thin and severe man with a beard that looks like it juts straight out from his chin, Ellarent Pellan is a reasonable cleric. He is the master of the entire Temple of Miles and must deal with constant reports of every quarter of Arunia, so it's understandable that he'd be a bit stressed.

He has salt-and-pepper hair and is entering his forty-seventh year. He often eschews the complex garments of his station for a simple white robe and hood. I doubt you'll ever run into the High Lawkeeper, as he stays well clear from the public spaces in the Temple, but if you do try not to bother him overmuch. He is easily aggravated, probably due to the vast number of things he must contend with at any given time.

In his time, Pellan has had clashes with Emperor Tamerin, particularly over warring with other kingdoms that share the faith of Miles; Byrne, Meirenia, and the other lands that were swallowed in the War of the Shield. After being imprisoned inside the Temple of the Lawkeeper by the Knights of Miles for several months, his tune has changed but he is still a staunch supporter of peace and sanity over the emperor's expansionist politics.

The Temple of Avauna and the College of Healers

Physicians in the world of men are most often trained by Avaunite colleges. The Milean College is the largest of all these training schools for hundreds of rods in every direction. It serves as an academy for students, a Hall of Healing and infirmary for the sick, and a place of quiet prayer and contemplation.

The Milean College is in actuality a loose grouping of buildings comprising a city block or so and within it one can find a loose corpus of lectures, classes, and debates. These classes cost a pretty penny, but anyone who can ante up the gold can attend them. However, the full course of physician (known as a *medicus*) training takes several years to complete. I suppose if you wanted to attend just a few lectures and learn some basics, that could be arranged.

Unlike other temples, the infirmary of the College will take the wounded in for free. Young Healers and *medici* take their training on some of the sick while the others are tended gratis by the temple *magistri*. Magical healing, of course, is reserved for the paying or for members of Avauna's inner cult.

Be wary when looking for physicians outside of the College: if they've been trained by Avaunites the law says they may wear a leather thong about their heads with a silver sunburst on their brow. Anyone without such a thing is an impostor who may not know your heart from your lung!

Master Physician Valreth Lemille

Valreth is one of the *magistri medici* (master physicians) of the College. He spends most of his time in the infirmary tending the sick and teaching the young healers. While he is a priest, he has none of the training required to channel the divine talents of Avauna which makes his work all the more impressive!

He's an old fellow who needs ground glass lenses to see properly, but he wears his Avaunite headband at all times. Indeed, you'll usually find him in bloodstained white robes and a white linen smock mulling around the sick.

Unless you need a physician or to consult one, I wouldn't bother going to speak with the *magister*. He's got little to say that doesn't deal with viscera.

The Altar of Grains and the Temples of Eleia

On Pillar Hill you can find a massive outdoor altar stained with the sacrifices of a thousand years and worn smooth by the passage of time. It has only a few attendants, but don't let that fool you. There are many temples of Eleia in the city!

They aren't truly a single organization since they are all independent from one another and share only the loosest ties. However, I would feel remiss in not mentioning them. They crowd the Middle and Lower city, since the fertility and grain goddess is much beloved of the common people.

When they wish to affect some kind of change in the city, the High Grovetenders comprise a council of hierophants and designate one of their number to represent them.

Grovetender Leara Noraine

Leara is the High Grovetender of the large Eleian Temple on the via sacra. She is in her middle age and is an affable woman who was once an adventurer in her own right. Her fair face is a welcoming sight every time I return to Miles and her cooking is delightful!

She is by far the kindest of the Grovetenders in the city and the most inclined to help adventurers in a bind. She was raised in the Noranian Forest, so she knows the dangers of bandits, raiders, and orcs better than most in Miles.

The Temple of the Seven Gates (Akem)

Located at the intersection of the via sacra and the via cinis (the Street of Ashes, which appropriately leads to the Imperial Tombs) the Temple of the Seven Gates is one of the largest temples attributed to the Silent Lord outside the death god's own city-complex at Gadrada.

The cult of Akem has a monopoly on death-rites in the imperial city. Gnomes, halflings, elves, dwarves; whoever you like, if you die you will pass through the gates of this temple. It is illegal to dispose of bodies in any other fashion. While the priests will respect the wishes of the deceased (i.e., only men and halflings will generally be cremated, etc.) they are still the only authorities allowed to deal with the corpses and take them to their final resting place.

The imperial family has patronized the temple for centuries, leaving them an enormously powerful legacy and coffers overflowing with coins. The cult has little political ambition save to ensure that the practice of necromancy (and a vile practice it is!) and the worship of the Necromancer (and a disgusting god to boot!) is kept outlawed within the empire.



If you or anyone you know dies, you'll be sure to come into contact with someone from the Temple of the Seven Gates.

Gatekeeper Faraius Canthir

The face of the temple and the teacher of acolytes, Gatekeeper Faraius is pretty happy-go-lucky for a cleric of the death god. Of course he wears the long black robes and cloak of a cleric of his order but he often laughs and smiles which is not something you see in a lot of the grim servants of Akem!

If you need anything from him, he is one of the only (how can I say it?) robust Gatekeepers. He has brown hair and a kindly smile and is willing to discourse for long hours about the nature of death; I have long considered writing down our conversations as part of a general Dialog.

The Temple of the Four Winds (Aros)

The Four Winds play a minor role in the administration of the city and, in fact, the Arodian cult is rather small in Miles when compared to the huge following of the Eleian or Hierian cults. There are still a fair number of worshippers of Aros within her walls.

This temple is extremely attractive to adventurers; they aren't stingy with their divinity and magics (though again, everything is mercenary!) and accept inner cult members readily and without a number of trials.

The Four Winds can occasionally act first and think later, their Windspeaker being a loud outspoken fellow who often takes to the streets to make his beliefs and desires heard. He commands a relatively disproportionate amount of power for the size of his parish-base due to the fact that so many of them are adventurers! Thus any regulations or laws concerning adventurers are always at least first run by the Windspeaker.

Windspeaker Areus Valet

It's said that the Divine Areus was raised to be a squire but found a calling in the Arodian priesthood when he was a boy. He exhibits the divinely-touched powers of the gods and has been known to channel miraculous spells in public without any prompting. Where most priests would hesitate to rush into a fray or lay on their hands and make use of their god-given might, Areus seems to relish it.

I can't say I've had time to speak with him in great detail. He is a young man, full of vim and vigor, and from what I hear of him he generally aligns himself with the same position as the Conclave! That's what I like to hear in a priest, and it gives me hope for the empire yet.

The Signe of the Frothing Mug (Heimir)

Scattered throughout the world are the semi-austere monasteries devoted to the perfection of the arts of brewing. A noble devotion indeed! These monasteries house the male-only order of the Monks of Heimir or the Brotherhood of Beer as they are sometimes (insultingly) called. Part of the oath of the monks, as they serve the god of hospitality, is to accept whatever payment anyone can offer (no matter how little) in

exchange for a place to sleep. Thus, the semi-cloistered order is frequented by adventurers on a regular basis: and why not? They brew beer and will let you sleep there for free!

The monks do not trouble the imperial authorities at all, unless it is to request stricter laws regarding the content of ales, wines, and beers, which (surprisingly) can become very complex.

The River God Temple (Meina and the River Spirits)

The temple of Meina in Miles also serves as a place to placate and propitiate the spirits of the river Annorius and the various creeks and rivers around the city.

Together with the Arodians, the Meinites serve and represent the needs of sailors and waterborne merchants throughout the city.



THE CABALS

There are a number of secretive cabals of mages dwelling in Miles as well. While the history of sorcery is fraught with lessons that teach us that wizards cannot get along, there will always be those who attempt to gather in schools similar to the fabled sorcerers enclaves of the first and second empire.

The Grand Conclave of Wizards

My very own order! The Grand Conclave was founded in the Ninth Age by the wizard Crisby the Magnificent and only the most powerful sorcerers in all of Arunia are asked to join its ranks. Crisby himself said:

Magic is poison to the uninitiated. Magic is darkness and chaos to the untrained mind. Like all power, magic is a source of danger but also a source of wonder. We must ensure that the mages of the North never represent a source of danger the way they once did. That is our purpose, that is our message. Let us never forget that, for in so doing we will open ourselves up to the chaos and the darkness that gripped the world so often in the earlier Ages.

There have never been more than fifteen members of the Grand Conclave at any given time, and we generally expound on all matters from the political to the magical! Our meetings oc-

cur beneath the Pillar of Miles itself, and we watch powerful wizards outside our circle carefully to ensure that they use their powers responsibly!

It doesn't embarrass me to say that the members of the Grand Conclave are the most powerful living sorcerers in Arunia. We meet several times a year and don't generally do any of the things normally associated with a wizard's circle: there are no apprentices, no shared magical learning, just the conclave sessions where we discuss the affairs of the world and decide what to do about them.

Joining the Conclave

I hate to say it, but if you're reading this book chances are you're not admissible to the Grand Conclave. Think for a moment on the most powerful wizards in the world. Who does your mind turn to at once? Ward of Wardtower, perhaps, or Cyon Greenmantle. Certainly Drozon the Red and Julianus, the Emperor's personal sorcerer.

None of these men are learned or skilled enough to warrant even ten minutes of the Conclave's time. None of them have the magics at their command that would amount to a Conclave seat.

If my words seem overly harsh or the Conclave seems unreachable, you have only to remember: we all started as apprentices, even the mighty and powerful Solon the Silent, who is responsible for much of the magical learning we know today. I don't preclude these fellows because of any prejudice but simply because they have not attained the rank of preference and the deep understanding of matters magical that men like Solon or women like Iloria have.

To be eligible for the Conclave, one must present a credible threat to any single Conclave member; indeed, one must present a credible threat to the entire north. The Conclave exists mostly to prevent us from utilizing our powers and knowledge in any meaningful way!

Besides, who would want to be on the Conclave? It's stuffy and the beer is always stale.

Solon the Silent

Solon is the most powerful wizard in living memory barring Orvius Kavalson, who perished in X.501. He was born in the Aellonian islands and traveled to High Aellon as a boy where he learned magic at the foot of the Archmage of Chimeron.

I believe that, by the year X.427, he had become a powerful wizard in his own right. There are certainly rumors of his presence in the city of Ninfa at that time. He came to the empire when it was still just the Kingdom of Thyrnesse and established a residence in the port-city of Noranos.

Solon is a tall and far-sighted man with much wisdom to offer but little inclination to offer it. He's as tight-lipped as a corpse; in all my years of having known his acquaintance I don't think he's ever joined together more than five words at a time. This is how he earned his title as the Silent!

Solon has contributed more to the study of magic in his

lifetime than any ten other mages in the world combined. If you see him, you'll know him by his long white robes, gray cloak, and long white hair. He wears his beard to a moderate length and that too is pure white. His eyes are a piercing green and his expression is often a sour one. If you're looking for aid from Solon the Silent, you'd probably best seek elsewhere.

Avarius the Farsighted

Another Milean! This short brown-haired imperial wizard is a blisteringly clever man even if he's not all that nice. He's rarely in Miles, preferring the seclusion of his villa in southern Dorlan. Some say he's half-elven, though I don't see that cast in his features.

He is a vocal member of the Conclave (unlike Solon) and always has something to say about everything. He carries his staff, *Witherer*, with him wherever he goes and I'm certain he has at least one means of instant teleportation.

The Circle of Miles

Of a lesser grade than the Grand Conclave, the Circle of Miles serves roughly the same purpose: several potent wizards in the city have banded together for mutual aid, protection, and political power. They pool their resources, allowing them greater access to magical materials than any one wizard alone. Of course, the problem with this is, as we are fond of saying in the north, wizard's build towers. What I mean is, take a handful of people of any given background and they likely can get along—for a little while at least. However, wizards are more haughty and arrogant than most.



Not only that, but they have the potential to change reality itself whenever they want to. Small altercations can become dangerous battles of magical skill. This is reason enough for me to monitor the Circle: if they have a falling out, the Conclave should be ready to step in and protect the city from their wrath.

The Circle is composed of three magi, namely: Baseri the Ishtrian, Domna Star-reader and their patronus, Beade Whitebeard. Between them they own a small region of Wizard's Hill as well as a large and extensively appointed magical research library.

I myself have rented time and space with them while I am in the city, for my own notes are located in my home in the Vales. In my experience, they never charge more than one thousand readers for a week's worth of time in their spacious and well-stocked marble halls.

They have no hierarchy, save that Beade is the mightiest and therefore their patronus and leader. I don't know if they act collectively in politics, but it would seem that they don't. They aren't an overly friendly lot, but they are amenable to training young mages who possess the necessary humility.

The Imperial Schola

Once, long ago, during the First and Second Empires, there were a number of competing but powerful schools or colleges of magi that competed in both philosophy and political power. While these schools have since vanished, there is a group of mages in the city claiming the inheritance of the most powerful of the schola, namely the schola imperiorum which was said to serve the ancient emperors alone.

From what I've seen, these sad men and women are dressing up in the trappings of days gone by and mouthing half-forgotten secrets without knowing what they're doing. They may have had access to some of the most ancient and revered tekhne manuals or they may not have; their magic doesn't seem to be any stronger or more mighty than my own!

Still, they have some prestige in the imperial court (though Julianus also hates them) and the emperor seems to see something in them. I would be wary of making them angry, for even if they aren't more powerful than any other wizards, they're still wizards which makes them powerful indeed.

They wear the costume of the ancient imperial school, which includes ornate purple robes with heavy plates of gold sewn into them. They have a certain bent towards ceremony and solemnity and do not take kindly to silliness or belittling of their statures.

Organization

Joining the Imperial Schola isn't as simple as one might be led to believe. New members are hand-picked from the populace of Miles and the surrounding towns by the *magistri scholastici* (the scholastic masters) who ride out of the school once per year to find suitable apprentices.

Money is always exchanged, generally two hundred golden pillars for a young child of eight years or less. These children are taken onto the grounds of the Schola and trained

in the philosophies of the old imperial school—or at least, whichever of those survive.

I don't remember the school existing in my youth, but then again I never paid attention to things like that when I was young. It's possible that they do have an uninterrupted link to the past, but even if they do its a tiny one.

After a youngster reaches the age of 12, they're designated an official apprentice. Before that they can still be rejected from the schola.

Apprentices must proceed through a variety of milestones (generally they are expected to do so by certain ages):

age 12, apprentice -- comprehend basic spells

age 14, invoke -- perform a philosophical defense before two masters

age 16, invarch -- perform their first spell

Once apprentices pass the rank of invarch (by reaching age 18 and successfully crafting a spell of their own to add to the school's libraries) they ascend to the rank of the Senior Schola.

Master infiltrator that I am, even I had trouble piercing the veils of their higher ranks. Below is what I've managed to cobble together from various inferences, sessions of sneakery, and listening to them speak in public:

The next rank is that of Exarch, and when initiates reach this rank they apparently are allowed to don the purple and gold robes of the schola in public.

Beyond that there appear to be Hierarchs, Magearchs, and Masters though what those titles mean precisely I cannot say. The leader of the imperial school is known as the Esteemed Master and he, at least, must be a wizard of some power.



GUILDS AND GUILDERS

The great guilds drive the monied economy of the imperial city and keep the trades they represent from becoming overrun with poor quality imitators. Indeed, imperial law enforces the power of the guilds by demanding that all tradesmen belonging to a trade that has been incorporated into a guild belong to that guild; independently practicing tradesmen are fined and may even receive a sentence of enslavement for multiple breaches of the law.

There are, generally, two types of guilds in the empire. These are the craftguilds (such as the bakers, carpenters, etc. but also encompassing the guilds of less concrete crafts such as the advocates) and then there are the mercantile compacts. Craftguilds represent groups of craftsmen that

must, by imperial law, operate together under a single guild-heading. They share regulations and upper councils of skilled masters and their influence is confined to a single city. Journeymen must be interviewed by these masters to receive the rank of master themselves, and apprentice fees paid to individual craftsmen are also generally shared with the board of masters.

Mercantile compacts, however, are not generally composed of parties that would otherwise be in competition with one another. Instead, they are corporate endeavors wherein multiple merchants pool their money into a single pool and create a governing board to administer it. This allows merchants that join the coster or compact to operate as though they had a far larger supply of capital than would otherwise be possible. This also avails them of the use of all the properties of the guild: caravan masters, ships, barges, etc. to move their goods. While the law requires craftsmen to be incorporated into a guild, merchants may operate freely or within the confines of a compact. Compacts are enforced throughout the empire, rather than in one urban locale.

The guilds listed below are the nine most influential in the city which form the Mercantile Council, an advisory body that often delivers the desires of the city's merchant and craft class to the imperial court.

The Guild of Advocates

The Guild of Advocates represents every lawyer and advocate in the city. Advocates from other imperial cities must register with the guild and pay nominal dues to have their names cross-recorded on the Milean scrolls of practitioners. Practicing law in Miles does not require that one be a member of the guild of advocates, but practicing law for money does.

The guild holds certain standards which, like all craftguilds, are impressed on their journeymen before they become masters. Of course, being advocates, guild members refuse to use the terms applicable to "lesser craftsfolk." Apprentice advocates are known as novices, journeymen are *advocati reguli* and masters are *magistri advocati*.

Membership in the Guild of Advocates requires the ability to read and write; part of the apprentice-fee of young men sent to train as lawyers (who are generally from the mercantile or artisanal classes, the nobility shunning the vulgarity of the work) must spend several years under the tutelage of Hierien clerics before they may begin the formal introduction to law.

Advocati are present at every public walk of life and can also serve as *vigilatores imperiales* or imperial witnesses to publicly witness documents and transactions that require official seals of acknowledgement.

Advocates fees are vastly variable, but the guild sets the lower limit at 5 towers (*turre*) per trial. Thus, the very poor can never afford advocates. The upper limit for law services is 150 pillars (*fulcre*) per trial, ensuring that wealthy advocates are quite wealthy indeed.

Tholfir Goldenhair, Principes Advocati

The First Advocate is the chief position on the governing council of the Guild of Advocates. The office has been held by Tholfir Goldenhair for over one hundred years, since long before the current inauguration and revival of imperial law. Tholfir is a member of the imperial (and somewhat imperialized) iron dwarvish clan of the Goldenhairs (Gulhar) who also live in Auruxol and serve as imperial minters.

Tholfir is a dour old dwarf with a snappy business-like attitude. He likes to see problems solved but, like most iron dwarves, is reluctant to approach any problems in a frantic or frenetic way. If you've ever interacted with dwarves you'll know what I mean; that distaste of extroverted behavior.

He has a cool, level head and knows the laws of ancient Miles as well as the modern city as well as he knows his own hands. He doesn't wear his beard long in the classical dwarven fashion, but rather short like a Hieriean priest might.

Tholfir himself rarely serves as an advocate any more. He has made a great deal of money in his long career, which is no surprise. As Principle Advocate he is permitted to charge any fee he desires, and the fees for his expertise are high indeed!

The Guild of Bakers

The bakers supply the city with a steady diet of digestible foods made from the grains that are brought into the city from the Heartland and from places even further abroad (Ishtria, Hadash, and Khewed). The fact that the Guild of Bakers is powerful within Miles seems to confound and puzzle most provincials. In many towns of the empire bread-ovens are communal property and the privilege to use them is paid to the lord.

This was true in Miles during its dark ages, but at the beginning of the Thyrnessan Renaissance many small bakers of the city banded together to purchase the rights to the ovens. All baking ovens within the city now belong to the Guild of Bakers, which has enabled the ancient practicing of the grain dole to be resumed; namely, the imperial court stocks huge amounts of grain and pays it out to feed the city free of charge.

Because the Baker's Guild controls the baking ovens, they are granted a ration of free imperial grain in return for providing the imperial administration with a certain amount of free bread. This bread is then distributed as part of the dole to the neediest in the city from the great imperial granaries. By this system alone does the massive population of Miles manage to stay fed. You probably won't even believe me when I say that there are over three million people in Miles and the surrounding towns that live from the grain dole, but until you've been there you can't truly know the scale of this city!

Guild regulations determine the weight of standard breads (to reduce such unconscionable practices as sawdust-stuffing), the salt-content of dough, and the maximum price of grain and bread (which is passed down from the imperial authorities).



Andryss Grosso, Master of Bakers

Andryss the Fat. A long-time friend from the earliest days of my career in Miles! He was just a sprat then, and I already a wizard grown, but he has become a powerful man in the city. Andryss is a behemoth of a man, as learned in oven-lore as I am in spells. His huge ruddy cheeks and bulbous nose are hard to miss in a crowd, so you'll always see Andryss coming.

He is not only a jovial friend, but also Master of Bakers and the representative of the Guild to the Mercantile Council. His persuasive powers are known the Council over; his opinion rules the bakers and it is lucky that he believes they should be generous, giving, and understanding. Grain doles are often supplemented with spontaneous gifts from the bakers and it was Andryss who convinced the Guild to supply free food on all official festival days.

The Guild of Caravaneers

The caravaneers may at first blush seem similar to the carters, but there are important differences between them. The caravaneers do not operate sledges, carts, wagons, or other conveyances within the city. Rather, their singular purpose is to staff and maintain caravan-trains which can be hired by mercantile compacts en route to dangerous locales throughout Arunia.

The caravaneers are thus great friends to fledgling adventurers! They often work with adventuring companies that require simple but dangerous (and well paying) occupations. Caravan guards are amongst the least risky of well-paying mercenary jobs available. If you're looking to cut your teeth, there's few better places to start than the Guild of caravaneers.

Of course, though the caravaneers are wealthy, most proper merchant's compacts provide their own caravan and guard services. If the caravaneers can't give you a good deal or you feel as though your services are undervalued, it is always better to go straight for the merchants involved; Pandar's Procurements, which moves strange and exotic cargoes, is often the best wage.

Thylgus

Thylgus

Miscellaneous adventures, routines
(Rogue, Thief)



Lagante Twocoin, Master of Caravans

Lagante is a native son of the port city of Noranos and he was once an adventurer himself. I've crossed paths with him on many occasions, though I can't say I ever managed to get a good read on him. I believe the man is a skilled manipulator, having observed him from an unobtrusive locale during several sessions of the Mercantil Council.

Lagante is a tall man with short-cropped hair who tends to wear ostentatious displays of his wealth and the wealth of his guild. Rich reds and blues are his favorite hues, and his weasel-like face always floats above a heavily embroidered collar.

While the guild itself may be good for starting adventurers to get a feel for the work, I fear Lagante himself may be inclined to take advantage of the untrained and novice adventurer.

The Guild of Carters

The imperial carters serve as transport as well as cart-construction. Wagons, carts, barrel-carts (not of gnomish design, for my folk refuse to join the Guild and instead the emperor has decreed Valdis to be its own settlement and exempt from the Milean rules on guilds), transports, litters, and all other means of conveyance by land are produced by the carters. They look out for the interests of the builders on the Council.

The carters have no structure in terms of hierarchy over labor for pulling or hauling carts and litters; all members of the guild that do these menial tasks are known, appropriately, as menials. However, cart-construction is a different kettle of fish all together! Cart-builders are still divided into the classical groups of apprentices, journeymen, and masters. You'll never find a gnome carter for the reasons stated above, but they may be legally employed at the rate normally reserved for master craftsmen.

Baldwen Carter, Chief Carpenter

A staunch workman, Baldwen Carter is like a blunt instrument. He brings his straightforward attitude to the Council and his personal business dealings, so if you must ask him for something or work with him in any way make certain you don't cross him (on purpose or inadvertently).

You could be forgiven for mistaking him for a carter menial, as he is a tough looking older man. Yet, this bald hammer-faced carpenter is one of the most senior masters in the city and has worked not only on carts and wagons but on the great ships that compose the imperial fleet.

The Guild of Gold and Silversmiths

The gold and silversmiths are without a doubt the wealthiest and most influential of all the Nine Guilds. Gold and silver are in great demand amongst the nobility as well as all the resident elves and dwarves in the city. This makes the few smiths capable of working the metal fabulously

wealthy. The guild has invested its excessive coin in farms and latifundia outside of Miles as well as in mercantile ventures and sailing ships for the import and export of metal. As such, the gold and silversmiths sit in the preeminent position of the Council, ruling all opinion and determining the final say on all matters.

In recent years the influence of the jewelers (as they are commonly called) has declined due to deliberate imperial policy. Their great estates have mostly been confiscated and assigned to nobility and new laws have been enacted which require all gold imported into Miles to be purchased first by the imperial domus (at a rate decided by the imperial tariff-masters) and then resold to the goldsmiths.

The smiths are divided over what to do, since the empire has brought an unprecedented wave of peace and wealth into the city but has diminished the personal wealth of many of the members of this guild.

Goldsmiths and silversmiths tend, more than any other guild, to be of non-human race: elves, dwarves, and gnomes dominate the trade, probably because of our singular devotion to craftsmanship that can be perfected over the long millennia of our lifetimes.

Apprentice-fees to receive training under a master smith are higher than any fee extracted from any other craft guild in the city. Indeed, I don't think I've seen any guild anywhere that costs quite so much as the entrance fee for becoming a gold or silversmith in Miles!

Arnir Goldenhair, Master Smith

Yet another Goldenhair! The imperialized iron dwarves are to be found scattered all over the city, both in districts and in positions of importance. Arnir is a goldsmith, gemworker, and jeweler of consummate skill. It is said that his work is so perfect as to imbue the very things he makes with magical power much like the dwarven master smiths of the Arinnfal.

Whether or not this is true, I unfortunately can't say. What I can tell you is that this fair-haired dwarf is nearly four hundred and eighty years old and wears his beard long, down to his shins. He has shared some meals with me, and I have noticed that he particularly enjoys fragrant cheeses from the Vales, perhaps because they remind him of the mountainhome he never inhabited.

He's not very political, so you needn't worry about crossing him. While the smiths may have a huge influence on the Mercantile Council, Arnir does his best to steer a level course and make certain that drastic action is kept to a minimum.

The Guild of Stonemasons and Carpenters

The stonemasons and carpenters make up the two most important building professions in the city. If you're going to make something in Miles, chances are it will have at least one of the two components (wood, stone) to it! A large number of dwarves and rock gnomes serve as masons, and there is a fair minority of forest gnomes working as carpenters.

The guild works with merchants to ensure a steady import of wood and stone from outside the city to keep

supplies fresh. The masons have a standing ordinance not to dismantle ancient Milean buildings for materials. Plunder of old Milean ruins has been a fairly wide-spread problem in the city, probably due to the massive levels of decay during the dark ages of Miles.

Anyhow, the masons and carpenters are generally upright folks, though I've never sat with one of them for a meal, of course. The guild also represents the needs and desires of the lesser guild of builders and workmen when sitting on the Council.

There is a bifurcation amongst the apprenticeships of the guild; stonemasons and carpenters, while they may sometimes engage in the same kinds of work, also tend towards radically different projects as well. Personally, I believe that this guild represents two lesser guilds that were joined together for expedience and power at some point in the past. Since there are no written sources that extend farther back than about two hundred years detailing the guild, I'm pleased to believe that my own answer is the correct one!

Livalia Half-elven, Master Stonemason

While you might immediately assume that the guild would be run by a dwarf, there are a fair number of elvish masons under her auspices. They tend towards detail-oriented work (finishers, embellishers, etc.) rather than the simple business of mixing mortar and such (which is done by apprentices anyway!)

Livalia is a darling little half-elven girl who's father is a wind elf stonemason and who's mother was once a whore in one of the wolfsdens of the city. She has a fiery heart and is often the most outspoken voice on the Mercantile Council, though she has the meekest appearance!

Don't let her mousy looks fool you if you ever have occasion to deal with her. Underestimate her at your own peril!

The following three guilds that sit on the Council are mercantile compacts rather than craftsguilds; they specialize in shipping and the protection of merchants.



The Noranian Importers

The Importers maintain a strong hold on all goods that come north from the imperial port of Noranos; two out of every ten ships that sail up the Annorius are from the Importers. While this may seem insignificant, the number of compacts and independent merchants trading at River Hill actually makes this quite an impressive number!

The Importers bring grain to the imperial domus, iron and fire-gold from the eastern kingdoms, gemstones from Cymballar, and spices from southern Ralashar.

Pandar's Procurements

Pandar's Procurements is a strange compact indeed! As a wizard I thoroughly appreciate their services; they do their best to move exotic goods all over the world. They were founded in Dorlan under the administration of the mage-lords there which makes a certain amount of sense.

They move books, rare spices, the body parts of animals that have been properly preserved, and even jars of alchemical ingredients. Pandar's trading posts can be found all over the world with their largest and most powerful in the land of their birth, Dorlan. Still, the influence of the Procurements crowd can't be underestimated in Miles!

Many wizards get supplies from Pandar's exotic lists, so they have the tacit support of those who care to purchase from them... and the friendship of a wizard can mean a lot.

The Hearthland Traders

The Hearthland Traders focus on goods moving exclusively through the heart of the old empire. The Hearthland Traders maintain trade links with Bataille, the Duchy of Paix, and Mermarche which enables them to bring most domestic imperial goods into the city for consumption including slipware from Mermarche, heartwood from Paix, and all manner of goods from Bataille (which is a huge center in and of itself).

The Lesser Guilds

Listed here for completeness are several of the guilds in the city that do not receive a seat on the Mercantile Council. Some of them buy influence with one of the other Nine Guilds, and depending on the power of each of the guilds, their fortunes may rise and fall, dropping off the Council altogether and being replaced by one of the lesser guilds.

- The Guild of Builders and Workmen
- The Guild of Coopers
- The Guild of Tailors and Cloth-dyers
- The Guild of Leatherworkers
- The Guild of Blacksmiths
- The Guild of Weapon and Armsmiths
- The Guild of Whores, Baudy-folk, and actors
- The Guild of Dockmen



THE CITY HERSELF

Now we must come to the physical layout of the great imperial city. I once spoke to the monk Ceylon the Wise, who told me that all cities look like eggs. I didn't understand him then, but I think I've taken the meaning of his words. In their lifetimes, cities begin as solid shells surrounded by walls, but as time goes on they overflow those walls and become more and more chaotic: just like an egg broken over a skillet as it scrambles!

Strangely, Miles defies that description. Its early walls are still standing and many of the walls that were raised during the empire are partially or completely in-tact. There are ancient aqueducts bearing water from the mountains that still function, and the preservation of the city-center seems to have been maintained rather than shattered like a cooking egg!

So below I will present you with a history (first Ancient but then Modern) of Miles followed by the long-awaited geographical description complete with keyed locations.

ANCIENT HISTORY

Miles was originally settled in the late 3rd or early 4th Age by southmen fleeing from the jungle-land of Zesh. The first settlers founded their hilltop town on what is now Pillar Hill. The artisanal class from Zesh built the original Faberlaine wall which girdles the central hill.

In those days it was the only city for rods and rods around, and it commanded a view of the river-fords as well as the great Gigantine lowlands. The original city was very small, composing only the narrow lanes of the hill. It wasn't until the middle 4th Age that it began to expand, spilling its boundaries. It was during that time that the Tour Wyrmais was built. If you can believe it, this ancient Milean tower was constructed on a hill outside the city, though it is now well

within the outermost set of walls.

As the city spread her influence spread with her. The heartland became her periphery, supplying the early settlers with food, cloth, and links to the greater world. It was during the time of the city-states that Miles truly bloomed; the raising of the Pillar marked her entry into the world of the ancient powers. Chimeron, Llernea, Byblos, Mercantis, and Vaer all became sudden foes and competitors on the world scale. Towards the end of the Sword Age, Miles had ceased to compete and simply stood victorious over them. This was the beginning of the First Empire.

Taking over the great alluvial plains surrounding the Inner Sea, including territories that had once belonged to Mercantis, Miles became the center of culture and civilization in the heartland, drawing all men into its orbit. Of course, we smallfolk had never heard of the city in those days, wandering as we were across the wild northlands, but elves and even dwarves by then had come to Miles.

The city served as the seat of imperial administration for centuries until the great Civil Wars which threatened to unravel the empire. When they were concluded a new capitol was founded at Bataille, the so-called Field of Battle. Miles entered a long decline, a slumbering dark age.

For centuries her population fell. After the final end of the Second Empire, she served as the capitol to much reduced kingdoms, growing less and less magnificent as time went on. The ancient monuments were mined for stone, the old buildings fell into ruin and many of the grand streets began to clog with new construction as the old ones became uninhabitable.

This was the dark age of Miles; the city contracted greatly, most of the people that were no longer supported by the old grain doles scattering off to other places. The aqueducts stopped working and in many places there was flooding. Whole buildings began to sink or fall over, and the roads were

overrun with weeds and small woods grew up on the hills.

It wasn't until the coming of the Galoen kings that Miles began to be restored to its native glory, the glory that has evaded it for so long.



MODERN HISTORY

The modern history of Miles begins in the year of 103 in the Ninth Age (IX.103) with the accession of the steward of Miles to Theron Elsoín (r. IX.103-51), the rightful king. Theron was crowned in the summer of that year and subdued the renegade county of Noranor but failed to capture the powerful independent kingdom of Mermarche to the east of Miles.

He was followed by Armena Elsoín (r. IX.151-79), his younger sister, who was supposedly a member of the Black College. The College was an evil group of sorcerers long since expunged from the city that had a powerful grip on many of the nobility in those years. Queen Armena destroyed the Lords of Serpentis and declared it a county of the Kingdom of Thyrnesse but she herself was killed by an assassin from Mermarche in IX.179.

She was succeeded by Olander Elsoín (r. IX.180-215), who was called "the Good." He was a wizard like his mother, but was a peacemaker instead of a warmonger; a much more noble pursuit! He solidified a lasting peace with Thyrnesse's neighbor of Avaria and publicly tried and executed many of the members of the Black College.

His own successor was his daughter by his second wife, known as Saint Evelyne the Pious (r. IX.215-70) who built up hundreds of Hieriean, Avaunite, and Eleian temples in Miles and the whole of her kingdom. She nevertheless lost the isle of Crestley to the kingdom of Paix and the county of Serpentis to Mermarche.

Evelyn was childless, and her great-nephew Tarsus the Bookfriend (r. IX.271-96) succeeded her. He eschewed public policy for the life of the monastery. He lived in a Quilian library in the city (which you can still visit! It has a whole wing built by Tarsus!) during almost all of his reign. His steward (and supposedly his lover), REGARDINE, administered his kingdom.

The years IX.297-300 represent an interregnum by REGARDINE the Seneschal; upon the death of King Tarsus, the seneschal assumed complete control of the kingdom

and effectively imprisoned the heir-designate, Olanthus, in the Red Palace. Upon reaching his majority, young Olanthus staged a coup that ended with REGARDINE's death.

Olanthus Elsoín "the Reclaimer" (r. IX.300-1 and IX.312-345) was dethroned on New Year's Day of IX.301 in a counter-coup by the REGARDINE's son, COLINUS, who had the aid of Mermarche behind him. For an eleven or twelve year period the kingdom effectively ceased to exist, becoming an appendage of Mermarche. It wasn't until Olanthus stormed Miles (capturing the Faberlaine Wall, as the Outwall was too big to be manned in those days) that he could be re-crowned.

In IX.346 his crown passed to Cormorans Elsoín (r. IX.346-65) who married Elanda of Mermarche, ending the ancient war between the two kingdoms. He made HOROS AMVOR, one of the old king's vassals, Duke of Mermarche—a title that the good Amvors have held ever since.

Cormorans was unfortunately succeeded by Tagmus the Kinslayer (r. IX.366-408) who was possessed of an insane paranoia, perhaps brought on by too much wine or capre seeds. He is remembered today only for purging his house of so-called traitors with the aid of his elvish allies and assassins.

Orldus "the do-nothing king" (r. IX.409-66) and Therus "the Unprepared" (r. IX.467-515) are hardly remembered at all save for their military disasters against Avaria.

Histar Elsoín (r. IX.515-627) ended the Ninth Age with his suicide. Childless and heirless, the Elsoín line collapsed, leaving the kingdom in a dynastic crisis for which she would suffer (and suffer badly) for the next four hundred years.

With the passing of the Elsoín, the throne of Miles was left open for any contender with the power to hold it. Astrologers proclaimed the Ninth Age over with Histar's suicide, ushering in the Tenth. In those early years, the creature known as Myrea the Depraved (r. X.3-87) claimed the ancient seat.

Myrea built several fortresses across the Thyrnessan heartland and ruthlessly persecuted the Faiths, levying the first taxes they had ever been subject to in imperial history. She was famed for her work projects and the condemnation of mass groups of peasants to royal slavery to work and die on the great fortresses.

In X.87, Myrea was slain by the man who would become her successor: a Duke of Paix, Kadagus (known as the Despot, r. X. 88-102) claimed the crown and scepter and badly mismanaged Thyrnesse for his entire tenure as king. There were apparently widespread beliefs that he himself was a Black College sorcerer, but those rumors proved to be unfounded upon his death.

He was succeeded by Roland the Wise (r. X.102-215) also called Roland the Sorcerer-King. Under King Roland, Paix and the western half of Thyrnesse was lost again; the sons of Kadagus founded the kingdom of New Avaria, which would become a constant thorn in the side of Thyrnesse.

Roland himself appointed his own successor, a Count of Noranor named Sorvial (r. X.216-53) who passed the scepter to the Auruxol Dukes.

Caldus Auruxol ruled in my own childhood (r. X.254-

307) and his son Polinus succeeded him (r. X.308-37). In rapid succession followed Agardus (r. X.338-77) and Queen Thebera (r. X.378-412).

I was still a young gnome when the Auruxol line was brought to an end by the Conclave. In an attempt to reunite the brutally warring heartland, they destroyed the Peppinids of Avaria and gave the throne to the son of the Watchmaster of Tourons, the rulers of the kingdom of Westreth. This knit together Westreth, Avaria, and Thyrnesse into a cohesive whole beneath a cadet branch of the Galoen house.

The first Galoen King was Aras Galoen (r. X.412-49) who created the new Thyrnessan coinage and began the reconstruction of Miles.

He was followed by his son Tamerin (X.449-53) who planned to pass his throne to his own son (also named Tamerin) who died as a young boy. King Tamerin died without issue, leaving his brother Velas to inherit the scepter.

Velas (r. X.454-77) named his own son Tamerin III after the dead child, and it is Tamerin Galoen himself (r. X.478-present) who rules the empire. Of course, it's worth noting that Tamerin changed his name when he declared himself an emperor instead of a king—he is now Tamerin Elsoin the First, rather than a lesser Galoen scion, though he still recognizes his kinship with Prince Balduen Galoen of Westreth.

In the year X.501, Tamerin (who was still a king of Thyrnesse in those days) went to war with Byrne, Meirenia, and Colona against the wishes of myself and the rest of the Conclave. The king's reasoning was simple enough to follow:

each of those lands was a former imperial holding and he, as the king of Miles, was entitled to rule them. Over the course of a summer he fought and won his battles against the three nations, bringing them to heel. After a failed assassination attempt, he declared himself emperor of Miles and decreed the foundation of a new empire. Since that day, he has revived old imperial custom and acted much in the manner of the emperors of old: building public works, showing largesse to his people, and constructing great projects in the city of Miles.

GEOGRAPHY

Miles is built across seven hills, winding through their valleys and peeping out upon their crests. These are the Pillar, Sword, Wyrn, Peasant's, Shadow, Wizard's, and River Hills. Together with the lands between them, they make up the entire city of Miles. I've provided a map for those without the power of flight (which is probably all of you!) or who have never visited the city before. Look over it well, for I have marked down on it all the most important places in Miles!

Gates and Towers of Miles

P1. Portam Reges

The Gate of Kings! This entrance used by the emperor and all the kings of Miles before him. No other monarch may enter this way, and the *via sacra* (also known as the *via arteria*) extends from this gate all the way through the city to the Gate of the Shipwrights.

The structure of the gate is mammoth, large enough to admit war elephants and towering giants, some of which have actually passed through in the long history of the imperial city.

P2. Tower of the Watch

Extending from the outwall of the city is the old Tower of the Watch, which is the chief outpost of the Knight's Watch. This massive keep serves as the center of all Knight's Watch organization. It houses many of the Knights when they aren't on duty and most of the wall-garrison.

Built of the same red porphyry as the walls, it is all but indestructible! Rain, vines, siege weapons: none have ever made a mark on imperial porphyry. Thank goodness the secret of its making has gone out of the world!

P3. Portam Cled

The Gate of Swords, this entrance through the walls leads to the Marshaling Fields. It stands at the end of the *via lammis*, which leads down from the Hill of Swords. Nobility generally enter the city through this massive gate, and it is the custom of all soldiery and warriors of Miles to assemble on its far side at the Marshaling Fields when the emperor calls the imperial *bann* to war.





P4. Norandor's Tower

Built by Emperor Norandor Blacksword, the Conciliator, this tower is said to house a reliquary of the Prophet Aeldus who brought the worship of the northern gods to the southmen. An ancient tower of Second Empire construction, it's one of the oldest buildings in Miles.

It is never used for military purposes in this age of the world. Rather, the priests of the Hammerer and those that serve at the Aedium maintain the reliquary there. The rest of the tower stands empty and abandoned, its porphyry frame sustaining no rot or injury from the passage of time.

P5. Portam Occidentalem

The Gate of the West, also the Gate of Death! This portal leads out of the city and to the imperial tombs. It is always kept close save at the death of an emperor or a Milean king. In that case, the imperial procession marches down the road of ashes (via cinis) to the portam occidentalem and the high Pyschopomp of Akem knocks seven times upon the gates. They open, allowing the procession to continue into the tombyard where the emperor's body is then burned and sealed with his ancestors.

P6. Tender's Sally

This is a small sally-port that was added to a breach in the porphyry walls. The sally itself is set in granite instead of ancient red stone, which makes it a weak point in the circuit of the Milean outwall.

The tender's sally leads out to the tombs of the emperors as well as to the River Gardens (through the servant's entry).

P7. Portam Flos

This gate leads into the River Garden as well, and is generally made use of by nobility wishing to take a day away from the stink of the city. It's generally unguarded.

P8. Portam Defensores

The Defender's Gate, as it is known, has seen the most bloodshed of all the cities many gates throughout the past three centuries. Standing as it does between the fortifications of River Hill and the rest of the city, there was a time when elvish refuser-reavers sailed up the Annorius to assault the walls.

The portam defensores is battle-scarred with streaks of ash where lightning-blasts of Elder Magic struck it. Since the walls of River Hill and the River Keep were raised, relatively little violence has been seen at the gate.

P9. Gate of the Shipwrights

This gateway leads to the gnomish work-town of Valdis. Just beyond it is the long stretch of the River Annorius where sea-going and river-ships are dragged onto the shore to be scraped clean, worked upon, and returned to the waters.

P10. Scrivener's Sally

Another small weak sally-point built into the old Milean wall, the Scrivener's Sally is a roundtower gate cut from heartland granite. It is rarely used, and thus only ever lightly guarded.

P11. Portam Magiorum

The Wizard's Gate, this portal provides the easiest access onto Wizard's Hill and to the temple of Quilian Knowais where the Library of Miles can be found. It's a great way to slip into the city, reference some important books, and slip away again.

The gate is covered with creeping vines but, as is the nature of porphyry, they seem to do no harm to it. Just inside the portam magiorum there can be found a stand of ancient oaks and ash trees growing up around the walls.

P12. Portella Viator

This small gate (hence the name portella) is another of the more recent repairs to the outwall. It's frequently used by messengers and Sacred Heralds due to the stable maintained at the emperor's expense on the far side.

P13. Portam Minore

The "small gate," this portal is actually so known because of its proximity to Shadow Hill and the constant influx of common folk that see its use. The actual gate is quite large and, unlike the other gates of the city, absolutely no fee is levied on those who pass through this gate. The standard two copper gate-fee is waived. Probably for this reason alone, the Portam Minore sees more traffic than most of the other gates combined!

P14. Portam Frumentum

The Gate of Grain, this entrance to the imperial city also doubles as a temple to Eleia. It is manned not by the Knight's Watch, but by the priests of her temple. It has been decorated

in her style, surrounded with wreaths of grain and festooned with ribbons and bells.

The fee at the Portam Frumentum is only a single copper shield; this is the gate most commonly used by farmers.

P15. Portam Festis

The Portam Festis gives access to the Field of Festivals, where most of the religious celebrations of the imperial city are held. On festival days, passage through the Portam Festis is free. On all other days it is a reduced fee (much like the portam frumentum).

P16. Portam Carnifex

Executioner's Gate was once used to usher people from the city to be killed upon the Hill of the Hammerer in the ancient days of Miles. They were a brutal time! The Mileans have lost the taboo and now execute people in their cities on a fairly common basis. The emperor's justice is swift, and I suppose there's no time to escort the miscreants out of the city to ensure that their souls don't haunt the living.

P17. Portam Malleator

The Gate of the Hammerer is one of the most run-down gates in the outwall. Built some time during the First Empire, the porphyric stone is finally showing its age! Decrepit and crumbling, since no one in Miles (or indeed the world!) knows how to repair the red stone, this gate is slowly toppling into the ground.



THE UPPER CITY

When referring to the Upper City it makes some sense to be clear exactly which parts of Miles we're talking about. There's some imperial snobs who only think of Pillar Hill, but I'm not one of them. The Upper City refers to Pillar Hill and the Hill of Swords where the nobles of the empire maintain their manors to be near the imperial court.

Pillar Hill

Pillar Hill stands in the center of Miles, a tall swell of earth upon which the most iconic and famous of her landmarks are built. Her southern side is a rocky slope, her northern a gentle curve to the level earth. The imperial domus, the altar of grain, the Temple of the Lawkeeper: all of these can be seen from almost anywhere in Miles.

U1. The Pillar of Miles

This is the heart of the city, the very center of Miles and the center of the northern world. The Pillar is a two rod high column of wine-red porphyry brought up from the jungles of Zesh. On close inspection it is wound about with tiny golden runes and I myself have checked for seams within the rock but could find none! It stands atop a large mound at the highest point of Pillar Hill, surrounded by the ruins of the old Red Palace which are believed to be haunted (they aren't, we hold Conclave sessions there).

The air around the pillar is cold at all times, even in the hottest summer sun. Standing near it, you can feel a strange aura of power that permeates the air. No physical harm has ever come to the Pillar and it stands today just as it must have stood in times past.

Beneath the Pillar, buried in the mound, there stands a large eight-chambered room. That too remains cool no matter the weather and seems to share some of the uncanny feeling of the Pillar above. I can tell you, sitting there beneath so much magical power, I have never felt anything but apprehensive! Either way, that chamber (which we call, creatively, the Pillar Chamber or the Pillar Hall) is where the Grand Conclave meets to discuss our esoteric plans and try to make the world a better place.

U2. The Imperial Domus

This massive complex of halls, manors, domes, and courts is the residence of the emperor and the location of the imperial court. It is a confusing network of buildings and you can easily lose yourself amongst them! But don't worry, *escurae varani* will prevent you from wandering unattended into the private section of the domus, reserved for the emperor's household.

It is built of quarrystone from the very gutrock of Pillar Hill and the limestone walls are adorned with marbles imported from Aellon. Entry to even the public courts is strictly regulated; unless you have business there you are very unlikely to see the interior.

U3. The Altar of Grain

This massive stone slab serves as the center of the Eleian cult within the Empire. It's attended by several noble clerics of high station and birth who live within the Upper City. During the great festivals of Eleia sacrifices are made there to ensure the coming of fall and the return of spring. The altar is not generally serviced as a temple, and there are no services to be had there during most normal times. Wealthy landowners often come to leave offerings of grain, meat, and wine at the altar, however, and to burn candles. For this reason, it is often attended by at least one of its clerics to help distribute offerings and collect donations.

U4. The Walk of Honor

This narrow stairway begins at the court of the Pillar, just outside the ruins of the Red Palace. It winds its way down into the lower city, eventually passing through the Faberlaine Wall to become the Adventurer's Stair (L2). Up here on the hill, though, it is a winding staircase that passes between some of the largest and wealthiest manor-houses of the city. Great lords and dukes live in the marble-sheathed palaces

that overlook it.

Adventurers are strongly dissuaded from climbing the Stair into the upper city unless they have business there. The *escurae varani* and the Knight's Watch look unkindly on heavily armed people wandering through the upper city and may go so far as to confiscate your weapons if you look like you're about to do violence or that you're looking for gaps in the walls of the wealthy.

U5. Temple of the Lawkeeper

The largest temple complex in the city and maybe anywhere in the empire, the Temple of the Lawkeeper is the administrative heart of the Hieriean faith. It covers several blocks of the upper city, is surrounded by a wall of marble, and is comprised of a labyrinth of halls, law courts, libraries, courtyards, domes, and chapels.

This is where the Sacred Heralds have their headquarters, and where the worship of Halor and Tallial takes place as well. The various temples and chapels are filled day and night with penitents, their decorated halls whispering with the hush of prayer.



Traffic has decreased somewhat since Emperor Tamerin constructed the Aedium just down the road at the foot of Pillar Hill, but there are still a steady stream of trials and court cases that occupy the grounds. Advocates practice their trade and advertise their services from the porticos of the temples and the courts, and priests hurry about their business.

Adventurers seeking ratification and witnessing to their charters clog the courtyard outside the Court of Swords, each clutching their parchment hopefully and waiting to pay the infamous “sword tax” on mercenaries.

It’s easy to get lost amongst these lanes of marble and brick, so keep your head and don’t start wandering around if you come in for a visit. There are a few Hieriean chapels near to the gate so you don’t have to go that far in at all.

U6. Pillarwood

The Pillarwood is located on the far side of the Faberlaine Wall and accessible through a small doorway that is always under Knight’s Watch guard. It’s said that the oak and plane trees of the Pillarwood have stood since the time of the giants, and that is easy to believe! There is a sense of extreme age about the place, age and peace, though it has been turned into something of a garden for the extremely powerful.

There are little lanes of earth that have been beaten down by centuries of travel, small shrines to all the gods you can imagine scattered throughout the little forest, and places to sit and contemplate life if such is your wont. From the Pillarwood you can look out over the southern city with an unobstructed view all the way to the outwall.

U7. Faberlaine Wall

Supposedly built by the artisan Faber during the pre-imperial period, this red porphyry wall surrounds Pillar Hill. It must have been repaired continuously throughout the late imperial period (unlike the Gate of the Hammerer, P17) since it is still in perfect condition.

Along its southern side, the Faberlaine Wall tops a steep and rocky slope that falls down towards the middle city.

U8. Artifex Gate

The northern gate within the Faberlaine Wall, the Artifex Gate is so-called because the architect Faber was also known as Konom the Artificer in myth and legend. I doubt that he had anything to do with the construction of this heavy and imposing gateway, but Milean scholars insist that he designed it and oversaw its construction.

U9. Imperial Gate

The imperial gate was clearly made some time during the late empire. It has a grace lacking in early southmen architecture and it bears the distinctive imperial insignia of the Pillar carved above its entrance. This gate, like the Artifex Gate, is never closed but entrance to Pillar Hill is strictly controlled after dark.

U10. Span of Swords

Other than the Pillar, the Span of Swords is the most impressive piece of construction in the entire city. It stands to rival the great works of the dwarves in the Arinnfal and even in long-lost Hârnholme. It is a massive bridge made from heartland granite which sweeps across the little valley between Sword and Pillar Hill, allowing the nobles of the Hill of Swords to cross over and enter the imperial domus without descending to mix with the common rabble.

The Span is so large that it can accommodate carts and wagons rumbling across it; its pilings are so thick that those who build in their shade never need worry about the sun troubling them. The newly built Imperial Garrison (S7) can be found near the base of the hill, beneath the Span.

U11. Goldsmith’s Guildhall

The Guild of Gold and Silversmiths maintain their guildhall on Pillar Hill. In the shadow of the Pillar, this opulent building boasts a tall square tower, golden fittings, and silver trim along its roof. It’s interior is done in the finest woods and the most expensive hangings decorate its walls.

The Gold and Silversmiths take much of their custom from amongst the nobility of the upper city, preferring to deal with the naturally noble rather than the wealthy merchants and priests of the middle city. More the loss for them, says I! I have seen them look down their noses at wizards and warriors alike when asked for work simply because they were not from the great and noble families.

However, if you show them enough money after a while they stop complaining and start realizing you can be a valuable customer. There’s little reason to visit their guildhall unless you don’t know the residence and workshop of a good smith, in which case they may (for a fee) direct you to one.

U12. The Towered House

The Towered House is the only publicly available inn on Pillar Hill. It is, as its name reveals, a former manor house that once belonged to the Auruxol family. It boasts three squat drum towers and looks more like a fortification than an inn from outside.

Its host, Darradus Marcel, is a kind enough fellow and is always quick to offer a smoke or a drink. Of course, the surroundings are delightful, the rooms are well-appointed in both the tasteful (and plentiful) decorations and the soft feather-beds. You’ll have to pay for all of this, of course, at a rate of no less than one and a half golden pillars a night. You can find rooms for much more than that, if you prefer one of the towers.

If you absolutely must stay in the finest inn in Miles, you couldn’t go wrong with the Towered House. A huge retinue of servants lives on the grounds to attend to your every need. Absurdly, Darradus’ grandfather inherited the Auruxol library when he purchased the manor, leaving all kinds of books for the guests to read.

Darradus comes from a long line of merchants and is more friendly by far than most of the folk you’ll find in the upper

city. He has no pretensions to nobility and cares little for the provenance of the money he takes. In that, and many other ways, he is a good friend of adventurers! In fact, if you're looking for work and cannot afford a room at the Towered House, Darradus can often be persuaded to give out tips and hints about jobs he's heard on the cheap: he has contacts with the Knight's Watch as well as other less... savory friends in low places.

Hill of Swords

The Hill of Swords lies just to the west of Pillar Hill, attainable by the many roads that snake up its sides and by the huge archway of the Span of Swords (U10). Land on the Hill of Swords is incredibly expensive, and is generally reserved for the nobility and the merchants that serve them.

On its southern side can be found the *via sartores* (that is, the street of the tailors if you don't speak Varan) and just to the west lies the *Porta Flos* (P7) and the River Gardens.

S1. Crowncourt Inn

In the center of the Hill of Swords is the Crowncourt, a small courtyard upon which sit many of the homes of the upper nobility. The Crowncourt Inn is also located here, a three story daub building with leaded windows and jettied upper floors that project far out over the square.

The Crowncourt is less prestigious than the Towered House (U12), but still manages to be one of the best inns in Miles. Its bedrooms are all on the upper floors, allowing visitors to see a grand view of the city from atop the Hill of Swords, whichever direction they may be facing.

It's generally used by knights and traveling imperial bureaucrats when they need to stay in the city. Indeed, the prices are weekly rather than nightly, and it could easily be called a boarding house; two pillars for a week's stay is not bad at all considering its location and amenities.

Gaven Blanc is both the innkeep and barman. He owns the entire building, which he purchased (I believe) from the retired adventurer Thomas Levane nearly fifteen years ago now. While he doesn't particularly like adventurers, he's more than willing to allow them to stay under its roof provided they pay a little deposit to cover brawls and damages.

S2. The Coaching House

The Coaching House is an inn and boarding house located along the serpentine road that defines the very outer edge of the Hill of Swords. Sitting as it does at the bottom of the hill, the Coaching House is considerably less snooty than the Crowncourt Inn.

It's also considerably cheaper: five silver towers a week or two for a single night are the prices she runs. The Coaching House is much larger than the Crowncourt and has a tendency to service merchants and caravaneers. Their stables are very large, big enough to house whole wagons and carriages, and there are several carriages that run from the Coaching House to various parts of the empire. Of those that run from

the Coaching House, all four are covered—namely, of the type that serves as the template for the superior Gnomish traveling wagon: box-shaped, large-wheeled, and covered with a high roof.

I have myself stayed at the Coaching House on several occasions; once, when I was short on coins for meals I even passed three weeks in the stables there for a handful of coppers. The owners are Dawn and Maybury Bindweed, a pair of halfling merchants from the Lamp Country. They're as pleasant a pair of folks as you could ever ask to meet, and their chefs are all halflings as well.

This means, of course, that you can get good imported cider from the Lamp Country as well as fine halfling eating in the Coaching House, a treat not found in many other places in the city of Miles!

S3. Halor's Theater of Knightly Virtue

The Theater of Knightly Virtue is the theater of choice for the Milean nobility. A huge round-house with a centrally located stage, it plays host to mostly high dramas and religious plays. Prices fluctuate and their season seems to run longer or shorter depending on their whims, but the Theater of Knightly Virtues is certainly worthy of a few moments of your time.

If nothing else, the troupe's playwright, Jahn à Agua, is constantly in need of relief from debtors and other such nonsense. He needs allies, and his ability to write plays in recompense, praising those who assist him, is no small return for giving him a little relief from his woes!

S4. The Rosegarden

The Rosegarden is one of three wolfsdens on the Hill of Swords. I have chosen to include it alone because it is the cleanest and most hygienic and the girls there have never robbed anyone that I know of (the same cannot be said of the other two).

It's a pleasant little building overlooking the imperial garrison (S7) down at the foot of the hill. Knights from the tagmata frequent it on a regular basis, however, so if you are wanted for a crime this is perhaps not the best place to cool your heels.

The garden is built in an eastern style, modeled after the pleasure-houses of the goblin kingdoms beyond the Straits. This means, for those who have never seen the Moon Lands, that it is made of plaster and covered in frescoes rather than wattle and daub. It has several minarets, which are a type of tower with no room inside to climb up them, and a small dome of beaten brass.

The Rosegarden serves all genders and can provide wolves of either sex, as is the case in almost every wolfsden the world over. Their prices are, perhaps, not reasonable but they aren't enough to beggar you.

It's a fine place to go and relax after a job, as long as you don't trouble any of the local knights or nobility while you're doing it.

S5. The Onyx Pyramid

As you approach the Pyramid you will notice that the traffic of the city falls back. Like the Pillar, the air around it is chill and strange, even drear. The walls of the pyramid are made of glistening black onyx carved with what I believe are ancient Khewedi symbols from the deep deserts.

No one is quite sure when it was built or how it got here, nor does it have an entrance of any kind. I would stay away from it, for there are all manner of strange and unpleasant stories regarding it; from vampiric spirits to ghosts and devils! Whatever the truth, it cannot be pleasant.

S6. Commandery of the Knights of Miles

The Knights of Miles, the sworn swords of the heartland, have their commandery here on the Hill of Swords. A bailey and tower make up the grounds, withdrawn from the street and imposing. While there are several gates that lead into the bailey, I would advise not approaching any of them: the Knights guard them heavily, as though they might come under attack.

There are always at least one hundred of the knights themselves there, and they employ between two and five hundred men-at-arms at any given time. Since the order is made up of second sons and the like, they really have little to do except to follow their grandmaster and parade around the city every now and then.

I can't say I've ever had the luxury of going inside, but I hear they maintain twin temples to Halor and Tallial on their grounds.

S7. The Imperial Garrison

The garrison is a big group of long limestone buildings that you'd do best to avoid. The imperial tagmata is stationed here when they're off duty, and some of the *escurae varani* have housing amongst the buildings as well. It lacks a wall, so you might find you've wandered in completely by accident.

Note the buildings which bear the purple banners and golden sunburst of the tagmata and those which have the white field and red pillar of the Varan guard. Those should give you a clue that you've entered territory that you really shouldn't be meddling in, unless you have a message for some knight-captain or other.

S8. The Shining Jewel

This pleasant little shop is located on the Clothmarket which is where the *via sartores* (the street of the tailors) begins. It's a three story townhouse, the first floor being the workshop of the respected elvish jeweler Almaranen.

Almara, as he is known, is one of the finest gemcutters and jewel-appraisers in the entire city, mayhaps the empire as a whole. He came from Silversong Forest long ago, and has almost as many years on his old elvish shoulders as even I!

If you should be looking for a fine gemstone or jewel, this is certainly the shop to visit. It is welcome and warm, the workshop doubling as a place for potential clients to sit down, have a glass of chilled elvish wine, and examine some of the finer gemstones.

Almara also sometimes employs adventurers on a per-item basis to bring him gemstones to sell. While you won't get top price (he needs to resell them, after all), the money is certainly good. Don't bring him stolen or illicit goods, though, because his trade is a respectable one.

S9. The Better Bolt

This cloth shop is found down a sidestreet from the Clothmarket, attached to its own fullery and dyeshop. The Better Bolt is owned by Elethinorial, another elf who resides in the upper city.

The main building of the Better Bolt is a tailor's shop owned by Eletha. The finest garments on the Hill of Swords are often made by her hand, along with the bevy of young Milean boys that she employs to do some of the work. There are rumors that she and Almaranen were once lovers, but I wouldn't go prying into that kind of sordid detail with her.

If you're looking for a very fine new garment, something fit to visit the imperial domus in, Elethinorial is the woman to see.

The Middle City

The Middle City technically encompasses the valleys between the two great hills, Wyrn Hill, and River Hill. By far most of the city is the "middle." Like the Upper City, the Middle City is mostly supplied with running water; however, the *escurae varani* and the knight's watch do not patrol this part of the city with any regularity.



M1. College of Healers

The College of Healers is Avauna's chief temple in the empire. Found at the confluence of the via sacra and the via cinis, the College stands just south of Pillar Hill. It can be seen from afar by the golden sunburst plaques on its walls, which surround the eight buildings that make up the temple.

The outermost hall is the main temple proper, and it peeks through the walls to allow travelers an ingress. There, in the liminal space, is the infirmary and hospital of the College where one can seek aid that is both physical and spiritual.



The hall is kept up by gigantic pillars of quarried granite that may or may not have come from some gigantine ruin.

The alcoves are dark and mysterious, and the smell of incense hangs ever in the air within, masking the stink of medicine and death. Infirmary beds crowd the spaces between the pillars, but an outer altar of pure gold resides at the far end of the chamber beneath a shaft of sunlight that shines for most of the day through a cunningly made slit in the roof.

Beyond that hall lie the many chambers of the healers; any man or woman wearing an Avaunite thong around their forehead and calling themselves a physician within 100 rods of this place has probably trained in the hallowed grounds beyond where the likes of me are not permitted to tread.

M2. Temple of the Seven Gates

Just down the via cinis from the College lies the Temple of the Seven Gates. Life and death in such close proximity! This temple is much more imposing and dark than Avauna's, by design. The walls are made of an ashy gray-black stone and they are almost without adornment save for the absolutely massive pillars that stretch up along the exterior of the building. The roof is a gloomy black slate, and the very archway into the sacred interior is framed by two giant-sized statues of cloaked and hooded figures that hold up the keystone.

Just outside the archway and the huge brass doors stands the outer altar, a chunk of volcanic obsidian that has been cut and hewed by centuries of workers into the shape of a rounded arch. Burning on the altar at all times are seven candles of red-colored tallow who's tall tapers emit a brilliant blue light.

Penitents are not permitted inside the hall of the Seven Gates unless they're members of the inner cult. I've never been that interested in death and dying (mostly, I've spent my time trying to avoid both) so I don't know what it looks like inside. There are always attendants standing by the altar, however, every time of day or night. They can answer your questions about the temple and even perform some basic services for you.

All in all, I'd say this is a place to avoid unless you're thinking of passing into the netherworld some time soon.

M3. Anarian Aqueduct

This snaking aqueduct runs all the way down from the mountains in Auruxol. It was repaired in King Aras' time, and is now in use to bring water down to the reservoir (M4) in the center of the middle city. From that one reservoir, the old piping systems are supplied and massive cisterns built by King Velas beneath the city are also filled, granting a long-lasting supply of water. It's said they're also filled with water from the Annorius, but that river is so foul that I hesitate to believe that rumor.

M4. Anarian Cistern

This cistern provides the water-distribution for the entire city. In its basin, King Velas had many drains cut and carved,

to allow it to fill his new network of subterranean cisterns. It is a huge building, a veritable drum-tower of stone, that contains within it hundreds of tonnes of water.

M5. Grotto of Raya

This sacred cave has been revered since imperial times. Its mouth has been covered with carvings in the very stone of Pillar Hill and its yawning entryway supposedly represents the descent into the underworld mythically performed by one of Raya's champions, Rutilius, when he went to reclaim his beloved from the grip of death. Indeed, some of the Rayan priests will tell you that this is the very entrance to the underworld taken by Rutilius in the dawn of days.

However that may be, supplicants are not permitted in Raya's sacred grotto without first undergoing rituals of purification and cleansing. Only on one occasion did I allow myself to be submitted to the fasting and purification ritual the priests of Raya perform. It made my head ache and they gave me some powerful liquor that made everything swim around me! Mayhaps I did indeed descend into the underworld...

I remember a deep lake, the singing of hermaphrodites and merfolk, and the laughter of satyrs echoing off of the walls of a sub-terrene forest. I don't think I'll ever take the drink of the Rayans again, nor visit that strange grotto beneath the hill, but neither shall I forget my time there.

M6. The Anarian Wall

This wall projects out from the Faberlaine and is made of the same red porphyric stone. It slices into the temple district of the middle city, determining its far-eastern edge. It ends at the Tower of Anor which overlooks the Fleshmarket (M67), the cities' cattle-market.

M7. Temple of the Star

The temple devoted to Galos the Seer in Miles is a low peristyle hall with a tholos-dome at its northern end. Like many cults, the seers keep the interior of their temple hidden from the outside world. The only entrances are the small servant's gate and the massive double-doors of Dorlish bleakwood. A green limestone altar is located in the forecourt for those who wish to make sacrifices to the Lord of Magic but who have no attachment to the inner cult.

The walls of the temple are painted a deep blue-green hue but are otherwise blank and bare. The pillars that support the ceiling are cut from green limestone as well, fluted with scrollwork-filled channels.

Three clerics dressed in the full regalia of their order are always in attendance at the outer gate to challenge those who do not belong and perform sacrifices for those who wish to appease the god. Since they wear green cloaks, green hoods, and ivory masks it is difficult for outsiders to tell who is who; indeed, the masked priests of Galos are each interchangeable with the next for they devote their entire selves to the study of magic. A good place for a wizard to visit!

M8. Temple of the Wild

This temple of Eminea is a small domed tholos that stands on an overgrown yard filled with trees and underbrush. Wooden trellises form a pathway through the growth to the gate of the tholos where those who are not among the inner cult must pause and go no farther.

Within the garden, it is possible to forget the sounds of the city. They fade into the background, the birdsong overcoming the shouting of merchants and priests. There, in the ivy-covered bower, stands an unhewn altar of white granite where you may make sacrifices to the druids who dwell in the grove.

There are only perhaps seven or eight druids in the temple and they seem hard-pressed. They call themselves the Druids of Miles, but they have little power outside of the grove. Rarely do they venture out, relying on servants to do their work in the city for them.

M9. Statue of St. Evelyne

St. Evelyne Elsoín the Pious was a queen of Thyrenesse during the Ninth Age. She founded a number of temples of Haeron, Avauna, and Eleia (such as St. Evelyne's Tholos, M24). This statue commemorates her with a life-size representation of the beautiful queen standing astride a stylized stone. The road splits around her here and it has become a makeshift market of talismans and apothecaries' goods.

M10. Signe of the Frothing Mug

The monks of Heimir run this inn and tavern, as they run many such throughout the world under the sign painted with a mug brimming with ale. This is one of the absolute largest of all the Signes I have ever seen. It's a huge L-shaped building with four stories that jetty out over the road, built of timber-framed daub.

The wing thrown back away from the street is the cloistered section of the monastery, where only the monks may go. The other wing contains three taprooms and the many inn rooms that the brothers hold for guests. The monks will take whatever you can afford in exchange for rooms and drinks, as the God of Hospitality demands as much from his servants.

The Signe itself is a daub building all done up in dark woods and high-backed chairs. Tapestries depicting Heimir's infamous antics can be seen hanging on almost every wall. The monks are always kind and attentive, even to those with little money. I myself would look out for Brother Thomas, the most rotund of all the brothers there. His appetite knows no bounds and, as such, he has the most learned opinion on all the food in the house and as Brother Cellarer he knows the contents of the larder like no other monk on the premises!

M11. Arch of Judges

The two great arches that stand astride the via sacra are the Aches of Judges and Kings. Both are massive, though the Arch of Judges is far older and larger. Made from worn heartland granite, the Arch of Judges is taller than any



THE CITY HERSELF

buildings for blocks around, a huge soaring bulk that stretches across the sacred way.

The old carvings have long since been worn down to little nubs, for the Arch was built during the Second Empire. Passing under it is always an entertaining prospect (though I can't remember the last time any bits fell off). Birds roost amongst its upper courses and carters and merchants rush beneath it to avoid being struck by falling stone.

M12. The Inn of the Sacred Way

Next to the Arch of Judges there stands the Inn of the Sacred Way, a three-story tall daub building that leans heavily against the archway. The first floor alone is built of stone, and upon entering the inn you will find yourself in a small foyer with altars of Vaela and Heimir on either side of the room. As in all inns and taverns in the north, it is appropriate to leave a few coins for the gods in either bowl.

Just beyond lies the taproom, its walls whitewashed and painted with frescoes of the gods who's temples reside in the city. Golden lamps hang from the roofing beams and on the far side of the room lies a doorway that leads to the kitchen, which is indoors (unusual for Milean architecture).

Rooms are five silver towers a week and the proprietors, Caramus and Lydda Prester, are a brother and sister who like to maintain good relations with the local priesthoods. I've heard it said that they are the children of a Rayan priest from the Grotto!

M13. Temple of the Stony Heart

This large squat temple stands on the confluence of the via sacra and the via draconum, just at the foot of Wyrm Hill. It is an L-shaped building with a low roof in the dwarven design: flat crown and heavily slanted sides. A portico runs along the interior walls, shadowed by pillars of sculpted iron.

In the courtyard there stands an outer alter beneath a pavilion of stone. Dwarves can be found in the courtyard, along the portico, and beneath the stone pavilion. Priests of the Earthfather generally spend their time amongst them, out of doors.

I don't know what you would want to pray to the Earthfather for, unless you're going underground or hoping to start a mine. However, it seems friendly enough and I've even seen a number of rock gnomes in the courtyard there, chatting about construction and gemcutting.

M14. Imperial granary complex

There are several imperial granaries throughout the city. These complexes of massive grain storage buildings, towers, and silos are where the emperor stores the grain transported into the city up the River Annorius. The grain dole is handed out from here, and there are always a number of Knight's Watch men-at-arms and a few knights guarding them.

M15. The Blue Stag

The Blue Stag is an inn complex with a large stables in the narrow streets between the via sacra and Eleia's road. Near

to the Smithy of Lorevan (M34) and the Golden Lamp Tavern (M27), the Blue Stag is an inn and tavern much-frequented by travelers.

The Stag was founded by the young nobleman Darius (called "the Hunter") who gave up his family name to fight the bandits of the Noranian Forest during the time of Tamerin the First. Darius' children now own the place, and they've done well by it.

It has its own large inn-yard, a separate stone kitchen, three stories in the main building and an entire wing devoted to rooms. The stables are an important feature, since they bring in many adventures to the Stag (after all, how many places do you go without your mounts and wagons?)

The cost was two silver towers a night the last time I was there, or a week-long stay for nine towers. Vaegrus and Therius run the bar and kitchen respectively, two good boys that have each spent times under arms as adventurers themselves!

M16. Wyrmsfoot Inn

At the base of Wyrm Hill and on the Dragonmarket stands the Wyrmsfoot Inn. It is a huge square building, the bottom two floors being built of gray granite. The upper two floors are jettied out over the market and from them hang lanterns wrought in the shape of curling dragons.

The shallow steps that lead up to the door are framed by ancient oak trees that grow up before the building, brushing against the upper stories with their long-fingered branches. Just inside is a long hallway where alcoves hold statues of Vaela and Heimir, as is common amongst mannish inns.

Branching off of this hall one can find a pair of taprooms and at its far end is the landing that leads upstairs to the rooms. The Wyrmsfoot is decorated in green and burgundy wall-hangings, most of the tapestry subjects (appropriately) are dragons.

The owner of the Wyrmsfoot is Garavan Suvel, a wizard of some renown. He has his laboratory and library within the inn itself, protected by powerful warding spells. He enjoys tending bar and telling jokes to his patrons.

The Wyrmsfoot isn't exactly cheap at five towers a night, but Garavan's character enough to make it worth while.

M17. Temple of the Four Winds

Built in the tholos style, the temple of the Four Winds is unlike most of the others in the city: those who are not intimately acquainted with the Wind Lord's secrets may enter freely! The tholos itself is open all along the front half of its arc facing the street. Only the rear rooms (those belonging to the priests and the inner cult) are hidden.

The temple is hung with silver chimes that make soft sweet music in the wind. Often, Aeolian harps will be set up around the public altar which itself is a beautiful sculpture of blue limestone. Blue is the predominate color here: blue painted columns, a sky-blue ceiling painted on the interior of the dome (complete with clouds), and the blue of the priestly vestments.



Silver is a prominent secondary color, and there is enough

of it on display in the Temple of the Four Winds that Arodian temple-guard are posted near each of the pillars to dissuade the less-than-scrupulous from peeling it off and melting it down in some hidy-hole on Shadow Hill.

M18. Dinismayl's Bower

Just south down the via sacra from the Temple of the Four Winds (M17) is the Bower of Dinismayl, an altogether more unpleasant place. You might be forgiven for mistaking it as an Arodian establishment at a distance: an icy blue is its primary color, and white its offset.

The Winter Queen's temple, however, is a hypostyle hall with open archways leading into its front-interior. In shape it is a stretched oval, but in form it resembles the temples built by the giants centuries ago. The pillars themselves are carved in the shape of gigantine bodies writhing in pain or coldness, their nakedness painted a light chilly skin-tone. The tympanum roof is carved in the likenesses of the three handmaidens of winter: Want, Hunger, and Madness. The outer walls depict the great Blizzards who serve the Bitch of Winter and snarling dogs (real ones, not statues!) are chained to the pillars flanking the main entryway.

The public altar is located beneath the roof in the portico, which extends some hundred and fifty feet into the temple. It is a mound of human bone (doubly disturbing to men, I am told, since they burn their dead) stacked into a roughly pyramidal shape. Upon this altar, the Icehearts and Winterpriests make

sacrifice to appease their unpleasant master.

I would avoid the Bower at all costs, if I were you. The priests of Winter are a foul and sordid lot, more likely to sneer at you than to hire you. Where, might I ask, did those bones come from? I'm certain they weren't donated willingly, but the imperial diet on public worship forbids the city from clearing the lot of them out unless a true crime can be levied against them.

Tread with care here, brave souls, and with sharp steel in hand.

M19. Temple of the Sacred Fire

The Temple of the Sacred Fire is in reality two temples that are so near to each other and represent gods that are so friendly and their priesthoods so minor that it is simply easier for them to administer both temples jointly. These are the temples of Elernus (the "little flame") and Osvea (the "eternal fire), two gods worshipped in informal ways in the

empire.

Osvea's tholos is the location of the Flame of Miles which is tended by seven virgin priests who may not, during their tenure, engage in any sexual activity. The flame is said to have burned since the conversion of the southmen and where it to go out the entire city would be in grave danger. Indeed, legend says it has only ever gone out once in its long history, when Emperor Malleor died fighting the fire giants in Pernag and the empire descended into chaos and dissolution.

Elernus' hall is a place where wives, hearthmaids, and anyone who works with heat or the forge comes to worship the fire. Elernus is the fire of the forge and the kiln, and as such his temple is made of brick and clay. Osvea is the goddess of the hearth, and it is said that while the hearth is the heart of any household, her temple is the hearth of Miles itself.

The priesthoods of Osvea and Elernus have no representatives outside of Miles and they are minor in the extreme. Few of them are even trained to contact the divinities to produce miracles and none ever leave the temples to adventure.

M20. House of Insitor

Also known as the House of Serpents, the temple of Insitor lies between the Arch of Judges (M11) and the Arch of Kings (M23) on the via sacra. The House of Insitor is a long low building with stepped walls carved in the forms of giant men and women. These figures are painted in life-like colors, depicted nude, most of them in poses of lecturing or learning.

The House of Insitor is one of shadowed knowledge. Entrance is strictly prohibited and the great copper-and-iron gates are rarely opened for anyone. The priests of Insitor, strange scheming men with quiet demeanors and sly looks, sometimes attend the serpentine altar that sits outside the temple but rather more often it sits alone and unwatched.

If you have an offering to make Insitor, it is best to leave your coins, or perhaps a bowl of wine or meat, right on the altar and trouble as little as you can with his priesthood.

M21. The Temple of Tuwayne

The Watcher has a wide temple-space hidden behind a welter of buildings off of the via sacra. While no temple stands on the grounds, a peaceful pool and garden is maintained by the donations of the locals as well as the nearby guilds (particularly the Guild of Masons and Carpenters, M28). A great wooden eikon of the many-eyed watcher-god can be found behind the pool, its dais half-sunken into the grass.

Locals come to leave flower-cuttings, coins, and sacral keys (generally purchased from the talisman-sellers in St. Evelyne's Market, S9) as offerings on the dais of the statue. There are no priests of Tuwayne in the city as far as I know, yet the place is always immaculate. Whether the Watcher himself keeps it clean or the locals make sure the place is well-tended is a secret that I still do not know the answer to.

M22. Chapterhouse of Flowers

Right in the shadow of the Arch of Kings (M23) stands the Chapterhouse of Flowers, a Rayan institution as old as the Grotto (M5). Unlike the Grotto, the Chapterhouse is open and inviting. The Rayan symbology of roses decorating the building makes it seem a wolfsden from without, but you'll find no whores to hire here.

The Chapterhouse of Flowers is an extension of the ancient Rayan order of warrior-priests who serve the Goddess of Beauty. It is constructed around several courtyards, each growing more and more removed from the street as one passes further into the building.

Roseknights of Raya reside here, holy warriors beholden to the Lady of Love. If you're seeking a champion to fight a judicial duel for you or perhaps someone to write a love-ballad, the Chapterhouse of Flowers is a good place to go.

Elayne of the Two Roses is the most senior of the Roseknights and probably the least inclined to long-winded prose and high drama. I advise seeking her out if you have need of anything here; she is the knight with brilliant red hair and the slender boyish frame who is most often found in the second or third courtyard composing ballads and sonnets.

M23. Arch of Kings

Like the Arch of Judges (M11) the Arch of Kings was constructed during the late Second Empire. While it is ultimately much smaller than the Arch of Judges, it is in better condition. Images of foreign kings being dragged through Miles in chains are recorded upon its sides. Most are worn beyond recognition but a few near its uppermost levels can still be discerned. Passage through it is required in order to advance down the via sacra from the portam reges.

M24. St. Evelyne's Tholos

This temple of Eleia was established by Saint Evelyne Elsoín, the Saint-Queen. Some time ago, probably in the last two centuries, the roof of the tholos collapsed, leaving the pillars standing in a ring around an altar. Since that calamity, the local Eleian priests has tended the shrine as though it

were deserved of being fully staffed.

So, if you fancy worshipping the kindly Grainmother beneath the open sky (as is frequently done in the smaller towns of the empire) this is the place to do it. Priests rotate duties to tend to the tholos from all over the city, sending some of their number from each of the main Eleian temples every week.

M25. Avandra the Healer

Avandra the Healer is potentially the only medicus and physician wealthy enough to afford a home on the via sacra. Her small infirmarium takes up the ground floor of this all-stone manor while the upper two levels are reserved for herself and her husband, Acton.

Avandra is a skilled physician and often serves in the imperial court. If you are looking for someone to patch you up, there is undoubtedly no one more learned (or expensive) in the whole city.

One of the unfortunate side-effects of her immense popularity amongst the nobility is that she is rarely home. Indeed, the three times I have been to see her, I had to leave word with Acton and he sent a runner up to the Pillar to tell me when she returned home.

M26. Tulion the Alchemist

Along the curving lane that makes its way southwards from the Grotto (M5) stands the house of Tulion the Alchemist. A young wizard, Tulion made his way in the world as a sort of alchemist-for-hire throughout Miles. His townhouse reflects his status as new money: it is built in the style of an ancient Milean villa, with fat red pilasters and many courtyards and atria throughout. Like the ancient villas, there is but one story, spread out as it may be.

Tulion has an entire herbarium and garden attached to the house, walled in of course to prevent the riff-raff from sneaking a peek at his rare and exotics.

If you're in need of a strange herbal substance or even of some specially compounded ointments or tonics, Tulion is the man to see. He is a bit insufferable, being so young and successful as he is, but well worth suffering if you need something he has.

M27. Golden Lamp Tavern

Just down the way from the Blue Stag (M15) lies the Golden Lamp, a tavern-only. It doesn't compete with the Stag as it has no rooms and it doesn't compete with the Signe of the Frothing Mug (M10) because its beers, ales, and wines are all disgusting.

The so-called "golden lamp" is in actuality a cheap brass thing hung over the door. The ale-wife Lavinia is also the owner of the place, and a dark unpleasant swill-hole it is. However badly her drink may be (and none are wanting of water) she often hears rumors from the middle and lower cities.

As a font of information she's second to none: if you must put up with her dark and crowded tavern for a little while to

get at her, you'll be none the sadder if you're looking for work. Of course, she's no Lukius the Jester (see the *Taberna Poveri Hominum*, L4) but she'll do in a pinch.

M28. Guildhall of Masons and Carpenters

The Guildhall of Masons and Carpenters is located on the *via latomos*, and whenever someone is looking for men to perform a building job in the city this is where they go. The Guild is a long daub building replete with dormitories and halls for those masons and carpenters that are between jobs and don't have enough money to purchase a home in the city (or don't want to, as they are only moving through; these "foreign journeymen" pay guild dues like everyone else for the duration of their stay).

The register of Masons and Carpenters can also be found here in the public hall (part of the main building) where a record is kept of all the guildmembers in good standing. Hiring up skilled men to do the work you need is a synch so long as you remember the Road of the Stonecutters.

M29. Tower of Wrath

This ancient Milean tower might have been a watchtower like the *Tour Wyrmais* (Y1) at one point. Now, however, it is a strange and abandoned ruin. I have smelled the telltale tang of magic gone sour and awry within but I have never myself explored it.

Legend has it that one of the old schools of the imperial days made the Tower of Wrath their home, but if that is the case it's a school I've never heard of. Either way, I would avoid the strange obsidian door and the rooms beyond, as does anyone with any sense.

M30. Guildhall of Carters

The Carter's Guildhall is located on the beginning of the *viam lignorum* (Street of the Carpenters). There are a number of carpenter's shops nearby (several of them gnomish) and just above the Judge's Wall (M31) can be found Judge's *Poleturning* (M69) who use wood from this lane.

The guildhall is divided into several buildings: the hall proper, where the guild registry is kept and carters may go to find a meal or a bed, the stables (where guild-owned animals are kept alongside wagons and carts owned by guild members), and the wagonshop where the guild maintains a number of carpenters for the repair and servicing of wagons and carts owned by the carters of the guild.

M31. Judge's Wall

This massive porphyry wall was once meant to be an extension to the Anarian Wall (M6) but the two were either never linked or the link was destroyed to make way for the *Fleshmarket* (M67) that lies between them. The Judge's Wall is lower than the Anarian wall and surmounted by many wallwalks and wooden platforms that have been added to it over the years. While no one has yet attempted to build housing upon it, its only a matter of time before someone claims some of the rickety structure as their home.

M32. Alayne's Tower

The wizard Alayne has built his tower just off of the *Fleshmarket* (M67) along *Eleia's Road*. Nowhere near as tall or imposing as the ancient Milean towers, Alayne's is built in a more modern style with a peaked roof tiled in lead.

I've never been invited into Alayne's tower, but I hear it is comfortable and quite cozy. Alayne himself is an ally of the *Conclave* and has often come to speak at our meetings on topics many and varied. I believe he is out of the city at the moment, somewhere along the south coast helping to quell the elf-reaver attacks on *Crestley* and *Paix*. However, when he is in residence, he is more than willing to rent out the contents of his tower to those young or inexperienced wizards seeking somewhere to study and improve their magics. The last I knew, he was asking no more than eight hundred pillars a week for use of his library and lab.

M33. Salan's Brewery

Right at the very end of the *Judge's Wall* (M31) stands the *Brewery of Salan*. The brewery itself is non-religious, though it bears the name of the God of Wine and Revels. It comprises a small group of buildings just south of the *Fleshmarket* (M67) which surround a *Salian shrine* at their heart. The wine is blessed there by a monk from the *Signe of the Frothing Mug* (M10).

The brewery supplies many of the inns and taverns in the local area with *Salan's Finest*, wines that are attributed to the god of drunkenness himself. If you need to stock up on wine for a long journey you can buy it in quantity here but otherwise there's really no reason to trouble the brewmasters.

M34. Smithy of Lorevan

The Smithy of Lorevan is not far from an imperial granary (M14) and the *Blue Stag* (M15). Just north of Alayne's Tower (M32) and the *Fleshmarket* (M67), it can be found along one of the side roads leading to the granary.

The smithy itself comprises several work-buildings, including a bloomery used to produce high-quality ore right here in the city. Lorevan himself is a dwarf-trained smith who works in the style of the green dwarves.

His smithy employs nearly half a hundred apprentices and his workshops produce all manner of goods, from weapons to simple ironwork. Lorevan doesn't charge overmuch for his goods, though he always seems in a rush to get back to his work so try to make any conversation you have with him quick: he tends to raise his prices if you delay him for any reason.

M35. Fine Goods Appraised

Yandir is a forest gnome who lives between the *via sacra* and the *viam lignorum* above his workshop and storefront. The shop is quite small and, no matter what the signboard may say, Yandir himself is not a purveyor of fine goods. Rather, he is a knick-knack collector, a sort of magpie of a



gnome who has in his possession everything from rings and gems to weapons that found their way from the imperial garrison to Fine Goods.

The shop itself is exceedingly cluttered and close. Unlike most shops, Yandir doesn't expect you to stand outside and talk to him through the slat-window but rather to venture within his den and pass between the towers of teetering trinkets to peer through them and find what you want.

Yandir himself may not even know the full stock of his store! He's grown wealthy enough over the past three decades to build an addition to the original store which is a small warehouse on the ground floor and extends his personal space above. He has nearly fifteen servants, and several clerks at work in the shop at all times. Don't even think of trying to pilfer from him, because he has about fifteen cousins, each one tougher than the next.

M36. The Red Shield Inn

If you turn at Evelyne's Tholos (M24) and head towards the Portam Malleator (P17) you'll pass the friendly daub bulk of the Red Shield Inn. A single long building describes it, and over the stoop hangs a battered shield painted, appropriately enough, red. The inn was opened a mere twenty years ago by the aging knight Sieur Haras Joule. Now in his sixties, Sieur Haras is an old but happy man who has hung up his sword over the bar and his shield over the door. Declining the honors normally attendant to knights of his station he prefers to show off his golden knight's-belt to his patrons than to wear it.

The taproom of the Red Shield is a lively place, always filled with a mix of travelers and workmen. There's precious few tapestries and hangings to be had here. The few adornments on the walls are generally either woodcarvings or trophies from Sieur Haras' journeys as a knight. His wide-hipped old wife, Maude, serves at bar and keeps the books.

The prices are eminently reasonable, a mere tower and three shields for a night. The place isn't a boarding house, however, so there are no weekly beds. The Red Shield is a favorite of adventurers from outside the city, probably because it has a stable, good food, good drink, and a minimum of fuss in terms of brawls, thefts, and the like.

M37. The Axe & Handle

Where the *via lignorum* and *via latomos* cross, the Axe & Handle can be found. It's a low tavern with an attached brewery and kitchen. The most common visitors here are workmen, and if you go to drink in the Axe you'll find that you're surrounded by dusty stonemasons and grimy carpenters.

I personally love the Axe & Handle, primarily for the fact that the proprietor (Lydda Mason) keeps ice on hand at all times in huge chests behind the bar and all her beers and wines are served cold upon request. Sure, the ice costs an extra three copper shields, but it's worth it!

M38. Manor of Theolus Amvor

Theolus Amvor, Dynas of Mermarche, is one of the most powerful nobles in the empire. As the duke of the eastern seamarches, his fleets command the approaches to the Inner Sea as well as guarding most of the trade that travels across the ocean from Noranos.

His manor is rarely inhabited these days, its massive and beautiful marble halls standing empty since the accession of the king to the throne of an emperor. The Amvors have never been friendly with their kings, and Theolus is no exception.

Empty as it may look, this vast marble palace is still guarded by Mermarchine men dressed in the Duke's blue and gold colors so I wouldn't go peeping around here if I were you.

M39. Riverway Traders Guildhall

Up near the Defender's Gate (P8) and sitting right on the Fishmarket (M56) stands the Riverway Traders Guildhall. It's a huge building made of river stone and marble, and takes up two blocks in both directions. It encompasses warehouses, stables, and the directorate of the coaster. Goods are offloaded at the Sailor's Shingle (R5) and moved straight over the bridge (R2) into the guildhall.

The Guild is always looking for sellswords to guard its ships, which ply every river in the heartland. Just beyond the main door of the Guildhall is what they call the Hall of Hirings where ship's captains come and offer seats on their crews in return for coin.

M40. Temple of Fortune

Seated comfortably on the Square of Fortune (M59) is one of the largest temples of Fortuna the Fickle Lady in all of the empire. A huge dome covered in beaten gold and high-pillared hypostyle hall stand athwart the market, looming over it and covered with the wheel-and-hand symbology of the Lady.

Within, the main hall is open to outsiders. Sacred gambling under the watchful eye of the Lady's priest's is available in small private rooms and many nobles avail themselves of this entertainment.

The main hall itself is gilded in gold and silver, traced in reds and blues, and surrounds a massive central altar of precious metals and gemstones. Whenever anyone wants to make an offering to Fortuna they come to the Temple of Fortune and speak with one of the many priests to be found there.

M41. Raya's Embrace

A wolfsden located within spitting distance of Pillar Hill, Raya's Embrace looks almost disturbingly like the Chapterhouse of Flowers (M22) in that it is covered with floral themes. However, unlike the Chapterhouse it is made of simple plaster and daub and the flowers themselves bear an uncanny resemblance to genitalia.

I can't say I've ever been in Raya's Embrace, but I imagine it is a pleasant enough experience. The priests would hardly let pox-ridden or unclean whores practice under the name of the Lover-Goddess, so I assume the place is at least hygienic.



M42. Baths of Aras

Just opposite the Anarian Aqueduct (M3) stands the bath-complex built by King Aras during his reign of the city. It's all made from recovered marble taken from old Varan ruins throughout the city. The baths are a free service, available to all members of the city, and also serve as a local well for those that have no running water (which is many people in the Middle and Lower city).

The baths themselves are divided into public and private sections; as time has gone on, private enterprises have constructed baths next to old King Aras' and they have different rules and regulations: there are several that double as wolfsdens, allowing one to repose with a nubile young girl (or boy) in the comfort of a steaming-house.

Whether to wash or simply wade and pass the time discussing politics, money, and the future, the baths are certainly one of the most relaxing places in the city.

M43. The Broken Bridge Inn

The Broken Bridge is a small inn that stands beneath the shattered southern arm of the Anarian Aqueduct (M3) that fed the cistern that is now the Theater of the White Lily (Y2). Favored by bards, jongleurs, actors, chanteurs, and performers of all kinds, the Broken Bridge is deceptively run-down from the outside. Moss grows on its roof, water trickles down from the ruined aqueduct, splashing the ground outside, and the neighborhood is generally quiet and withdrawn.

Inside, however, there's a whole separate life to the Broken Bridge. Performers often play for their rooms, and the proprietor, Tyria Plectra, encourages bards and singers to pair off and battle for the crowd's affections. The winners get a small purse (as though it were a joust!) while the losers have to find somewhere else to sleep.

The Broken Bridge is cheap for those with coin, five copper shields a night, and it also serves as a tavern. While not a proper brothel, it is easy enough to find ready women (and men) at the Bridge, particularly on nights rife with performances. The wine flows freely, and the patrons are kind.

M44. The Cup & Coin

The Cup & Coin is yet another tavern. This is one that I wouldn't recommend, as it is generally filled with riff-raff from the lower city. There are tile-sharps who can winkle you faster than a dockside doxy and dice-games rigged to make you pay. Thieves prowl the dingy little bar, ready and willing to pick your purses clean.

The drinks aren't half-bad, if you find you have enough coin to pay for them at the end of the night and it hasn't been spirited away. The ogre simply called "Clobber" serves at the beck and call of the proprietor, a nasty little halfling named Half-shield Dick. If you can't pay, for whatever reason (like Half-shield's robbed you) then Clobber makes sure he lives up to his name.

All and all, I'd give this one a miss.

M45. The Company of Crossed Swords

Midway between Hangman's Square (L1) and the Haymarket (L13) stands the Company of the Crossed Swords. This compound belongs to a former adventuring party that has turned mercenary, attracting a great number of swords and arms to their banner. Their leader, Baron Thesideus the Longblade, was granted his titles by the emperor after putting down a tribe of marauding orcs near the Mermarche border.

The Company is a series of buildings that are all interconnected and warded by an outer wall. A large square tower juts up from the western end of the complex, giving the Crossed Swords archers a clear shot at the street surrounding it.

There's little to be gained from talking to these fellows unless you want to employ them. As adventurers, however, I imagine you don't have the coin (or inclination) to engage them for their services. The Crossed Swords generally takes higher paying contracts from the nobility or the emperor's household.

M46. House of the Sealord

Between two arms of oceanic marble there stands a sea-green dome and squat hall dedicated to the evil and pernicious lord of the waters, Vodei. Not far from River Hill or the Fishmarket (M56), the House of the Sealord was once much more active than it is today.

The temple is in a tragic state of disrepair, most of the coin coming in from sailors looking to avoid storms or doldrums going directly to the upkeep of the slowly crumbling structure. Just outside the great steps that lead into the temple proper stands its outer altar, a huge slab of red coral that is said to contain the blood of centuries of sacrificial fish and fowl.

Acolytes prowl the yard between the two great arms of the temple, but the interior halls look tatty and deserted. With the foundation of the Temple of the River Gods (R6), the Vodoni priesthood has suffered badly. His friendly wife Meina and the River-spirits of the heartland are much more approachable than the Seapriests of his own cult.

You really have no need to come to this place unless Vodei himself has expressed a personal dislike of you and you want to avert his gaze with some well-meaning offering.

M47. Knight's Watch Commandery

Right between Raya's Grotto (M5) and the Blue Stag (M15) stands a little tower that is used by the Knight's Watch as a commandery. Though the main bulk of the force resides in the two upper city gates (U8 and U9) and the Tower of the Watch (P2), there can always be found a handful of men-at-arms at this tower.

They are generally training with a swordsmaster who is also a knight, and young inductees to the Knight's Watch are required to spend a certain amount of time (I believe six months) assigned to the middle city commandery.



M48. The Saucy Slattern

Close to Raya's Embrace (R41), though on the far side of the Span of Swords (U10) there stands the little wolfsden known as the Saucy Slattern. It services mostly fishermen, riverfolk, and sailors as well as a great number of imperial soldiers from the Garrison (S7).

The Slattern is a two-story daub building with a common room for choosing your pick of the lot and many separate bedrooms for spending your coin. The green dwarf who runs the business, Tolor Greencloak, is a friendly fellow who is always willing to gossip for the proper coin.

M49. Baker's Guildhall

I'm not certain how the Baker's Guildhall wound up on the Fishmarket (M56) but there it stands! The great communal ovens purchased from the king long ago are primarily located here, though the bakers have since established other ovens throughout the city (maintaining, of course, the monopoly on their use). The smell of baking bread does wonders to drown out the stench of the river and the fish.

The guildhall itself is a tall building, mostly made of thick heartland granite. Since the ovens are burning all the time, wood must be brought upriver to serve them and is constantly being loaded into the attached warehouse. Folks who are not guild members or carters (carrying the wood) are generally not allowed to enter the guildhall for reasons other than business.

M50. Caravaneer's Guildhall

Down by the Portam Reges (P1) stands the Caravaneer's Guildhall. More loading station than hall, it serves as

the launching-point for hundreds of merchant caravans every year. The building is all of stone save for its third and uppermost story, which is jettied daub. The Guildhall possesses a training yard and employs several weapons-masters to train the caravan guards who serve it.

You can almost always find a caravan here waiting to leave, and the Guildhall serves as a good place to find business as an adventurer if you're willing to pay the guild dues. Like some of the other halls, the caravaneer's provides rooms for those guild members who are currently without roofs.

There is even a dwarven armorer on the premises (his name is Galdir) to repair the damage done to arms and armor along whatever treacherous routes lead into the city. This is a fine place to get started if you want to get out of Miles, because you can be paid to travel!

M51. Hearthland Traders, Guildhall

Just down the via sacra from the Caravaneer's Guildhall (M50) is the hall of the Hearthland Traders. They're a wealthy merchant's compact that operates out of the city, but all of their work is private.

The guildhall itself is quite nicely appointed, with rich decorations and fine silken pennons hanging from its upper windows. They don't want much truck with adventurers, though, so unless you have something for them I'd stay away. They're as apt to call the Knight's Watch on you as offer you a job.

M52. Guildhall of Baudy Workers

Directly beneath the Span of Swords (U10) hides the little Guildhall of Baudy Workers, were wolfsdens and whoremasters must go to get their licenses. The Guild is operated as a joint partnership between the Rayan priesthood and the imperial administration. Being a new organization founded by Emperor Tamerin, you can bet that its caused a lot of stir amongst the established whorehouses in the city.

It's run by the half-orc Tibereus, who was appointed by the Rayan priesthood itself. If you think his ugly mug wouldn't appeal to any Rayan, you'd better go back and ask them what the definition of beauty is. They apparently see it everywhere.

Tibereus isn't an evil soul, though, and the little guildhall is run well under his charge. Essentially nothing more than a small office staffed with hired clerks who keep the records and make imperial inspections, the Guildhall has little appeal to me.

M53. Blacksmith's Guildhall

Just down the way from the Cup & Coin (M44) one can find the guildhall of the city blacksmiths. It's a largish daub building, (though there are several sections made entirely of stone) complete with a shrine dedicated to Elnus, the "little flame" of the forge, as well as to the dwarven forge-god Brunnr Brightbeard.

Blacksmiths gather here with some frequency to hold competitions on the guild forge and to consult one another



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about prices of iron. Indeed, most blacksmiths in the city buy their iron in bulk through the guild itself, which ensures they receive the best possible prices. A small bloomery for the purification of the metal can be found behind the hall.

The guildmaster, a fat little iron dwarf by the name of Galdir Forgelight, is a scrupulous customer, and though he has long abandoned the work of making nails, horseshoes, and ploughs he still remembers his century and a half at the fire and keeps the needs and deeds of the other blacksmiths in the city close to heart.

M54. Seastone Armory

The Seastone Armory is in the northern quarter of the city, near the shop of Calodus the Spice-merchant (M71) and Thanrik's Weapons (M55). Owned and operated by a small family of rock gnomes, the armory comprises both their home and their workshop. The front half of the armory is open to the street year round, to give the four forges somewhere to vent their heat. The lower floor is all made of stone, to protect the building from stray fires.

The upper story is the family hall of the gnomes who run the place, the Argots. Their patriarch, Geldmar Argot, is a gnome with a fantastic beard that he has had to trim only to keep it from dipping into the fire. His five sons are his forgemasters and most of the day-to-day work is done by his litter of grandchildren who run hither and yon grinding, tempering, and smelting.

This family of gnomes is one of armorers as well: they specialize in flexible mails and they always have a good supply of tanned leather on-site to assist with their work. Their prices, of course, are a bit above the average but, being rock gnomes, they'll work on your commission until they drop.

I'm not quite sure why they call themselves the seastone armory, other than the fact that most of their armors turn out with a slight blue coloration to them. Perhaps they made armor for the Vodoni, in that temple's heyday.

M55. Thanrik's Weapons

The iron dwarf Thanrik is from one of the high mountain clans of the Arinnfal and it is said he was a master smith in the Dwarf-king's pay before he left nearly sixty years ago now to come and establish his little forge in the city of Miles.

Thanrik's Weapons has no sign and looks just like a dwarven house from the street: stone with heartwood beams supporting a tile roof. Out behind this house (lonely, for a dwarven home, as only Thanrik resides there) is the forge proper, beneath a stone roof with no walls.

Thanrik's work costs hundreds or thousands of pillars and can take months to complete. However, his weapons are said to be works of art. I cannot attest to their quality as I've never seen one of Thanrik's blades, axes, or hammers, but the nobility of Miles speaks of this dwarven smith in such hushed tones I find it easy to believe almost anything about him!

M56. Fishmarket

The Fishmarket stands at the gateway to River Hill (P8) and is where all the fishing sloops of the Annorius dump their hauls. The stink there is so great that I can hardly bear to pass through, unless its own my way to the Baker's Guild (M49).

M57. Sulyeman the Clerk

Just hard by the Scrivener's Sally (P10) stands the workshop and home of Sulyeman the Clerk. Sulyeman is one of the most studious men in the city, even more so than some of the Quilian Priests over in the library (W1). He is an old man from the city of Blackport in the East, though I believe he came here when he was but a lad to escape some doom out there in the Plain of Sorrow.

He has built quite a reputation for himself in the city, and anyone looking for a clerk would be well-regarded if he could hire one of the expensive Acolytes of Sulyeman. He is known as a master of ciphers and letters, a true pedagogue in the art of writing.

His house doubles as a scriptorium and library and, for fear of fires that might destroy his books, he has slowly converted the building over to stone. Over the years he has added buttresses and towers so his dwelling looks more like a castle than a clerk's office. Inside, you can find a small number of scribes at work at copydesks (though not as many as in the Scriptorium, W7) and the shelves and shelves of Sulyeman's vast library.

He himself hardly does any work anymore, preferring only the most difficult of translations as his bread and butter. It is said he knows something about everything and I've heard him quietly referred to as Sulyeman the Sage in the scholarly circles.

If you ever have need of a research library, a master sage, or a perfectly illuminated copy of a valuable manuscript, Sulyeman's manor is the place for you.

M58. The Company of Ashes

At the place where the via cinis and the viam lamnis intersect there stands a vaguely L-shaped building, with arms along either road. This large stone structure is the home of the Company of Ashes, adventurers who have established quite a name and reputation in the city of Miles. They had their beginnings doing work for the Temple of the Seven Gates (M2) but now they serve no masters other than themselves.

Their home is palatial, the equivalent of something owned by a count or duke, and the number of servants they employ is dizzying. They often hire out their work to lesser adventurers, as their head honcho, Tulimarien the Farsighted, seems to have a love for budding adventurers.

M59. The Square of Fortune

This huge diamond-shaped square is surrounded by jewelers, goldsmiths, silversmiths, and the homes of wealthy merchants. Its primary attraction, of course, is the Temple of Fortune (M40), though the great fountain at the heart of the Square is said to be beloved by the Goddess and some would fain throw their coins there than at her altar.

M60. Miklaus' Friendly Guides and Touts

I've been told that I look quite similar to the forest gnome (Miklaus) who runs Miklaus' Friendly Guides and Touts. I don't see the resemblance, really. Miklaus is young, brash, and extremely talkative. I once tried to engage him on a good discussion about cured meat, but he immediately hared off to tell me about where I could find some in the city. He can't keep his mind on one thing, that gnome!

Be that as it may, this large cream-colored plaster building houses the gnomes who have moved into the city from Valdis to become guides for Miklaus. His gnomes and halflings can be found lingering at every major gate, in every thoroughfare. They've even taken an imperial contract to serve as criers for the emperor upon occasion, that's how ubiquitous they've become!

Miklaus himself refuses to hire anyone but smallfolk and likes to claim he's giving them a respectable place in the city. I'm not sure you can call a little halfling lad pestering you for a three-shield tour of River Hill respectable, but he's certainly made a name for himself.

M61. Northgate Stables

The Northgate Stables (across from Miklaus' friendly guides, M60) are owned by the Count Regald de Coer, the count of the lands just north of the city. The day to day operation of the stable is run by Gaspard Brun, a slovenly fellow inclined to wear shit-stained breeches and a floppy hat.

Horses from the Coer herds are sold here and some stalls can be rented out to keep your mount fed and rested while you're in the city. Unlike many of the stables in the heart of Miles, there's plenty of room for warhorses of the larger variety here and Gaspard knows how to keep them well-fed on expensive grains. It may be about the only thing he knows, but he knows it well.

M62. Gatehouse Bawdies

Hidden just along the outwall near the Gate of the Shipwrights (P9), this large low building of unmortared granite plays host to a variety of vices. Illegal (unsanctioned, ie, without a priest) gambling, fighting, and archery contests can be had inside as can all manner of unpleasant women.

I have a hard time believing that the Gatehouse Bawdies have recieved a visit from Tibereus of the Guildhall of Baudy-workers (M52) ever in its entire history. They must be paying someone off, as the Knight's Watch has never even so much as hinted that they might get shut down.

While the area around the wolfsden is safe by daylight, being caught out here after dark is a sure way to find yourself waking up naked on the bottom of the river.

M63. The Thunderhammer Armory

The muscle-bound elf Vasarascirvamia (known as Vasara) and his assistants run the extremely wealthy-looking Thunderhammer Armory on the Square of Fortune (M59).

The peals of his hammer can be heard for blocks as, like many smiths, Vasara keeps his forge open to the air.

The lintels of the forge are lined with gold, the building itself built from heavy white-blue marble. The entire place is covered with carvings in the elvish style. The walls are aswarm with stars and clouds, hammers and axes shaped like bolts of lightning, and thunderheads in the shape of anvils.

Vasara lives here with his wife in the closed part of the building just to the side of the open shop. His armor, while not as renowned as Thanrik's, is said to be beautiful to behold. Many suits of armor used for ceremonial purposes are commissioned at the Thunderhammer Armory, as Vasara knows many secret techniques of dying and etching metal.

It is said that, if the money were right, Vasara would make functional arms and armor again. I've yet to hear of him taking up such an offer, but I'd be eager to see what his workshop can produce.

M64. The Golden Glimmer

Garrus Goldsmith, the haughty old man who owns the Golden Glimmer Forge, is a pain of a man. Pious and self-righteous, he uses every delay in his work as a reason to charge more! However rude he has been to me in the past, I take it he is obsequiously nice, scraping and bowing, to the nobility when they come to get goldwork done.

His home and workshop are two separate buildings, and his three apprentices are ill-kept and generally quite angry with Garrus. They were willing to slip me back some of the gold he charged me when they heard of my plight! Anyhow, if you have need of Garrus Goldsmith, I recommend dealing with the two kind young boys and the girl who are being trained in his trade.

They'll go far some day!

M65. The Silvermoon Smithy

The Silvermoon Smithy is a silversmith's shop owned by the Dorlish half-elf Auro Tyrolin. It stands just across from the Golden Glimmer (M64) on the Square of Fortune (M59). Auro is a reasonable if expensive craftsman, much more pleasant than his neighbor Garrus.

He generally focuses in jewelry, but he has made several silver sculptures for prominent elves throughout the city.

M66. Emperor Norandor's Boarding House

Perhaps taking its name from Norandor's Tower (P4) of Norandor's Wood just across the street, the Emperor's Boarding House can be identified by a sign with a painting of a black sword upon it.

The boarding house is a converted tenement from the second empire, all brick and slate. It's owned by Sieur Ogus Dirke, the captain of the Knight's Watch, but he only collects the rents. Day to day operation is left to the halfling Mira Fern who is the chatelaine of the house.

The rooms are small and spare, though you can bring any furniture in that you want. They lack ovens or hearths, so in the winter time you'd be advised to buy a heating brazier.



THE CITY HERSELF

Prices are a bit steep, but then again the place is safe, clean, and centrally located. Three silver towers a week buys a room, or seven towers a month, if you pay in advance.

M67. Fleshmarket

The Fleshmarket is located along Eleia's Road, midway between the Alaren Wall (M6) and the Judge's Wall (M31). This marketplace is a large open area lined with cobbles but mostly given over to grasses and small shrubs. Once a month, the farmers from all around Miles herd huge numbers of sheep, cattle, and goat into the market to be purchased and slaughtered.

M68. Gradius the Fletcher

Standing next to each other, Gradius the Fletcher and the Judge's Poleturning (M69) are both in the shade of the Judge's Wall (M31). Gradius himself owns both shops and does quite well by them. The imperial garrison buys weapons from Gradius as well as from several other shops throughout the city, but he's always turning poles and making arrows for the tagmata, the Watch, and the escurae. The fletching shop is the larger of the two, employing around fifteen workmen.

The shops themselves are both simple wattle and daub, though Gradius' household is above the fletchery not the poleshop.

M69. Judge's Poleturning

An extension of Gradius' fletching business, his poleturning shop makes poles for carrying, for ladders, and for polearms. There's little to see or do here unless you're looking for poles and poles alone.

M70. Lagarius the Jeweler

Right at the edge of the lower city and just opposite a Sernian temple of shadows (L5), Lagarius the Jeweler owns a tiny little shop into which he attracts passers by with unctuous words and sinuous gestures. Inside, he had a variety of gemstones and gem-settings that all seem suspiciously fine for a little shop near the Wall of Judges (M31).

I've got my doubts about him, I do! I'd wager a fine cut of Milean beef that he's a criminal and that every single piece of cut glass he's passing as rubies and rock crystal is in fact stolen from somewhere else.

M71. The House of Spices

All the way back north near Thanrik's Weapons (M55) and the Seastone Armory (M54) you'll find Calodus' House of Spices. This massive roundhouse is a storage space, a home, and a store all in one. The side which faces the street is a stone shopfront from which Calodus may lean out and accost people in the street, drawing them over and allowing them to scent the various spices stored in his roundhouse.

His home occupies the rest of the ground floor and the floors above, and he has many servants and apprentices attending him. His spices come in from River Hill on ships

that he has engaged and he is actually deceptively wealthy.

The man himself wears simple clothing, unadorned with fancy gemstones or patterns. He is a fat man, which belies his love of food and his own spices, and we have both shared the delicacies of the world in his hall before. I have only good things to say of Calodus, and I would hope he says the same of me.

M72. Scrolls Deciphered

Just down the way from Calodus (M71) lies the tiny shop known as Scrolls Deciphered. This is the home of a minor wizard who never amounted to much named Reynard. His home is wattle and daub, like most of the city, though he has a brick-framed storefront.

He mostly imports parchment from Meirenia and uses his meager magical capabilities to read strange and possibly dangerous scrolls brought to him by adventurers. It's an unenviable life, but I suppose some day he'll make enough coin to return to proper research.

M73. The Aedium

The Aedium is a huge building that was constructed by the emperor in honor of his marriage to the daughter of the king of Byrne. It is a massive dome, larger even than the dome of the Lawkeeper's Temple, and contained inside its hallowed grounds are shrines to every single god worshipped within the known realms of men, elves, dwarves, halflings, and gnomes. A small contingent from every temple has established itself there, and one may go into the private chapel of each of these deities and kneel down to pray. All save the Necromancer are worshipped here, and the opulence of the building is great.

The emperor spared no expense, and it is said that he inlaid the ceiling of the main chamber with the insanely expensive red-gold metal balglamir, found only in the Brandgelt mountains of Claulan.

M74. Magnir Arnsson's home

Magnir Arnsson is the Clan Judge of the dwarves in the city of Miles. His home is a palatial dwarven manor, complete with a garden of stone trees and rock-crystal sculptures studding the shadowed porch. He represents the Clan Prince in Auruxol and acts as an official diplomat to the imperial court.

Wyrms Hill

Standing in the southern quadrant of the city, Wyrms Hill is much lower than Pillar Hill or the Hill of Swords. It is named for its most defining landmark, the striking Tour Wyrmais (Y1) which stands atop its highest point. The buildings press in close on Wyrms Hill, and many more of them are made from the stone than in any other locale in the city.

We probably have the evil queen Myrea the Despoiler to thank for that, as many buildings on Wyrms Hill show evidence of stones taken from the ruins of her fortress (Y6).

The news was troubling indeed,
but Argus wondered just how
accurate it was. The cat had
a tendency to toy with it



Y1. Tour Wyrmais

The Tour Wyrmais was built in classical antiquity before the city of Miles had spread beyond the Faberlaine Walls (U7). It bears the mark of strange and exotic days, when the architecture of men was unsullied by contact with the giants and the elves, pure and strange and straight from Zesh. The Tour has powerful spells woven into it and, though it is not from porphyry stone, it remains standing five or six thousand years (sages do not agree) since its construction. Serpents and dragons crawl across its pale surface and ancient man's cosmophilic desire to cover every inch of the tower with designs makes it difficult to look at.

Winding up through the belly of the tower is a turnpike stair that leads to the platform at its apex. There, set into the stone with bands of ancient black iron which is impervious to the passage of time or weather, stands the mouthpiece of the great horn that the tower houses.

The tower was built to call out dragonsign and warn the early men of the hill when wyrms were aflight. In those days, the threat of dragons seemed very real and indeed, ancient histories often tell of the bellowing of the Tour Wyrmais calling the city to battle.

The tower is now in the keeping of the Knight's Watch and the only person with the authority to command the horn to be winded is the *magnai paxata*, Sieur Ogus Dirke. It has never sounded in my lifetime or the lifetime of even the longest-lived elf, and we may pray that it never does sound.

Y2. White Lily Theater

The White Lily Theater was once a large reservoir-cistern from the ancient imperial waterworks. It was supplied by the Anarian Aqueduct (M3) before that shattered in two places. The round shape and great size of the cistern was perfect for erecting stands, however, and drawing a roof over the place it has been converted into the White Lily.

Performances suitable to what the imperial master of revels might call lower tastes, the White Lily is a stage in the round where acting troupes and performers can come to play their shows. The troupes commonly bunk up at the Broken Bridge Inn (M43) not too far from the theater.

The theater is owned by the Master of Revels himself, Ludovus Errare, and he makes a pretty coin each time a troupe rents it out.

Y3. Gold Dragon Livery

The rear of Wyrm Hill has one of the largest open areas in the city and the Gold Dragon makes use of it by stabling horses there. The Gold Dragon Livery is owned by the elf Hevonamira and his half-elven wife Lyredia, both of whom have worked with horses for nearly their entire lives.

The livery looks like nothing more than a large stable with an enclosed wall and grazing space bounded by fences beyond. The Gold Dragon breeds draft and war horses both, and provides steeds for many of the processions in the city. The imperial tagmata purchased one tenth of their horses from the Gold Dragon when they were first created early in



the reign of King Tamerin.

The horses that they breed are excellent and they have a variety available for all prices. From angry mules to proud and stalwart stallions, there's something here if you're in the market.

Y4. Edifice of Clastrum

The Lord of the Lock and Chief of Slavery is little-worshipped in Miles. Yet somehow this large ugly step-temple seems to flourish. I don't know who supports it, or what madmen go into its dark depths to pray before hidden fires, but the public altar is never touched when I walk by.

I've yet to see any of the chained priests walking about in the light of day, but the day I do I'll make sure they wish they didn't!

Y5. Shrine of Fortune

This small unattended shrine to the Fickle Lady dominates the Dragonmarket, which is just down the way from the Tour Wyrmais (Y1). The Dragonmarket is a much-frequented by smiths and weapon-makers of all kinds, lending Wyrm Hill a reputation for attracting mercenaries.

Y6. Ruins of the Myrean Fortress

Myrea the Despised built one of her great fortresses here on Wyrm Hill and ruled from it for several years before her downfall. All that's left of the place are the broken stones that have been mined for two centuries to build the other buildings on the hill. I suppose there are shafts down into her sunken laboratory and old dungeons, as folks who have explored the sewers of Miles have warned me about entrances to her lair below the city.

Thank Topaz that she's gone, and steer well clear of these ruins. Some lingering spells may be at work underneath the city in the dark corridors that lie under the hill.

Y7. House of Three Sorrows

Wyrm Hill's one and only wolfsden, the House of Three Sorrows is owned by the singer Stera Verandi and she knows her clientele well.

The House is a small cozy building on the leeward side of the hill, built all of stone but framed with timber. Inside, the

walls are painted with dark plaster and frescoes of satyrs, nymphs, and other woodland creatures. Just inside the doorway is a pair of eikons entwined in flagrante de licito: Heimir and Raya, joined in the celestial love of the Laughing God and the Lady of Beauties.

Within you will find a garden-courtyard surrounded by colonnaded hallways that look within. Young men and women alike serve in the House of Three Sorrows and many are trained in the arts of rhetoric, philosophy, and theology. Though the Three Sorrows may cost more than the Slattern (M48) or the Mermaid (R7), her attendants are more than doubly entertaining. At least several of them are skilled in music and often sit in the courtyard and play pipes, drums, or harps.

Y8. Dragon's Roost

While the House of Three Sorrows (Y7) may be the only dedicated wolfsden on the hill, the Dragon's Roost serves as both an inn and as a whorehouse. Like the Gatehouse Bawdies (M62), I am firmly in the belief that Tibereus doesn't know or care about the whores in the Dragon's Roost. Many of them are foreigners, and they even boast three Zeshimites on their staff.

A small and unassuming establishment, the Roost bears a red dragon curled in a nest upon its sign. It is crushed between two other stone buildings, towering four stories above the street with rooms and rooms above.

Just going in, passing the bowl of offerings to Heimir, and sitting in the taproom you might be forgiven for mistaking the place for a simple inn. The barkeep, a gouty old warrior by the named of Ector, will not give up so much as a hint that the wenches and serving boys can be had for bedmates. The old merchant who owns the building, Talaius, has given him special instructions not to say a word.

In this way, the Roost dodges the taxes levied on wolfsdens completely, claiming to be just an inn. Yet, if you so desire you could have any of the staff sent up to warm your bed in the cold upper reaches of the townhouse.

Y9. The Knight's Sword

A small weapon foundry, the Knight's Sword is owned by the Count of Tournese. A number of smiths work there producing weapons used by adventurers and mercenaries all over the city. The maker's stamp of the Knight's Sword can be found on many weapons throughout the city and the heartland: the Varan letters "k" and "s" surmounting the individual smith's seal are imprinted on everything that comes from the Sword.

The building itself is of stone and daub, complete with a large yard in the back for tempering and outdoor work when the forge grows too hot.

They have a number of weapons on hand at all times, and they take commissions. The master smith, Logus Durant, is a gruff man with little time for pretension.

Y10. Dragonhall

The Dragonhall is an ancient home that was built who-knows-how-long ago on Wyrms Hill. It's for sale by the imperial office of taxes and rents, though it's in need of serious repair. It has boasted a number of famous adventuring parties, the most recent being the Dragonshields who were wiped out in X.446 when the hall was attacked by their mortal enemies who had augmented their numbers with mirrorkin spies.

Y11. Fingers' Oddities

The dwarf colloquially known as "Fingers" is not an ally I would cultivate. He is a merchant and undoubtedly a thief, as well as a traveler of far and foreign lands. His shop sits along the windward side of Wyrms Hill, and even has the dignity to have glazed windows and a leaded rooftop.

Within his shop, one will find strange things shipped in from all over the world. He fills the place with the sweet smell of pipe smoke from his tall seat, watching you with his one good eye and nodding as you pick up or handle anything there.

I'm not sure if he's a fraud or his shop is stocked with truly strange things from strange lands (the head of a flayer, preserved in a jar; an astrolabe from Chimeron; a Diajiongese sword) or if he is a lamentable huckster!

Wizard's Hill

Wizard's Hill is primarily built in stone as well, though for different reasons. Farthest from water during the first and second empire, Wizard's Hill was the sight of several of the warring Schola but was also prone to fires and had no access to the system of imperial aqueducts. Today, Wizard's Hill is a network of narrow alleys and tree-lined lanes. It's the steepest hill in the city, and the places where it joins with Pillar or Shadow Hill are deep valleys between them.

More than anywhere else in Miles, there are gardens and forests, trees and open lawns hidden in the clustering madness of the ancient stone buildings.

W1. The Library of Tarsus

King Tarsus Elsofn endowed the small Quilian Library near the Portam Magiorum (P11) with an immense amount of coin and books in the early Ninth Age, transforming it into a massive foundation of knowledge! The library today has four wings and a central courtyard filled with artificial canals for growing papyrus reeds.

The whole building is made of unpainted white marble and stands like a towering edifice on the north-eastern slope of the hill.

The library houses some of the cities' best scholars and without a doubt its most inclusive research collection. If you have any questions about matters strange or ancient, I would first stop at Sulyeman's (M57) but if you don't feel like it or can't afford him, you could do much much worse than the house of Quilian Knowais.

W2. Pandar's Procurements

Three buildings make up the warehouses and operating heart of Pandar's Procurements in Miles. While the guild's largest imperial settlement is actually in Tourons, you wouldn't know it looking from the two huge warehouses and the painted walls of the guildhall.

The intersection where the warehouses are stationed is known as Pandar's Cross to locals, and is always swarming with carters loading and unloading from wagons that generally have traveled from River Hill or one of the gates.

The main segment of the guildhall is devoted to recording inventory and taking stock of things before they are loaded into one of the warehouses. Both warehouses have mechanical cranes (designed by gnomes, no doubt!) which allow them to load their upper stories without the use of ramps or ladders.

The Procurement's guildmaster, Domoni the Pale, lives on the premises and has a good relationship with most of the wizards on the hill. Pandar's clients are almost exclusively scholarly or wizardly as they move only the most exotic and strange of goods.

W3. The Ivy Vine

An small stone tavern, the Soiled Robe is perilously close to the Adventurer's Stair (L2) and the crookback where the Taberna Poveri can be found (L4). Thus, those who choose to drink here do so because they identify more with the hill of the wizards than the stair of the adventurers. Minor magisters, novices, and apprentices are common sights in the dim booths of the Vine.

As per her name, the tavern is covered head to toe in ivy without. Inside, a small double-shrine can be found near the privy-hole where one can leave coins for both Galos the Seer and Heimir the Laughing God.

The place is owned by the failed wizardress named Helea who (rumors say) never learned to so much as cast a single spell before she ran off from her master to make her living on the streets.

She's a nice looking lass with an open face and easy smile. She'll gladly give you a free mugfull of ale if she thinks you're down on your luck and her policy is not to bother those patrons who want to be left alone. For her discretion and the quietness of the narrow little lane, she has developed a loyal clientele of locals.

W4. The Imperial Schola

The Imperial Schola maintains its buildings on the peak of the hill, alongside such institutions as Tembol's Couriers (W8) and the Riding Mage (W10). From its perch on the highest point of Wizard's Hill (and perhaps the highest point in the city) one can look down into the vale between Shadow and Wizard's Hills along the via umbras (the Street of Shadows) and follow it along to the shattered shell of the ruins of the old Black College.

The Imperial Schola is somewhat similar in design to that vanished clave of wizards: there are many small apartments scattered across the grounds for the students to inhabit, a

large library with a red tile roof, and several open lecturing theaters in the old imperial style.

The architecture is grim and foreboding compared to the rest of the hill. All of the buildings have plaster finishes or are done in marble sheathes, though most are actually made of brick. Black and red are prominent colors as are brass, copper, and gold.

The schola is surrounded by a tall outwall of faded black stone that is wrought with golden magical sigils and signs that I am fairly certain the current crop of wizards did not put upon them, leaving me to wonder just who did and what antiquity they have survived from.



W5. Circle of Miles

Just across the hill from the schola (W4) around the second step of its crown lies the library and three towers of the Circle of Miles. The members of the circle have been discussed elsewhere, so I need merely say that wandering onto their grounds without invitation is liable to get you transformed into something unpleasant for the rest of your life.

There is a very nice garden inside between the three mage's towers and their library is lovely if a bit withdrawn and pedestrian, but I doubt you'd even get that far before one of them descended upon you like the breath of Vodei himself.

W6. Black College Ruins

The Black College was once the scourge of the city of Miles. Feared and reviled throughout the Ninth Age, it squatted atop Wizard's Hill like a spider. The buildings were spindly and evil to behold, many made from jet imported from the far northern lands of the skinchangers. Myth and legend says that with that jet came skinchangers themselves: the were-folk who guarded the shadow-haunted corridors of that evil cabal!

I don't know how much of any of that is true, of course. Ancient evil cults and enclaves aren't really my speciality. I prefer a warm mug of mulled cider and a fine hunk of Downingvale cheese to the cold hallways and libraries of Milean ruins.

While similar in shape and design to the buildings of the Imperial Schola (W4) there are a great deal more of them amongst the Black College. Without fail, they are sheathed in either jet or obsidian though the polish has long since left the stone cracked and ruined.

Most of the buildings have caved in, particularly the once-impressive curves of the great domes. The halls now stand empty, the lecturing-theaters ruined, and the gardens overgrown with plant life. Whatever valuable goods were easy to spot and grab have long since been scoured from the ruin, leaving it a memory-haunted cenotaph to the sorcerers who once inhabited it.

Evil looking statues peer down from every remaining nook and cranny, some suspiciously similar to eikons of the Necromancer. Every year there are those who go missing in the city, and some are always invariably said to have been given to the College as part of its toll. No king has been brave enough to tear it up and build over it, so there it remains, growing rich in its wickedness.

I know brave men and women, brave gnomes even!, who are afraid to tread in the ruin day or night. Moans are said to sometimes escape from the rocks, like lost souls looking for their way to the underworld. What's more, demons and devils were once bound in this very place, tainting the earth itself with their vileness.

There are guardians still in the most secret places, placed there by the wizards of old. Webs of magic protect the old towers and tireless sentinels still prowl the grounds, stony and impervious to weapon or spell.

Tread lightly and swiftly if your path takes you along the via umbras and past the Black College, my friend, for it sleeps an unquiet slumber.

W7. The Scriptorium

The Scriptorium is a compound along the via scribae just east and above the Square of Fortune (M59) and the Wizard's Wood. The buildings inside make up a jumble of copying

rooms, dormitories, and parchment and vellum making workshops, and illuminating rooms. Paint and gilt are also made on the grounds.

The Scriptorium is partially funded by the Guild of Advocates (their Guildhall is just down the road at W9) and partially by the Library of Tarsus (W1). Both benefit from the availability of a source of cheap(ish) parchment and books as well as the incomes made from the copyists. Most parchment is still imported from Meirenia, particularly now that that nation has been enfolded into the new empire.

However, the Scriptorium houses a number of Quilian novices who must work there free of charge as part of their training to be accepted into the Library. When local merchants want a place to train their sons and daughters to read and write (so they can take over the family business) many turn to the Scriptorium.

As I said before, I prefer dealing with Sulyeman (M57), but I have no objection to working with the Scriptorium.

W8. Tembol's Couriers

Tembol the Traveler, Tembol the Trader, and Tembol the Tramp are all the same man. He is a renowned viator and message-bearer who has dedicated his life to carrying out Vaela's will along the roads. He became so famous that a small detachment of Poor Knights of Vaela (the Mendicant Order) have permanently settled within the confines of his business.

Tembol's Couriers are men and women who are professional viators both inside the city and out. There are two buildings that make up this business: the first is Tembol's home and hall where he accepts contracts and from whence he dispatches the couriers. The second is a stone tower just behind the house where a group of eight Poor Knights and their men-at-arms are generally in residence.

If Tembol takes on a particularly dangerous or lengthy dispatch, some of these knights may choose to go off with his couriers to protect them from the dangers of the road.

Tembol charges more than any other viator in the city, but the Sacred Heralds themselves have given their seal to him to prove his efficacy. No one has ever before failed to have their message delivered by one of Tembol's viators unless the viator himself met the God of Death along the road.

W9. Guildhall of the Advocates

You'd think that, seeing as they deal with the Hierieans so much, the advocates would have their hall within the walls of the Temple of the Lawkeeper (U5). You'd be wrong! They maintain their hall along the via scribae just a turn or two away from the Scriptorium (W7). Close enough to the Ivy Vine (W3) that the advocates can all go for a drink together, the guildhall is an unassuming building on the junction of the via scribae and the via quiliae.

It looks like a little stone hall with buttressed walls and an undercroft. Stepping inside, however, you're assaulted with brilliant guild tapestries and statues of Haeron and Sabian, the gods of Law and politics respectively.

I hear that the advocates practice their skills here and



THE CITY HERSELF

even offer training courses for apprentices and novices in the field. Mock-trials are held in a room made up to look like a small version of the Lawkeeper's Court and the place serves as a general gathering space for lawyers.

W10. The Riding Mage Livery

The Riding Mage has a large swathe of clear space atop Wizard's Hill where ponies and riding horses graze. The land itself is rented from the Circle of Miles (W5) but the business itself is owned and run by a retired jongleur named Lac and his mistress, the scholar Armina. Together they supply horses, donkeys, mules, and ponies to the inhabitants of the hill whenever they want them.

Their prices are extremely low, considering the wealth of their clients. However, if you're looking for a steed to win a race or do battle with you, you'd be much better off at the Gold Dragon (Y3) on the far side of the city.

W11. The Wizard's Well

Along the lowest point of Wizard's Hill, just touching the edge of Shadow Hill and the lower city, lies the via umbras or the Street of Shadows. Here the mages of the hill rub shoulders with the criminal element of the lower city, and nowhere are these shady dealings more apparent than at the Wizard's Well.

Just a short walk from the Stairwell Chandler's (L15) on the Adventurer's Stair (L2), the Wizard's Well is a tavern, inn, and house of secrets. There are no public gods to be seen and the dark paneled rooms are often used as meeting places between the powerful and unsavory.

If you have business with a wizard that you'd rather not do in public, the Well is the place to meet. The proprietor, William the Magebane, is well known for his protective stance towards his patrons and their employers.

W12. Crisby's Wall

Crisby's Wall was built by the founder of the Grand Conclave, none other than Crisby the Magnificent himself! It's a ruined granite course that runs from a tower on the outwall and defines the lower feet of Wizard's Hill.

I cannot be sure what the purpose of it was, as the outwall had already been constructed by that time and there seems to be no real reason to build such a projection. It may be the remains of an aqueduct system, but if so I've never heard of any pipes discovered up there.

Most likely the real purpose of the wall has long been forgotten, leaving the islands of in-tact masonry to tower over the surrounding buildings mysteriously, covered in the ivy creepers that seem to grow all over Wizard's Hill.

River Hill

River Hill was once its own settlement on an island reachable only by ferry. This eyot was incorporated into the city during the second empire period though the three bridges have been built and rebuilt a considerable number of times in

the centuries that followed. It has its own administration (the Riverwatch is law on River Hill) which reports directly to the imperial palace.

R1. River Keep

River Keep is a massive structure of pink riverstone (called Anorine) taken from upriver near Tournese. It has a single weighty drum-tower and a sprawling keep and yard with no bailey. It is from the River Keep that the Riverwatch issues forth to patrol the docks (at the Sailor's Shingle, R5) and collect taxes and tariffs.

In essence, the River Keep is the heart of River Hill, administratively and legally. From its huge walls flutter the Riverwatch banners and the men-at-arms it hosts drill every day to repel raiders, should they ever make it this far up the Annorius from the sea.

R2. Southbridge

The Southbridge is the oldest of the three bridges, linking the Gate of the Defenders (P8) to River Hill. It has massively tall archways supporting it to allow ships to pass beneath it for repairs in Valdis.

R3. Eastbridge

The Eastbridge and the Cartway were both rebuilt during the reign of King Aras and show a singular purpose: they are low bridges, level with the water, and they prevent ships from moving any further up the river by weight of their huge stoney embankments. In this way the northern heartland and Tournese is protected from sea-raiders that might sail up the Annorius.

R4. Cartway

The cartway leads out of the city proper and into the large town of Aripa on the far bank. It is jammed with wagons, foot traffic, and carts day in and day out. A shorter queue exists for ferry service on the pole-barges that cross the river, but there's a three tower fee for each wagon, a five shield fee for each animal, and a one shield fee for each head you take onto a raft.

R5. The Sailor's Shingle

This long riverfront dock space was once unembanked, a stony beach where ships would anchor to exchange wares. In the time of King Theron the entire southern side of the island was sunk with embankments and new docks were extended from them. Nowadays, the Shingle is a bewildering forest of masts and sails, wolfsdens, guildhalls, and warehouses. More sailors can be found in one block of the Shingle than in any every other portion of the city combined.

This is a dangerous part of Miles, for ships are often coming and going and foreign folk swarm the shores. You never know who you might bump into or who might attempt to shove you into their ship for sale in Essad or the Free Cities.

Keep one hand on your dagger and the other on your

purse and a firm eye out for Riverwatch portmasters if you must stay down here for any length of time.

R6. Temple of the River Gods

This temple overlooks the Sailor’s Shingle (R5) and is often thronged with sailors, merchants, and travelers. It’s a large square building cut from deep blue sea granite. Everyone is allowed inside into the cthonic light of the outer temple. Sheets of water fall along the walls and the only sources of light are the candles and braziers that glow from behind them. The effect is somewhat like being underwater and somewhat like floating through a dream.

The thunder of the waterfalls drowns out the sound of the street, and a hushed and sacral silence pervades the interior. A single tall altar in the rear-center of the chamber is dedicated to Meina, the Pale Lady, and is often approached by shipmasters and sailors alike seeking to curry her favor.

Smaller shrines surround it, lining the back wall, and one must past through the thundering water to reach them. Each is dedicated to a different river-spirit of the Heartland and many find it useful to propitiate as many of them as they can.

R7. The Topsy Mermaid

Further along the Shingle (R5) one can find the tavern and wolfsden known as the Tispy Mermaid. The sign over the door depicts just that, and the tavern itself is cobbled together from the overturned hull of a wrecked merchanter. It’s a favorite of the respectable ship’s captains who come to dock at Miles, and you can often find someone to take you to whatever foreign shore you can imagine there. If not, you can always take a rivership to Noranos and from there the open sea.

R8. Guildhall of the Noranian Importers

The Noranian Importers primarily ply the river between Noranos and Miles, transferring goods that have come from far over the sea on that final leg of their journey. This building is less a warehouse and more a wealthy hall. As the Importers are not a true guild but rather a merchant’s compact, this large opulent building serves as a place for various merchants who are part of the “guild” to come and make plans as to the future of their shipping enterprises.

Unsurprisingly, the docks just across from



the Guildhall are all reserved for members of the Noranian Importers.

R9. Guildhall of the Dockmen

The Dockmen are the sister-guild to the Carters (M30), the muscle that allows River Hill to operate. While many merchanters unload their own goods onto the docks, a great many more rely on the dockmen. There are a fair number of gnomes and blue dwarves in that guild, and the construction of the guildhall reflects that in its solid and unshakable appearance.

However, where River Hill ends (over any the Southbridge back into Miles, R2) so too does the employability of the Dockmen. Long ago a contract was worked out with the Carters—any labor that, for any period, takes place behind the outwall must have at least eighty-percent of the total value of the job paid to the Guild of Carters.

R10. The Dark Door

Midway up River Hill lies the Dark Door, a tavern identified only by the peeling black paint on its doorway. It has no sign and if you didn’t know it was a tavern you might simply pass it by.

Within, the lighting is dim and poor, coming mostly from the clay lamps behind the bar. The place is frequented by folks that have business to take care that they don’t want the Riverwatch to get their hands in. Of course, the Riverwatch is all too aware of the Dark Door, so it seems to be some sort of recursive game where one pretends not to know about the other only to attempt to spring upon them unawares.

Many dark deals are made in this place, and ships that carry cargoes the Watch would be glad to intercept. It’s said that, for a price, magical tomes on necromancy can be purchased here or at least the delivery of such books can be arranged.

I wouldn’t be surprised if an entire world of smuggling went on right below the nose of the Riverwatch in this pit. The arms and spells gathered in this den of ill repute is probably enough to challenge the Watch itself if ever there was a cause for it, which may be one reason why River Keep leaves it alone.

R11. Raya’s Daughters

The wolfsden known as Raya’s Daughters is the largest one on River Hill and mayhaps the entire city. It’s owner, Thierry the Fence,

bought the place when it was an old guildhall of an insolvent merchant's compact. It's a massive marble building that stands out over the water, four stories in height. Thierry expanded it by buying a small hulk and tying it up at the dock outside, effectively turning the ship into a second tavern and more rooms for his doxies.

The four story hall is reserved for the more discerning patrons; it boasts priests of Fortune and sanctioned gambling, music, dancing, and fine whores while the boat is reserved for baser pleasures. I'm certain that illegal things go on in the deeper parts of the ship, below the waterline, but I've never taken pains to prove it.

The place is opulent, I'll give it that (or at least half of it is) but whenever I've been there I've always had the feeling that something bad was going to happen. There are too many nobles from the Hill of Swords and the wine flows just a little too freely. If I'm not mistaken, I've seen the wild devotees of Salan amongst their number, guzzling wine as the Lord of Drink demands.

Thierry seems like a down-to-earth fellow, and he truly values his relationship with the nobility and the authorities. I remember when a scandal arose there two years ago over the disappearance of a minor knight, Thierry did everything in his power to find the man.

Lower City

The lower city encompasses two of the seven hills of Miles: Shadow and Peasant's Hill. These two hills are markedly different in their population. Peasant's Hill is inhabited by the urban poor; Shadow Hill swarms with thieves and fences, the underbelly of the city.

L1. Hangman's Square

Located at the base of the Adventurer's Stair (L2), Hangman's Square is where petty thieves and other common folk are executed for crimes against the empire and the city. Four huge pillars mark the edges of the square and a permanent stone scaffold where the accused hang. Since Tamerin's accession, however, the ancient Milean method of execution has been revived. The scaffold has been cleared and those sentenced to die by the emperor's justice are now executed in the ancient way, by a priest of the Law with a large sledge.

The square also serves as a marketplace of sorts, though the kind of goods you can buy there are either very basic (barrels, nails, etc.) or questionable in the extreme.

L2. The Adventurer's Stair

The Adventurer's Stair! Perhaps the most famous and well-known landmark in the city outside the Pillar itself! I've spent many a night along the stair myself, staring up at the stars and wondering where my years have gone. There's a little stall at one of the switchbacks that sells the finest roasted beef in the city or out of it!

The Stair emerges from the Faberlaine Wall (U7) beyond which it is the Walk of Honor (U4). It's a street that winds along the fault between Pillar, Wizard's, and Shadow Hills, folded between them and following a channel down to the base. The roadway is cut into shallow steps that twist and wind along sharp corners.

The Stair is a great place to find all kinds of gear: lamps, lanterns, grapnels, hooks, lockpicking tools, ladders, and even folks that are looking to hare off on an adventure with you. Stalls and stations, even whole shopfronts, specialize in supplying gear to mercenaries.

There are several large feed warehouses on the Stair as well, in case you want to purchase food for yourself or your mounts. Of all the places in the lower city to find yourself, this is probably the best.

L3. The Old Dwarf's Boarding House

Right across from the Taberna Poveri (L4) is the Old Dwarf's Boarding House. Like the Norandor's Boarding House (M66) it is a converted tenement building. It's much larger than Emperor Norandor's however, and it has a large central courtyard where grass and trees grow freely.

The old dwarf for whom the house is named is none other than Baldr Ironthane of the Harnthir clan, the infamous adventurer who once bested a dragon in a riddling competition. He's well on in his years now, a wispy white-beard who sometimes forgets what you've been saying to him. However, he still lives on the premises and will gladly rent out his rooms to mercenaries and adventurers: an attitude which is rare enough in the city! Most landlords would rather keep mercenaries (and the trouble they bring) rods away from their boarding houses!

The price is dirt cheap, too. Baldr charges only a tower for a week's rent, or three towers for the month in advance.

L4. Taberna Poveri Hominum

Lukius the Jester owns the Taberna Poveri, and he's a close friend of mine. He always lets me drink for free, and the drinks are generally quite fine! The Taberna is on





the downhill side of the stair and somewhat sunken into the ground.

A large plaster building with a single room above the tavern (which is rarely rented), this is the place where most adventurers in the city gather. The interior is cool in the summer and heated by a large fireplace in winter. What little light comes in from outside filters down from the narrow glassless windows up by the ceiling beams.

There are a number of stone tables and high-backed wooden settles, as well as a bar well-stocked with ales and wines. There's no undercroft or cellar, and the Taberna serves only the food the patrons bring with them and cook themselves in the hearth.

Still, it is a haunt of Sieur Ogus Dirke and contacts from the Knight's Watch and Lukius knows a good many fellows himself. There's no better place for a mercenary to get his bearings, maybe even find a company to join. While none of the ones I've ever been party to were founded there, I've heard tell that more adventuring contracts were drafted under the roof of the Taberna Poveri than in any other inn or tavern in Arunia.

L5. Temple of Shadows

Hidden near the Haymarket (L13) and just across from Lagarius the Jeweler (M70) there stands a little stone building that any passerby might mistake for a warehouse or a derelict building. But be warned travelers, for it is a temple! Yes, a temple to Sernis, the god of secrets and shadows, thieves

and darkness.

Entering the temple requires knowledge of passphrases and codes which I am not at liberty to reveal in this text. Suffice to say, it is not easy to make it past the door into this house of Eminea but once you are within, all its rooms and secrets are open to you.

Be wary about trying to infiltrate such a secretive cult; they likely know more about you than you'd like to think!

L6. Kneeling Knight

The Kneeling Knight is a dingy little bar on Shadow Hill only included in this manuscript for its ties to the criminal underworld of Miles. It boasts a signboard depicting a Milean lord vomiting; it's interior is disgusting, the floor covered with reeds that are matted with filth, and its cheap drinks are sold by the gallon or tun.

Regnault the Tapster owns this tavern and he is as surely an agent of Aventius the Fence or some other renowned underlord of Miles as I am a gnome!

I've confronted Regnault to his face on several occasions, but he has steadfastly refused to admit his involvement in the various crimes of the city. I find him to be personally despicable, and if I had more time to myself I would investigate him for Sieur Dirke, who feels the same as I!

L7. Odo's Tannery

Odo's Tannery is a huge, filthy, and unpleasant place where Odo the Short (a halfling, fancy that!) and his hirelings work ceaselessly to produce enough leather to supply the various businesses throughout the city that rely on it. The stinking bulk of the tanning vats belonging to Odo marks the beginning of the vai tannatorium, the Road of the Tanners, where many smaller tanneries stand in a long row.

This is a good place to get lost, if you're looking to drop pursuers. The strong stinks and the constant moving of goods (leather, cured tannins, cow piss) makes for a daily crowd that doesn't let up until sunset.

L8. The Singing Sisters

Hidden up near the top of Shadow Hill and not too far from the Kneeling Knight (L6) and Valzeth's Hockwares (L17) stands the Singing Sisters brothel. It's an old imperial building, complete with brick archways and billowing silken cloth over the doors. I've never been within, but I hear tell that each of the girls is taught to sing, and each of the boys taught to play the lyre.

It seems somewhat too nice for Shadow Hill by the description I was given, but perhaps some of the rumors are true: some would have you believe that a siren or a naiad runs the place, a spirit clothed in flesh!

L9. The Spitted Pig

Just at the end of a short lane is truly delicious little tavern called the Spitted Pig. This is the only reason I ever go to Shadow Hill anymore, and they make the most and best pork dishes of anywhere in the city. Pork roasted with honey for

days, grilled pork on coals, pork sliced and served with bread and cheeses... the Spitted Pig is just a delight to experience!

The landlord and cook, Fezig Whitebarrel, is a gnome of some renown! He and I are old friends, and I love spending coin in his establishment. I just wish it were in a better neighborhood!

Nestled at the top of the hill, the Spitted Pig is somewhat hidden from passers by, as it is down a narrow alley in a roundabout lane there. It's a low building, with the classical turf-roof and low hanging eaves of smallfolk construction. Within, you'll find a little slice of the Greensward served up to your delight, almost as though you were in the Lamp Country!



L10. Dwelling of Hasht

Hasht, the god of suffering and pain, maintains a crumbling temple on Peasant's Hill. His flayed priests just barely manage to survive and many are just as poor as the people they minister to. The building that houses them is an ellipse of worn, pitted stone with broken pillars supporting a canted roof of marble. I believe the temple may once have belonged to another god, but the Hashtemites have been squatting in it for longer than I can remember.

They're harmless now, as they have no following, and what little they do to stir up suffering is well within the boundaries of the law. However, when great tragedies occur their ranks swell and they can become quite dangerous.

They are a mad priesthood, and one best left to stew in their own devices.

L11. Tailors' Guild

Near the Haymarket (L13) and the Crossed Swords (M45), the Tailor's Guild is just this side of the lower city. It was once part of the middle city, but the spread of poverty beyond the square of the Haymarket has managed to swallow it up.

The tailors of the city hold precious few functions and the guild itself is mostly perfunctory. I would be surprised if a reorganization didn't come soon, since the tailors are generally quite wealthy and their guild so shabby.

L12. Coopers' Guild

The Coppers Guild sits right on Hangmans' Square (L1) and provides a place for coopers to organize. Since its so close to the place between the lower and middle cities, some believe it to be in the other, much like the Tailors' Guildhall (L11). Unlike the tailors, the coopers are not very wealthy, and their large but dilapidated warehouse, workshop, and hall combined is in desperate need of repair.

L13. Haymarket

The Haymarket is another farmer's market like the Fleshmarket (M67). Grains and vegetables are carted there when they aren't bought up by the imperial administration to be used as part of the dole. This means that servants come from all over the city once a week to purchase goods from the farmers who bring in their stock.

L14. The Royal Leech

If you've been wounded but cannot afford any of the fancy healers down in the College or thereabouts, the Royal Leech is the place for you. Boasting an old physician who once served at the royal bed, the Leech is a little infirmary for those without the coin for the best of treatments.

Samuel One-eye, as he is called, is the man who owns, runs, and works in this infirmary. He lost his eye long ago, but works just fine with the one. His prices are cheap and his medicine adequate: I've never had cause to complain!

The building itself is a simple house, small and tight, and Samuel does his operations right on the table in his main hall. The sign of the crowned leech can be seen for several turns of the Stair, so you can't miss it.

L15. Stairwell Chandler's

Candles, lamps, lanterns, oil, and all things relating to light and lighting are Chandler's business. He is a renowned lockpick and thief and claims to have forged keys to over half the houses in Miles. This little glass-windowed shop is a good place to catch a breath, buy some supplies, and learn the trade of the padfoot.

Chandler does his own glassblowing, a rare skill in the city when most glass comes from Noranos and I think he makes his own picks as well. He's a charming fellow, always eager

for a chat, even if he's got the bent of a true thief about him. Buy him a mug of ale if you want a tale: buy him ten if you want a discount.

L16. The Twisted Serpent

This is the only boarding house I've seen fit to mention other than the Dwarf (L3) in the lower city. The other places to stay in Shadow Hill are not even worth footnotes! The Twisted Serpent, however, is a strange exception.

Built by a goblin from the moon kingdoms, the very building stands out from amongst the slum that surrounds it. It's cut from imported sandstone and tiled with mosaics of lapis and blue porcelain along the outer walls. Inside, the rooms are designed to that strange moon goblin sensibility: radially, so that many wives could conceivably serve one husband.

The moon goblin who built it died long ago, but it has been refurbished in recent years by none other than Aventius the Fence, though I've never seen him nearer to it than three blocks. However, the place has running water pumped up from some deep cistern that must fill when it rains, and the price for a room is dirt cheap: two copper shields a week or eight for the month.

L17. Valzeth's Hockwares

At the very pinnacle of shadow hill stands the half-orc Valzeth's Hockwares Emporium. The building is half-warehouse half store where the brutally honest and straightforward (but quite bright!) Valzeth pawns goods that adventurers don't want, people can't afford to own any more, or that just find their way into his possession.

The shop is a dark and dingy place, more warehouse really than storefront. The only sign outside is one painted with a Varan "V," which is incidentally the same seal that Valzeth puts on all goods that make their way through his hands.

Inside the store you'll feel as though you were standing in Valzeth's own home: as, in fact, you are! Some of the things you see are not for sale; his furniture for one, and his trophies for another. Don't even bother asking the price of the preserved beholder! However, everything else is merely for the asking; whether Valzeth wants to part with it or not will determine its price.

I sometimes wonder if such a strong and well-armed half-orc could possibly avoid being involved in the unsavory business of the underworld in Miles... and then I remind myself that it's best not to ask.





CULTURE OF MILES

A city as old and powerful, as storied and colorful, as Miles develops a culture all its own. You could almost say that the entire culture of the Milean Empire (first, second, and third!) is descended from the urban life of Miles itself. The ancient taboos of the southmen, for example, ascribe a certain horror to the bodies of the dead. No dead may be interred within Miles, and indeed it is one of the strange facets of Milean culture that they burn their bodies to ash and bury or commemorate not the whole form but the urn alone.

The city, being massive, can only be kept fed with use of the grain doles and the public festivals decreed by the emperor. The Master of Revels thus plays an immensely important role in both the feeding of the city and maintaining the happiness of its citizens. It's a rare month that goes by in Miles without a procession, religious festival, or other celebration such as a joust or *melée* outside the walls.

Milean culture also has a much more open and accepting attitude towards sex than most of the non-Milean kingdoms of the north. I believe they took it from Aellon and Llernea, which are now vanished from the world. For Mileans, sex is not a thing to be ashamed of. Whereas in skinchanger lands a woman who went into public nude might be beaten and cast out of her family, public nudity is (if not common) acceptable in the city and all the places where Mileans once ruled. Brothels and whorehouses are embraced as necessary and healthful when properly maintained, and sexual license amongst those who have already been married once is complete and free. There are no negative judgements associated with homosexual love (as can be found, for example, in the Moon Kingdoms where goblins displaying homosexual affections are generally gutted publicly), and the age of sexual maturity is considered widely to be twelve.

Another strange Milean practice is the construction of *semul* statues. My close friend Ceylon the Thoughtful (a monk of Quilian Knowais, if you must know!) has hypothesized that

this bizarre totemic symbolism has given rise to the modern art of heraldry. For you see, in the empire it is common for noble families to "guard" their estates and houses with symbolic animals carved from stone. These are said to be blessed by Tuwayne and imbued with tutelary spirits. While there was a time when *semul* statues were animals alone, I have seen plants and even inanimate objects with the blessing of Tuwayne inscribed upon them.

You'll find no noble's door-frame and probably none of the old Milean tenement houses either, without a *semul* guardian to drive away evil spirits. I've heard it said that this is one of the reasons that vampiric spirits cannot enter a home without first being invited!

As for Milean garments, they tend to prefer knee- or ankle-length tunics. The wealthy wear velvets, embroidered and woven with intricate figures and gemstones, while the poorer Milean folk wear simple, short tunics and breeches. Long *robelike* garments are common amongst those seeking to give themselves weight and gravity (such as high nobles and imperial officials) and these are commonly paired with cloaks, mantles, and hosen. Belts are also extremely important in Miles, as they denote knights and officials based on their paneling. Golden belts are the standard amongst knights (hence the common term "belted knight") and those without are hardly knights at all!



GODS OF THE CITY

As you can probably tell by the preceding chapters and the immense number of temples in this, the mother city of Miles, religion is extremely important to Mileans. Other than the Necromancer (who's worship is outlawed in every sane land in the north), all cults are free to practice their worship within the city unless they breach the laws of the land.

Many cults have a sharp division between the outer cult (anyone from off the street) and the inner cult (those who eschew all other gods to follow just one). Those pledged to the inner cults are generally allowed into the secret parts of the temple, to worship at special altars, and given access to services not normally available (healing and magic, for one)!

The most important gods worshipped in Miles are:

Aros/Anunia

Greater god, CG
Wind, arts, poetry, fury

Aros is the creator-deity of the elves and one of the four gods known as the Quartos (the four brothers Eiri, Aros, Vodei, and Haeron, born in that order). He's a lusty power who loves to interfere in the everyday workings of the world though his younger brother Haeron often forbids it!

Known as the Wind Lord and the Silver Poet, Aros is also the patron of the four winds. Sailors sometimes worship him, and poets often do as well. He is furious when roused and protects his children the elves with a zeal bordering on madness, but he can be a strong ally as well.

I particularly enjoy Arodians; they have a sense of adventure and they enjoy a good wine as much as I do! Aros seems to be a fairly likable fellow, even if he does tend to lose control of himself but, as a god, who would ever challenge him over it?

Akem

Intermediate God, LN
Death

The Silent Lord and the Keeper of the Seven Gates, Akem ensures that all things which die stay dead, as best as it is in his power. He is the master of the City of the Dead and the psychopomp that leads the spirits of the fallen down through the Seven Gates to that realm where they await judgement by their chosen deities.

Akem is a harsh master, forbidding the return of things that have perished by the dictum "Cursed is he who troubles the dead, for the gates of death are closed," (The Papyrus of Anki, Third Book of the Dead). He despises necromancers in all shapes and sizes and his priests are sworn to destroy all undead and reanimated spirits on sight.

Akem and his sort are a grim but necessary bunch. They patrol the borders of death and prevent powerful magics

from breaching them (too much). I wouldn't want to share a meal with them, but neither would I do without them and their dark business.

Avauna

Intermediate Goddess, NG
The sun, light, healing

Avauna is the goddess of light and the creator of the Lamp of the Sun. She is also the inventor of medicine; known as the Healer, the Everyyoung, the Daystar, her Lightbearers and Sunsworn are kindly folk who tend to the ill and attempt to alleviate the suffering of the world.

She was once among the most powerful goddesses but her feud with Galos (who has ended up her husband, but the course of true love never ran smooth!) cost her that. She has lost her position, but not her kindness.

Avauna's priests are almost universally good folk. They tend to the sick without compunction or fear and she encourages them to do all manner of good deeds. The world is a brighter place for her.

Eiri the Earthfather

Greater God, LG
Mining, gems, crafting, adventuring

The creator god of the dwarves and the eldest of the Quartos, Eiri is husband to Helden Stonemother who helped him shape the dwarves in the earliest Ages. He is a craftsman, an artisan, an explorer, and a wanderer.

As such, his creations seem to share in many of his attributes. Like Eiri they are stoic and withdrawn but value craftsmanship above almost all things. His is the staunchness of the earth, and he has imparted it to the children of his labor.

I've never really cared much for Eiri; his priests, like the dwarves, are all dour creatures. Dwarves have never got on well with me, perhaps because of my penchant for going off about a topic and discussing it for hours. They seem to find my manners uncouth and loud, while I find them to be rude and withdrawn.

Eleia

Intermediate Goddess, NG
Spring, rebirth, midwives, fertility, farming

Eleia is the harvest goddess, the Spring Maiden who dies every autumn to be revived at the beginning of the next year. She is a kindly goddess and her worship is much beloved by farmers and herdsman everywhere.

Her cult is powerful in almost every society, though disorganized as she herself has little desire for temporal power beyond the ability to help those lesser folk that are in need. She is a favorite of midwives and other healers who work closely with childbirth.

Eleia is one of the kindest goddesses there is, and her priests are good down-to-earth folk. They know the endless cycles of the seasons always give way to spring again, which is an attitude I respect!

Galos/Lumia

Intermediate God, CG

Magic, divination, prophecy, astrology, stars

Galos made the stars in the heavens and also the forces of magic that encircle Arunia, pulsing through the green stones that we call emeralds. He and Avauna once persecuted a bitter feud which led to his physical entrapment in the world and his eventual defeat in the Eighth Age here in Miles itself! He has since been rehabilitated, and the blind seer has returned to the heavens to marry Avauna.

His priests are a mysterious lot, reclusive and prone to strange pontifications. They wear ivory masks that obscure their faces and mumble in half-heard voices. His temple is extremely mysterious and, if he hadn't secured the worship of most wizards and magicians simply through the fact that he is the guiding force behind magic in the world, I'm sure he would be a much weaker power.

Galos is not a god for me. His priests are strange, he himself is arrogant and smarmy, and I'd much rather study under the praise of a wizard-god like Topaz!

Haeron

Greater God, LG

Smithcraft, Law

Haeron is the youngest of the Quartos and yet has established himself as the mightiest. He's the head of the mannish pantheon and his word is literally law! That's not to say that he is unused to mercy, for he teaches that the law exists not to punish but to correct, not to condemn but to persuade. His golden dictates form the basis of all Milean legal procedures.

His priests are likewise extremely powerful, being integrated into the very justice system of the empire itself. The underpinnings of Hieriean faith hold up Miles and the right of emperors to rule over other men.

Haeron has decreed that the gods should not make war on the mortal plane lest they risk destroying the worshipers they strive to protect; though many of the gods deny him in secret, few are powerful or brash enough to do so where he may see and mete out punishments.

Heimir

Lesser God, CG

Hospitality, brewing, jokes

Heimir is the brewer-god, often depicted as a monk in a brown robe. His are the brewing-brothers of the Order of Heimir and he too protects all guests. Many inns have shrines

to Heimir, and many homes as well. It is he who established the guest-right, which says that you may not expect violence in a house where you have eaten. He too is the jester king amongst mannish gods (though I prefer Pogrillius myself!) and acts to lighten the mood of all sacred occasions.

He is as interfering as Aros, and the two often get up to tricks together, meddling with the world in order to put things right.



Heimir seems to be harmless enough, and his dictum that all his monks must do what they can to be hospitable to others is a joyous one. Guest-right is important as well, and I think valued highly by all gnomes and not just myself.

Leesha Roseheart

Greater Goddess, NG
Farming, halflings, adventure

Leesha Roseheart is the mother of halflings and gnomes, and wife of Topaz Firegem the gnomish god of magic. She is the halfling patroness of farms and farmers and her familiar spirit (the silver cat) is said to bring good luck and bounty to all it visits. For this reason, no halfling will harm a cat and silver cats especially are never hindered in any way. If you ever encounter a bowl of milk on a halfling's doorstep, you can reckon it was left there for Leesha's silver cat.

She's a bit of a prankster, too, and its said she's had many affairs behind Topaz's back, particularly with the hero-god Pogrillius Tosskobble (the halfling god of pranks and jests). While she may not be prevalent in the city, halflings everywhere love Leesha and it is rare to see a halfling home without at least one woodcut or icon of the heart entwined with roses that is her sign.

Quill

Intermediate God, LG
Scholarship, knowledge, writing

Quill (or Quilian Knowais as he's known to us gnomes) is the patron of books and writing and his temples often double as libraries. He is well-known throughout Miles and is actually one of the principle gods of the gnomish pantheon. His worshipers tend to be sober and logical, and his worship is encouraged in places with large populations of scholars.

Quill is a respectable god but his priests and temples are too somber for me. I like some laughter and some joy in my day, and the long faces of scholars are generally not prone to any untoward motion of the jaw!

Eminea

Intermediate Goddess, CN
Nature, wilderness, the moon

Eminea (also Senia to the elves) is the goddess who made the Dish of the Moon. Druids worship her along with Aloran and nature itself in their secluded groves. She is a strange and mysterious goddess who's only reasons for acting are those pertaining to the movements of nature.

I think that Eminea is related to the moon flow of women as well, and her powers extend over madness and skinchangers. Either way, she is the unpredictable incarnation of nature itself and I myself wouldn't stand between her and her prey!



Tallial

Lesser God, CE
War, fire, pestilence

Tallial the War-herald. Tallial the Blazing. Tallial the Insane. This god is a blight upon mankind, reigned in only by his master Haeron, like a dog on a leash. He is without mercy, sanity, or even a drop of kindness. His very presence is a blight as he encourages discord, war, and murder wherever he goes. I suppose the evils of the world must find mirrors in the heavens; if so, Tallial must be the balance for a great many evils.

Luckily he has no priests of his own in the empire. Shrines to him may exist (in the Aedium and the Lawkeeper's Temple)

but he has little influence beyond the prayers sent to him on the eve of battle.

Vaela

*Lesser Goddess, LN(G)
Roads, travelers*

The roadwarden is the patron goddess of the Sacred Heralds and though she has no official priesthood, her shrines dot the countryside all over Arunia. Along any road or trail, you can find an old but much-loved roadshrine depicting the Pilgrim with her staff in one hand and her shield by her feet.

She is technically a servant of Haeron, but prayers to her need no intermediaries. Many inns and taverns bear small shrines to Vaela, and most people send a prayer to her any time they begin a new venture or are about to embark upon a journey.

I myself have been known to pray to Vaela when the occasion has warranted it, even though most smallfolk wouldn't think of sending prayers to the Pilgrim rather than the Roseheart. Still, while Leesha may be sweet and gentle and good, Vaela is strong and stalwart.

DEMIHUMANS OF MILES

The city of Miles has a large minority of races other than men residing within its walls. Iron, green, and blue dwarves can all be found there as can wind elves, all three types of halfling (sterk, talsam, and harvoet) and rock and forest gnomes in abundance.

The dwarves, being insular, once had their own community within the city, centuries ago. The walls between the dwarven ring-town of Smithsveirr and Miles were long ago torn down as the city spread but an abundance of dwarven architecture (in both stone and wood) can be found near Metalsmith's Circle.

Valdis, just outside the Gate of the Shipwrights, is an enclave of gnomes, both rock and forest, who devote themselves to industry (particularly ships and wagons) and farming. There are a number of halflings living throughout Miles as well though they tend to be more numerous in and around Peasant and Shadow Hill.

The elves of Miles tend to congregate in the wilder portions of the city where the buildings press less closely and there are still some green things to be found. I don't believe I know a single wood elf that lives in the city, but there are wind elves aplenty!

Dwarves

The dwarves of miles settled on the north-western side of Pillar Hill sometime in the Fourth or Fifth Age. As iron dwarves do, they took a colony stone from their ancestral home and built a ringwall around their town. However, as the city grew, it incorporated the original settlement of



Smithsveirr and by an imperial decree the wall was broken apart, I assume to be used as building material.

The dwarves of Miles generally come from one of the six clans in the city, which are:

Type	Clan
Iron	Balsmið
Iron	Thalmir
Iron	Gulhar
Green	Eyrox
Green	Hjorrsmið
Blue	Vatnfar

The most common clan-name of all the dwarves in the empire is that of Gulhar or Goldenhair. These iron dwarves tend towards lighter hair colors as their name suggests, but they are also very numerous in Auruxol where their clan-stronghold is located.

As in any land, iron dwarves in the empire are reclusive and withdrawn. They prefer artisanal work to any other occupation and tend to live in multi-generational homes. These can be seen throughout the city and are characterized by their large size and shadowed porches or porticos that generally run all around the exterior of the house. While iron dwarves prefer to build in stone, you'll find wooden halls and manors as well.

The green dwarves of the city are invariably from one of two clans: the Silveraxe (Eyrox) or Swordsmiths (Hjorrsmiðr). They live much as normal Mileans do, having long since abandoned the ancient green dwarf precepts of the defended clan-hall.

The blue dwarves of Miles reside on River Hill in a single settlement of shipworkers and explorers known as the *via vatanum* (“river street” in a mishmash of both Varan and the dwarven tongue).

Gnomes and Halflings (the Smallfolk)

The smallfolk generally like to find themselves in out-of-the-way places. We aren’t keen to have many eyes upon us, and that is perhaps why we often end up in slums with farmers and the poor. This is true in Miles as well: Valdis is, sadly, a dense town of poorly constructed wooden and canvas buildings and many of the less structurally sound parts of Peasant’s Hill are inhabited by halflings. Close to the southern wall you might be able to find a few streets with turf-roofed buildings (or even some that are completely under-the-hill as we smallfolk call it) but they’re the exception rather than the rule.

We smallfolk serve in whatever roles we can when we settle alongside men. Our stature often leads to the tallfolk underestimating us, and many of us smallfolk can move quietly without being observed. I suppose this causes us to gravitate naturally to roles in the criminal underworld, much as I lament it!

The smallfolk community outside Valdis is fractured and fragmented, without a central locus or any sort of gathering places. Oh, there are a few halfling taverns I could name on Peasant Hill, but those only service the folk on that side of the city.

Smallfolk do like to stick together, though. Halflings may trust men more than gnomes, but both races tend to trust each other more readily.

Elves

The only elves that have settled permanently in Miles that I know of are all from the city-dwelling tower-building branch of their race known as the wind elves. They are a graceful people who dislike narrow lanes and the profusion of buildings common in most mannish cities, of which Miles is no exception.

Wind elven cities are themselves garden-like, vast, and sprawling with many green lawns and woods between the huge manor-houses and elvish towers. Thus, they tend to live in the places most like that within Miles; on the far side of Wyrms’ Hill, in and around Wizard’s Hill, and along the edges of Pillar Hill. They don’t have much of a community per se, though they certainly see each other from time to time at the Temple of the Four Winds or in passing.

Elves tend to eschew the filth and closeness of the cities’ poorer quarters, however. Most of the elvish immigrants are wealthy merchants, scholars, and noble-poets who have little reason to linger in those places as a matter of course.

That’s not to say that there’s no elves involved in the criminal underworld or that they don’t suffer misfortune in the same way as others, of course! I hear Aventius the Fence has recruited a small troupe of elvish enforcers who are skilled at magic and swordsmanship both.







AREWELL and Good Luck



Adventurers, I hope these pages prepare you for the dangerous lifestyle that you've chosen. There's no greater city than Miles in all the world, and no better place to get started on the road to adventure. Make certain you tread softly on the toes of the powerful and keep your swords drawn if any occasion sends you down into the Milean sewers (for they conceal more than this book could ever hold!)

Look to your friends and allies, particularly the friendly temples and the Knight's Watch. Make certain that you take some of your payment in advance, and don't skimp on details when devising your company Charter — the blowhard Reynarius di Llun has written an entire book on adventuring charters!

Keep your hands near your purses, and your eyes peeled, for a thousand traps wait to ensnare the unwary in the Mother of Cities... but know, too, that you may someday be a great noble lord like those on Pillar Hill, or a member of the Conclave like yours truly! For adventurers do not respect the boundaries of society—no! We break them and master them, transcend them and make them our own!

—Hamish Letterfriend

