

FEVER-DREAMING MARLINKO

A CITY ADVENTURE SUPPLEMENT FOR LABYRINTH LORD

By: CHRIS KUTALIK



Fever-Dreaming Marlinko

A City Adventure Supplement for Labyrinth Lord

Dedicated to Papi for the storytelling and dreams (both fever and not) and to Mimi for Narnia and the books.

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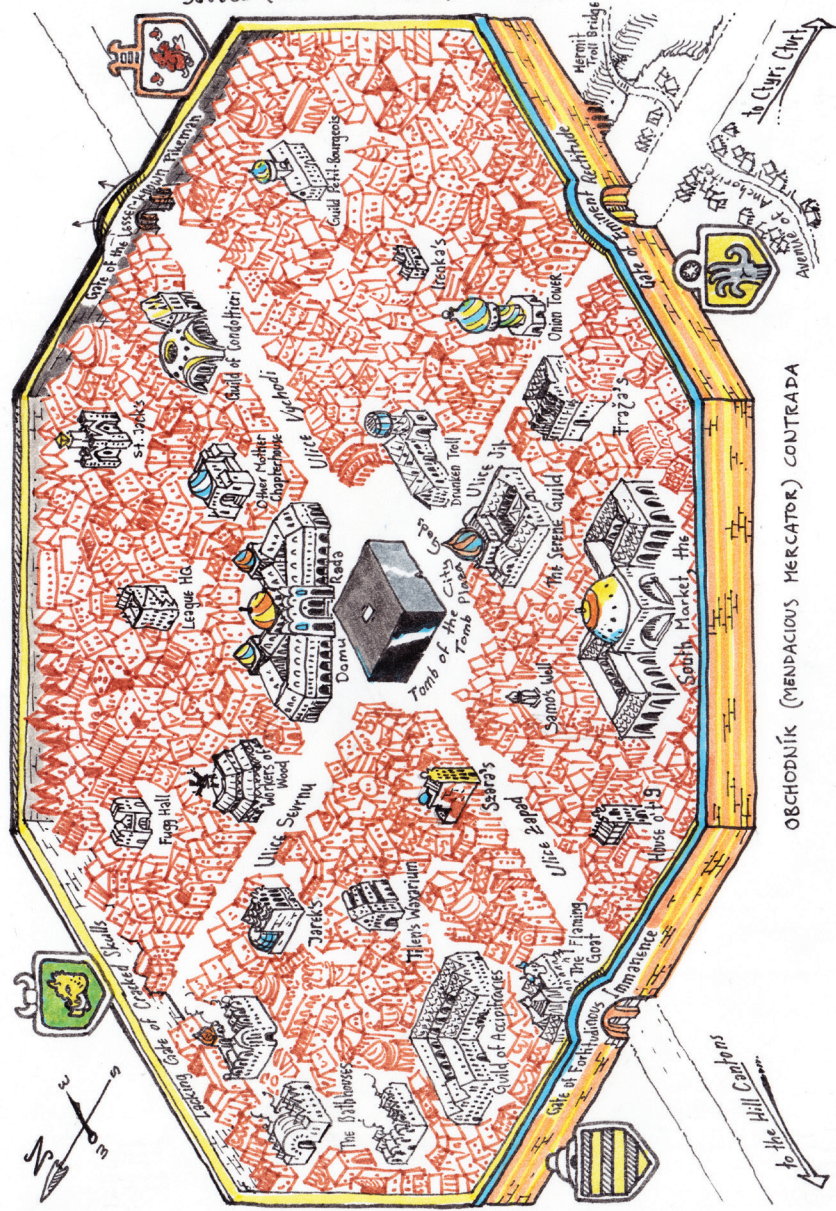
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SVINĚ (GOLDEN SWINE) CONTRADA

SOUJCE (MARE DOMESMAN) CONTRADA



VČELAR (SVLEN APIARIAN) CONTRADA

OBCHODNÍK (MENDACIOUS MERCHANTS) CONTRADA

WELCOME TO THE CITY

Fever-Dreaming Marlinko was designed to create a more directly adventurable location than the traditional city setting book (though it retains much of that “here's a place to buy goods and services and meet some NPCs” orientation). As such, the Labyrinth Lord will find that many mundane details of city life that you will find in traditional fantasy city guides (like building by building details on deadly dull shops and crafts) are de-emphasized or ignored altogether.

The hooks and locales in the city were designed and run as both pace-changing 1-2 session urban adventures between longer dungeon/wilderness delves, and as a central hub for exploring the surrounding region, especially that of the nearby Slumbering Ursine Dunes (a wilderness sandbox module also set in the world of Zëm, available now).

A MARLINKO INTERLUDE

In his landsknecht finery, the elf Ba Chim makes his way to the purple-spired compound of the Serene Guild of Seers, Augurs, Runescasters and Wainwrights to present his query—and hard cash—to a master oracle.

Pushing his way through the cacophony of the outer courtyard, where apprentice seers gabble in high-pitched voices and strident shrieks to the cheaper clientele, and then past the even louder din of the inner courtyard where journeymen wainwrights noisily repair wagons (this guild having merged recently and seemingly inexplicably in a marriage of convenience), he finally stands in the cool, dark confines of the inner sanctum.

His elfin eyes quickly adjust to the murkiness, and he makes out a single, white-robed woman on a tall-backed, bronze-enameled chair suspended over a vapor-filled chasm. Though placidly chatting with the blue-attired attendant, she begins to writhe and moan upon Ba Chim's entry. The attendant steps forward and takes the sacks of gold from Ba Chim's hand.

From the darkness above, a booming, hollow voice demands, “WHAT DO YOU SEEEEEK?”

Ba Chim replies: “Where is the tip of the sword Fauxbringer located, and what must be done to restore the sword to its full powers?”

The oracle begins to sway side to side melodramatically, shouting: “VIAKHANA Xitchol! Serpadon! Cuccagna! NATAS!” and then breaks in with a monotone, “What is a stick that is not a stick? When is a rock not...”

The attendant hurriedly interrupts her. Ba Chim can make out over the attendant's stage whisper that he is urgently saying “full rate.” The oracle abruptly stops and says in a perfectly clear, normal-toned voice: “Oh, well, you can find the sword in the underground level under the Tower of the Master in the Slumbering Ursine Dunes. Cirl the Petulant left it sitting on a worktable right next to the magical forge that can repair it. Cirl was slain for reneging on a gambling debt by a blue-skinned giant apparently before he could complete his task.”

“Next!”

While a cautious party of low-level adventurers can interact and survive contact with most of what this work throws at them, it was primarily intended for parties with 4-7 player characters with combined levels of 12-18. A number of hirelings and henchpeople are presented to add extra muscle. It should be noted that Lady Szara and the mini-dungeon under her manse will give even a party at the high end of this scale a run for their money (and potentially pay out very well).

Game masters should familiarize themselves with features like the Chaos Index (p. 43) and the Hooks and News section (p. 21) before running the adventure.

THE FOUR CONTRADAS OF MARLINKO

Marlinko (or Marlink if you prefer the Nemic exonym) is a bustling, smallish city of about 7,000, and council seat of the Marlinko Canton. It is the southernmost town-sized settlement in the Overkingdom before civilization peters off into pure howling wilderness. Though prosperous due to its role as a trade hub for the distant civilized lands of the South, Marlinko is deeply infected by its relative isolation and proximity to the Weird. As such, life there takes on a strange dream-logic cast, even by the standards of the rest of the borderlands.

Marlinko was built around the squat, black bulk of the Tomb of the Town Gods, a structure that predates the rest of the city by an interminably long period of time. The ominous edifice sitting in its wide, cobblestoned, circular plaza has retained its position as the dead (no pun intended) center of the city. Four wide avenues radiate from it at the cardinal points and divide the city into four contradas, or quarters.

The four contradas do not reflect merely geographic or class divisions, but have deeply embedded cultural and psycho-geographical lives of their own. Each contrada organizes its own festivals, keeps its own histories, and pays fearful homage to the abstract-featured idol of its own unique “town god.”

Each contrada also maintains its own contrada hall, a large, well-maintained, ceremonial gathering place where it keeps a collection of its own unique banners, ceremonial regalia, historical tapestries, mummies, and most importantly, the various trophies it has won in the single most important city-wide bi-annual event: the great chariot race that headlines the Ebon Horse Fair. Throughout the year, contrada trainers keep their chosen condemned convict-jockey revved up and ready for the Black Race. It is well that they do, for the losers are hanged while the winner earns a contrada trophy and freedom!

VČELAR (SULLEN APIARIAN) CONTRADA

The Northwestern Quarter, with its great yellow-and-black beehive and mopey deodand emblazoned banner, contains the greatest concentration of affluence and easy living in the city. The great painted-plastered town-manses of the wealthy dominate the coveted plaza and avenue fronts in this part of town.

Despite its wealthy cast, the contrada has a deeply-ingrained inferiority complex—due in large part to its century-long losing streak in the Black Race. The loss has become a self-fulfilling prophesy in recent years, as convict-jockeys regularly commit suicide rather than serve out what they consider to be a foregone death sentence. Roving gangs of youths from respected

families are quick to draw rapiers against any slight, as if to compensate for the wound to their civic honor.

AROUND THE CONTRADA...

The Manse of the Lady Szara. An opulent townhouse on a row of equally opulent houses, home to the decadent Lady Szara (NPCs of Note, p. 18). A small dungeon lies beneath. See Adventure Site 1 (p. 23) for more information.

The Guild of Accipitraries, Drovers, and Ankle-Beaters. Run by Hurloj Kladivo (NPCs of Note, p. 20), a good place for the sale or training of animals. Be wary of kidnapping his offspring. The guild can dangle several adventure hooks by offering to pay bounties for the capture of live specimens or eggs of hippogriffs, giant hawks or other bestial monsters.

Jarek's Manse and Tiger Pit. A three-story elaborately (and not terribly tastefully) stuccoed town manse houses Jarek the Nagsman (NPCs of Note, p. 20) and his servants. Jarek has replaced the gardens in back with a domed all-weather tiger pit and seating area.

Bathhouses. Three immense bathhouses — the tidy Punctilious Polevik, the seedy-chic Black Pomegranate and the dimly-lit Mongotarium — serve as popular centers for business and hanky panky in the city. The three bathhouses are built over several hot springs in the north-western quarter. Half-ogre masseuses and cave dwarf towelboys wait on your every need. And by every need, we of course mean rough, joyless handjobs.

The Flaming Goat. A rather seedy inn just inside the West Gate. The halushky ranges from poor to offal quality, but the white gravy is decent enough to keep a clientele for the lunch crowd. Though the room prices are quite a bargain at 8 sp per night — especially given the strong and artfully-hopped pilsners and ale brewed on site — sharing the long communal beds with 1d6 random peddlers, cutthroats, law students, and other vagabonds can be off-putting.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Roll d20 twice per day, or when first entering a contrada daily.

Včelar Random Encounters

1d20	Encounter
1-5	No encounter / mundane
6-9	Large crowd
10-12	Young rakes
13	Flirts
14	Pedants
15	Drunken boors
16	Kytel the Duellist
17	Escaped tiger (Old Slinky Panc)
18	Borko, Collector of Pollens
19	Maus
20	Lady Szara's servant, Kugel the Wight

ENCOUNTER DESCRIPTIONS

No Encounter / Mundane: If at night or in an alley there is no encounter, if during the day there is mundane foot traffic (craftsmen, servants, etc).

Large crowd: Large crowd of normal fucking people.

Young rakes: 2d6 young rakes. They will, at the minimum, taunt and jeer the party if they aren't sworn members of the contrada.

Young Rakes: AC: 8 leather jack, Hp: 3, 0-level, Attk: 1, rapier 1d8, XP: 5.

Flirts: 1d6 flirts. If party is carousing, there is a 35% chance that a random PC wakes up to a shotgun wedding the next day. Add 25% to the nuptials probability if the Chaos Level is 6 and higher.

Pedants: 1d8 pedants. 65% chance that the group will be squabbling over a detail of Sun Lord theology, legal theories, or fashion with another group (roll again on encounter chart to determine rival group, including the tiger). 40% chance that this will end in bloodshed.

Pedants: AC: 9, Hp: 2, 0-level, Attk: 1, cudgel 1d4, XP: 5.

Drunken boors: 2d6 drunken boors. Will descend on party and demand they drink with them. Will not let them talk without interruption.

Kytel the Duellist. A richly-mustachioed, foppishly-dressed, semi-professional duelist who is hopelessly bored. He wagers 50 gp that he can draw first blood in single combat.

Kytel: AC: 5 half-plate, Hp: 15, 3rd-level fighter, Attk: 1, sabre 1d8+2 from STR, XP: 65.

Escaped tiger, Old Slinky Panc. There is a 65% chance that he is drugged and quite harmless. Killing him will enrage Jarek the Nagsman (NPCs of Note, p. 20).

Old Slinky Panc: AC: 6, Hp: 13, HD: 4, Attk: 3 (2 claws, 1 bite) 1d4 x 2, 1d6, XP: 135.

Borko, Collector of Pollens, accompanied by 1d6 rakes. Borko is ranked as a Sullen Apiarian ceremonial society official and demands a "voluntary donation to the contrada commonweal" of 5 gp per party member. Not paying the tithe will result in -2 reactions for all encounters in the contrada until restitution is made at the contrada's hall.

Borko: AC: 5 half-plate, Hp: 15, 2nd-level fighter, Attk: 1, polearm 1d10, XP: 20.

Young Rakes: AC: 8 leather jack, Hp: 3, 0-level, Attk: 1, rapier 1d8, XP: 5.

Maus. A wild-eyed paranoid dressed in the long-robed, woolen hat finery of a rustic boyar. Maus rants and raves at the characters about the "Axis of Tindrthurn," a secret postal and matchmaking service that he claims is trying to kill him. If the Chaos Level is 6 or greater, he is correct on all counts.

Maus: AC: 8 padded, Hp: 6, 0-level, Attk: 1, dagger 1d4, XP: 5.

Kugel the Wight. Lady Szara's servant (NPCs of Note, p. 18) , Only at night, otherwise re-roll. He will follow the party and attempt to kill them in a dark or isolated space.

Kugel the Wight: AC: 5, Hp: 19, HD: 3, Attk: 1, drain life energy, XP: 110.

RANDOM BUILDINGS

If the Labyrinth Lord should find herself in need of a quick structure for a heist or other adventureable locale, each contrada is provided with a table of typical buildings unique in feel and type to that city quarter.

Včelar Random Encounters

1d20	Building
1	Walled garden
3	Covered food market
3	Abandoned/burned-out townhouse
4	Squalid subdivided rowhouse
5-7	Small two-story whitewashed townhouse
8-9	Teetering black-stained wood townhouse
10-12	Stucoed stone rowhouse
13-14	Elaborately-painted manse
15	Campy faux meadhall
16	Quaint little inn
17	Cockfight pit
18	Literary salon/lotus powder den
19	Marbled bathhouse
20	Major guild hall

OBCHODNÍK (MENDACIOUS MERCATOR) CONTRADA

The southwestern contrada of the city, with its great golden seal depicting a grasping human hand styled in mauve and silver, oversees most daily business in the city. The sprawling, bustling South Market with its countless booths and scams is the commercial heart of the center.

AROUND THE CONTRADA...

Fražá's Brokerhouse. Fraža (NPCs of Note, p. 20) the freakishly-honest dealer in curios has his showroom here—a good place to experience the novel situation of selling without being robbed.

The South Market. Arcaded mall where you can buy mundane equipment and services from the rows of booths.

The Serene Guild of Seers, Augurs, Runecasters and Wainwrights. For 4,000 gp answers are given in clear, parseable language. 1,000 gp will buy answers in cant, with an occasional admission of ambiguity. 500 gp will buy you a parable based on the life and work of our dear Sun Lord to be interpreted as you will, and 100 gp will buy you babble in an unknown tongue.

Townhouse of the Nine. The now mostly-abandoned digs of a not-terribly well-regarded (at least locally) adventurer's group is here. The windows and doors are boarded over and slogans too obscene to share here are painted inside. The smell of stale urine from piss buckets wafts from inside. A small concertina, a silver dog brush (worth 20 gp), a vial of robo-dwarf lubricant, an incoherent religious tract about a "Barge-God," and a small-sized set of landsknecht hose are semi-concealed in a largish hole in the floorboards.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Roll d20 twice per day or when first entering a contrada daily.

Obchodník Random Encounters

d20	Encounter
1-6	No Encounter / Mundane
7-11	Large crowd
12	Flirts
13-14	Pickpockets
15	Dancing drunks
16	Horse traders
17	Hairless hustler
18	"Doctor" Otto Filandrus
19	Agent Xoxx
20	Biserka

ENCOUNTER DESCRIPTIONS

No Encounter / Mundane: If at night or in an alley there is no encounter, if during the day there is mundane foot traffic (craftsmen, servants, etc).

Large crowd: Large bustling crowd of normals.

Flirts: 1d6 flirts. If party is carousing, there is a 35% chance that a random PC wakes up to a shotgun wedding the next day. Add 25% to the nuptials probability if the Chaos Level is 6 and higher.

Pickpockets: 1d6 pickpockets. 25% chance that they will attempt to pickpocket a party member. Duh.

Pickpockets: AC: 8, Hp: 3, 1st-level thief, Attk: 1 (weapon), dagger d4, XP: 10.

Dancing drunks: 3d6 dancing drunks. Will insist, really insist that the party dances with them in a boot-scoot line dance for 1d6 turns.

Horse traders: 1d6 horse traders. Will attempt to sell a string of 1d4+1 shaggy steppe ponies for 30 gp apiece. 70% chance that the ponies are either lame or stolen.

Hairless hustler: A hairless hustler will offer to sell some “hot goods.” He opens his wide leather cloak to reveal two heavy dull-looking silver bars that are quite warm to the touch. Stating that they are worth 200 gp to a local alchemist (true) he will offer to sell them for 50 gp as “they fell off the back of a wagon.” The bars were stolen from Fraža (NPCs of Note, p. 20). Handling the bars outside of a lead container for more than two hours produces a virulent skin cancer that kills in 1d6 weeks unless treated with *Cure Disease* (LL p. 21) or *Heal* (LL p. 23).

Hairless Hustler: AC: 8 leather, Hp: 2, 1st-level thief, Attk: 1 (weapon), short sword d6, XP: 10.

“Doctor” Otto Filandrus: “Peddler of salves, unguents, ointments and balms.” Will attempt to sell the party various hoax and cursed potions for 50-200 gp. Strangely the blood-apricot, gorgon-scrappings and burr enema he sells for 75 gp seems to actually cure diseases 60% of the time. If confronted, will throw a flash-powder bomb to cover his escape (save vs *blindness* [AEC p. 49] in 10' radius).

Doctor Filandrus: AC: 8 leather, Hp: 8, 3rd level mountebank (see *New Classes*, p. 63), Attk: 1 (weapon), long sword d8, flash-powder bomb blinds in 10' radius, XP: 65.

Agent Xoxx: Tall, thin-boned, with a comical high-piled turban and veil, this Eld spy seems to miraculously escape scrutiny from jaded Marlinkians. He will ask in a thick accent whether you “know if Serene Guild of Cloak-Men, Honey-Trappers, Spies and Bay Weavers maintain local lodge.” (They do not.) If given the opportunity, Xoxx will charm and kidnap a party member to take them back to the Eld-held portions of the Glittering Tower in the Slumbering Ursine Dunes (*SUD* p. 30).

Agent Xoxx: AC: 5 silver mesh, Hp: 13, HD: 3, Attk: 1 (weapon), barbed short sword d6+1 non-magical, *Charm Person* (LL p. 28), XP: 95, *SUD* p. 44.

Biserka: Entirely-too-earnest proselytizer for the Evening Star society, heretical followers of Habeka the Celestial Lady. (For more on the Celestial Lady, see the *Hill Cantons Cosmology* p. 3.) Will shove pamphlets at the party. Potentially will hire on as a hench-person if she feels that she is recruiting to the Cause.

Biserka: AC: 8, Hp: 2, 1st-level magic user, Attk: 1 (weapon), dagger 1d4, *Shocking Grasp* (AEC p. 76), XP: 13.

RANDOM BUILDINGS

Obchodník Random Buildings

d20	Building
1	Walled garden
2-3	Warehouse
4	Slaughterhouse
5	Wrestling arena
6-8	Small-two story whitewashed townhouse
9-12	Teetering black-stained wood townhouse
13	Stuccoed stone rowhouse
14	Open-aired small vendors market
15-17	Craft workshop with family loft above
18	Semi-fortified bankers guild countinghouse
19	Striped onion-dome tower
20	Minor guild hall

SVINĚ (GOLDEN SWINE) CONTRADA

The northeastern ward, with its tusked, dolorous, golden boar's head banner on a field of teal, is by most accounts a benighted slum. It has two saving graces: 1. that most guilds and high offices maintain their halls in its precinct (including the Rada's large council hall) and 2. that it holds the most trophies for Black Race wins.

AROUND THE CONTRADA...

Catacombs of St. Jack's Church of the Blood Jesus. After three weeks of backbreaking work—under the expert supervision of the Termex the Robo-dwarf — by devotees of this imported, alien and utterly syncretistic cult, a catacomb space has been excavated by nun-maeneds under the city. The new *sparagmos* fane and exquisite ossuary sculptures are “things of beauty,” cult leader Vatek son of Vatek (NPCs of Note, p. 20 reports. See Adventure Site 2 (p. 29) for more.

The Guild of Condotierre, Linkboys, Roustabouts and Stevedores's Dome of Supernal Dealings. Marlinko is a “union town” and even the hirelings have lasting organization. The hiring of “scab” henchmen is intolerable. Scab hiring or too many hireling deaths may lead to a party being blacklisted from future hires for months, or even permanently. (For more on the practices of the guild, see **Hiring Hall Rules, p. 51**.)

The Illustrious Workers of Wood. Carpenters, cabinetmakers, joiners and all other workers of wood unite together in this one big guild. Beyond standard woodworking services, the guild has been known to occasionally sell magically-animated wooden statues of pantless barbarians (that will act under vocal commands of the owner) to “friends of labor” for 750 gp. Shipping to anywhere in the Cantons is free (see **Hiring Hall Rules, p. 51**).

Pantless Barbarian Statues: AC: 7, Hp: 9, HD: 2+2, Attk: 1, fist 1d8, XP: 59, treat as *Golem, Wood, LL p. 79*.

Brothers of the Other Mother Chapterhouse. Local chapterhouse of an Orthodox Sun Lord monastic order that promotes the veneration of a less divine “Marian” like mother-figure to the Celestial Lady. Rancorous argumentation over seemingly absurd pieces of theology is a hallmark feature of Solarity (see *Hill Cantons Cosmology* p. 2-3 for more information), but the Brothers kick it up a notch by adding a strident misogyny and dogmatic intolerance of non-believers to the mix. Still, despite the venal nature of the local chapterhouse, the Brothers of the Other Mother can be useful to player characters, providing clerical spells up to the third level for 150 gp per spell level.

League of the Free-Handed HQ. A single, rather large, teetering slum tenement looms over the squalid, beggar-infested Square of the Bog Haruspex, deep in the heart of the northeastern slums. The building houses the “public secret” headquarters of the League of the Free-Handed, an organization that is equal parts organized criminal brotherhood, secret society and mutual aid society for the city’s poorest residents. However benign or malign its various functions, nothing moves through or out of the organization if it isn’t controlled by, and to the benefit of, its head honcho, One-Armed Jiri (NPCs of Note, see p. 20).

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Roll d20 twice per day or when first entering a contrada daily.

Svině Random Encounters

d20	Encounter
1-5	No Encounter / Mundane
6-8	Beggars
9-10	Ruffians
11	Aimless tails
12-14	Hellions
15	“Hruz heads”
16	Nun-maenads
17	Danika
18	Captain Faraj
19	Fong’orr
20	Rejka the Muleskinner

ENCOUNTER DESCRIPTIONS

No Encounter / Mundane: If at night or in an alley there is no encounter, if during the day there is mundane foot traffic (craftsmen, servants, etc).

Beggars: 1d4 beggars will ask for spare silvers or coppers. Will provide decent information about the city (roll on Rumor Table) if given 1 gp or more.

Ruffians: 2d6 ruffians. “Give us what’s in your pocket.”

Ruffians: AC: 8 padded, Hp: 4, 0-level, Attk: 1 (weapon), club or dagger 1d4, XP: 5.

Aimless tails: 1d4 aimless tails. Shifty, unemployed characters who will follow the party the rest of the day. They will not work up the courage to attack or steal from the group (unless they are fully incapacitated).

Aimless Tails: AC: 9, Hp: 2, 0-level, Attk: 1 (weapon), club 1d4, XP: 5.

Hellions: 3d6 hellions. Large gang of children who will rain small paving stones and feces on the party unless they pay them off with 10 gp.

“Hruz heads”: 1d4 “hruz heads” (addicts hopped up on hallucinogenic mollusk paste) that claim to need 1d8 gp “because, see, my old lady is waiting in the wagon, and we just need us a new wheel to get to Ostrovo.”

Nun-maenads: 1d6 nun-maenads from the Cult of the Blood Jesus. Will attack and attempt to capture the party only if a) it is equal or weaker in number and b) Chaos Index is at 4 or above. Otherwise, will rant and rave at the adventurers.

Nun-maenads: AC: 7, Hp: 7, HD: 1, Attk: 2 (hands), clawed hands 1d4/1d4, +2 to attack, XP: 21, treat as *Man, Berserker, LL* p. 87.

Danika: A non-spell casting priestess of the Starry Void secret society (see *Hill Cantons Cosmology* p. 3) with dark, deep-set, piercing eyes. She rarely speaks but will quietly follow the party, and if verbally approached will say “recruit, yes?” She will accept 30 gp and serve for exactly two adventure sessions before stating “I have seen enough,” and splitting.

Danika: AC: 7 studded leather, Hp: 3, 0-level, Attk: 1 (weapon), sabre d8, three throwing stars d3, XP: 5.

Captain Faraj: One-eyed, stark-featured and mean as a hungry deodand, Captain Faraj will offer “20 shiny gold pieces to anyone with enough grit and verve to join the Marlinko Reavers [the local mercenary company].” Refusal will be met with a horrendous pile of insults comparing the characters to various naughty bits of animal anatomy. (For more on the Marlinko Reavers, see the upcoming supplement for the *By This Axe* wargame, *The Dunes Run Red*.)

Captain Faraj: AC: 5 half-plate, Hp: 15, 3rd-level fighter, Attk: 1 (weapon), sabre d8, XP: 50.

Fong’orr: Tattooed barbarian on a vision-quest from beyond the steppes. Eschews the wearing of pants. Is convinced that random party member is long-lost sibling. If Chaos Index is 4 and above, he is correct.

Fong’orr: AC: 6 battle harness, Hp: 8, 1st-level fighter, Attk: 1 (weapon), trident d8, atl-atl (treat as javelin) d6, XP: 10.

Rejka the Muleskinner: Will hail down the party with a business offer for a single monthly contract of 200 gp in exchange for his “expeditionary outfit” (3 men-at-arms, 4 pack-saddled mules, 2 porters, 1 large tent). Is surprisingly competent and on the up and up.

Rejka the Muleskinner: AC: 5 half-plate, Hp: 14, 2nd-level fighter, Attk: 1 (weapon), crossbow d6, long sword d8, XP: 20.

RANDOM BUILDINGS

Svině Random Buildings

d20	Building
1	Yawning pit filled with nightsoil and trash
2	Small domed shrine to the Sun Lord
3	Horrific-smelling tannery
4	Gambling den of iniquity
5-6	Burned-out or abandoned rowhouse
7-8	Cluster of small huts
9-15	Narrow, tall tenement building
16-17	Large old, sub-divided manse
18-19	Small open-aired market
20	Strangely prosperous stuccoed townhouse

SOUDCE (YARE DOMESMAN) CONTRADA

The southeastern quarter is (despite its rather dramatic banner displaying grotesquely fat red demonettes piloting finned sleds) a sleepy and mundane section of the city. The houses of quietly prosperous craftsmen and the shops of the middle ranks dominate the ward.

AROUND THE CONTRADA...

The Drunken Troll. An upmarket inn located just south of the Tomb-Plaza of the Town Gods. The inn’s silent owner is said by local gossips to be the infamous Yadis, an anonymous, foul-mouthed satirist. The inn is also noted as the home of local second-fiddle mage (and man of letters) Mandamus the Erudite and his companions Uma, Barbarella, and “Martin the Fighter”.

Onion Tower of the Checkered Mage. This large, brightly painted onion-domed tower is home to the city’s resident arch-mage, František (NPCs of Note, p. 19).

Herbalist Shop. Irenka, a 5th level white wizard (treat as cleric) maintains her herbal shop here. She will concoct healing potions and cures as per her level for the appropriate cost. Her handpicked and rolled 300 gp sage, lacefoam and shimmerweed smudges are said to be able to *Cure Serious Wounds* (LL p. 22). Her mustard seed and triffid purgatives (despite their current clearance sale at 15 sp) are widely reviled. For 25 gp she will sell, under the table, small bags of Marlink Gold, a powerfully soporific pipeweed said to be favored by Vilem the Arch-Druid of Svat the Four-Faced.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Roll d20 twice per day or when first entering a contrada daily.

Soudce Random Encounters

d20	Encounter
1-7	No Encounter / Mundane
6-11	Workmen
12-14	Small children
15-16	Young couples
17	Lord Pahr
18	Inept grifters
19	Li'l Pavol
20	Glamdalf

ENCOUNTER DESCRIPTIONS

No Encounter / Mundane: If at night or in an alley there is no encounter, if during the day there is mundane foot traffic (craftsmen, servants, etc).

Workmen: 2d6 rosy-cheeked, near-identical skilled workmen in their simple, long woolen robes. They sing cheerful songs of the pleasures of toil as they tromp off to work, tools in hand.

Small children: 2d6 small children gather around the party. They demurely state pleasantries, ask for nothing and seem bizarrely well-behaved. Their eyes are as old as the world.

Young couples: 2d6 young attractive healthy-looking couples stroll the street hand in hand. A straggly content air of easy happiness exudes from their every pore.

Lord Pahr: The “contrada idiot” is dressed in a bizarre assortment of velvet sashes, gold-painted epaulettes, layered tunics, and landsknecht hose that together look vaguely uniform-like. He will hoot and scamper around the party, all the while boasting of “traveling to the Space Beyond,” and issuing invitations to his next fete.

Lord Pahr: AC: 9, Hp: 1, 0-level, Attk: 1 (weapon), kitchen knife 1d3, XP: 5.

Inept grifters: Two inept grifters will attempt to run the “old balalaika” scam. The first mountebank will approach the party looking like a distinguished but poor balladeer, saying that an innkeeper will report him to the watch if he doesn’t settle his 3 gp tab, then asking the party to watch his “beloved balalaika” as he has to run home to settle a debt. Once he leaves the second grifter will come along, and in a stagey voice praise the instrument, offering 1000 gp if they bring the instrument to his rowhouse on “ulice Teplice.” The first grifter will forget to return. If the PCs take the bait, the first grifter will be lying in wait, ready to mug them.

Inept Grifters: AC: 8, Hp: 3, 1st-level mountebanks, Attk: 1 (weapon), dagger 1d4, XP: 13.

Li'l Pavol: A jovial, plump priest of the Sun Lord will offer to buy a round for the party at the Drunken Troll. After eagerly asking for tales of their adventures he will offer 20 gp for each pair of human ears the party brings to him.

Li'l Pavol: AC: 9, Hp: 4, 0-level, Attk: 1 (weapon), mace 1d6, XP: 5.

Glamdalf: Glitter streaking his fantastically permed hair, Glamdalf the Wizard will ask for directions to Irenka's herbalist shop. If the party is friendly, he will offer to accompany them on their next adventure for 100 gp. He will leave exactly 1/3rd of the way through the adventure, citing a mysterious meeting with a horseman.

Glamdalf: AC: 8, Hp: 11, 3rd-level magic-user, Attk: 1 (weapon), dagger 1d4, *Floating Disk* (AEC p. 64), *Light* (LL p. 33) and *Spider Climb* (AEC p. 77), XP: 65.

RANDOM BUILDINGS

Soudce Random Buildings

d20	Building
1	Quaint little park
2	Gaily-pained almshouse
3	Large, pleasantly-yeasty bakery or brewery
4-11	Box-like, two-story whitewashed townhouse
12	Painted, rustic-looking, wood townhouse
13	Stuccoed, stone rowhouse
14	Open-air, small vendors market
15-18	Craft workshop with family loft above
19	Onion domed tower
20	Minor guild hall

COMMON AREAS

Tomb of the Town Gods. Located in the central plaza is the squat, polished basalt bulk of this resting place of the sleeping divine founders of the city. Locals maintain that five demigods of pure, dully-glowing energy toss fitfully in their sepulchers within. Local Sun Lord clergy have made a lifetime of quietly ignoring the obvious blasphemy of such a thing existing. It is whispered that extradimensional gates lie inside, but what fool dares to explore the terrifying silence of that space?

Tomb-Plaza. The wide circular public space surrounding the tomb is the preeminent public space in the city and will, day or night, be filled with clusters of citizens, eccentrics and grifters (though that may be a redundant set of distinctions).

Avenue of Anchorites. Just outside of the South Gate is a humble dirt track where hermits and adventurers living on the cheap reside.

Domu Rada. The magnificent arcaded and white-washed hall of the Rada (town council) sits on the northeast corner of the Tomb-Plaza. While technically sitting in Golden Swine territory, the structure is open and available to the bribery and graft needs of all citizens.

Common Area Random Encounters

d4	Encounter
1	Roll on the Sullen Apiarian table (p. 6).
2	Roll on the Mendacious Mercator table (p. 9).
3	Roll on the Golden Swine table (p. 12).
4	Roll on the Yare Domesman table (p. 15).

What Do the NPCs Sound Like?

FRANTIŠEK THE CHECKERED MAGE

The wizard has a direct and vigorous manner, following the speech pattern of a country club lawyer: shaking hands and kissing the female hirelings on the cheek, but ultimately all business.

“Good to see you Taurus, staying bloody? And you, Manzafrain, looks like you lost some weight. So about your petrified friend...”

LADY SZARA

Imagine a sinister Zsa Zsa Gabor with her drawling, coy socialite hat on. The dialogue practically writes itself.

“I realllly just must have that jewelled codpiece of Radahost, just think of what a party conversation it would bring. Really it shouldn't be much to convince that hairy beast, Medved, to part with it.”

“Really dabbhh-ling, it's been ages since I've dined on a pedant. Oh yes, my sweets, of course I meant with.”

ONE-ARMED JIRI

The boss of the underworld, having had one too many mix-ups from his not-the-sharpest-sabre-in-the-armory underlings, is quick to correct and elaborate his many menacing euphemisms and veiled threats. Play him like the traditional mafia type. An occasional nod and wink to game mechanics doesn't go amiss.

“It would be unfortunate if you found yourself having an untimely accident. And of course, by that I mean 6-12 of my associates on a random, cumulative basis entering your rooms at the inn, threatening you, and then hoping to win initiative in the invariable melee that will ensue.”

FRAZA THE CURIOS DEALER

Fraza speaks in a mild tone, but most outstanding is his absolute, unfiltered (and thus freakish for the Cantons) honesty. Unfortunately he is also extremely racist, and similarly lacks any filter for his bigotry.

“While I would profit immensely by pretending this rug you want to sell me is not magical, it is and I must mark up my offer five fold. However, you are also from the Southlands, and thus I am afraid that you would move into my neighborhood or marry my daughter if you became wealthy in means, so I will only offer you twice the stated amount.”

HURLOJ KLADIVO

Hurloj is incapable of having a conversation without sounding brusque and contemptuous of his fellow man.

“Pass the white gravy, will you please, sir - that is, unless the boundless laziness that emanates from your every pore prevents you from lifting the urn too high and far.”

JAREK THE NAGSMAN

Jarek almost literally cannot finish a sentence - any sentence - without a veiled brag or name drop.

“So I was on my way to the privy - indoor plumbing, you know, just had it imported in from Lower Kezmarok after supping with the High Patriarch - and...”

GLAMDALF

“Maaaagic, hahahaha.”

NPCs OF NOTE

LADY SZARA

One of Marlinko’s leading socialites and organizer of the annual Bathe in the Blood of Your Servants Charity Ball (see p. 23). Her ostentatious, pancake make-up, beet-red rouge and dark, dramatic eyeliner hide the fact that she is in fact undead, being a particularly ancient and evil strigoi. She is a prime mover in adventure hooks, offering sums of 500-1000 gp for various curios and minor magic items to be found in the *Slumbering Ursine Dunes* and other regional dungeons (such as those found in the upcoming *Misty Isles of the Eld* and *What Ho, Frog Demons?*).

Working for her has its hazards, however. After she has paid out 2000 gp in bounties (or has felt slighted by the manners of the party in any way, being particularly thin-skinned), she will attempt to have the party killed and their wealth turned over to her. The strigoi will take out a contract with a **local assassin**. The assassin will offer his services as a hireling “off the local Guild hiring hall books”—and thus at half cost—to the party as “Patch,” a “first-level fighter henchman.” Once hired, he will wait for opportune moments to attempt to kill party members. If asked to take on any risky tasks, he will demur, citing his “bad shoulder” and “old war wound.”

Lady Szara enjoys destabilizing human society and causing pain for its own sake, a naked jaded, almost sensual malice being her main motivator. To her, conspiracy is a long, deliberate game to relish, and she has had centuries to play it.

As such, she has developed a web of alliances with a host of seemingly incongruent bed-fellows, most notably several key leaders in Marlinko's rada council and guild system. If Lady Szara has decided to turn on the party, the full infuriating force of the Marlinko bureaucracy will be turned against them in innumerable petty and aggravating ways.

More recently she has developed a close relationship to the Eld, and has aided them in minor, lazy ways in their efforts (such as allowing them safe refuge inside her manse as a local base of operations). In turn they provide her with minor treasures, unmentionable erotic favors and vicarious satisfaction in upping chaos inside the city limits.

See: p. 6, p. 8, p. 57.

Hired Assassin: AC: 6 leather + Dex, Hp: 25, 4th level assassin or thief, Attk: 1 (weapon), longbow d8 with five poisoned arrows [save or die], long sword d8, XP: 135.

FRANTIŠEK THE CHECKERED MAGE

An avuncular, athletic, clean-shaven middle-aged man, František fails to reflect the popular image of a wizard. Leveled characters are rare even in the wild borderlands, and though he doesn't look the part, František is a tremendously powerful 13th level magic user.

Characters who work their way into his good graces may gain access to his spellcasting or spell book (see p. 51). Naturally, this always comes at a price: cash on the drum and the inevitable wizard's quest to find such and such item in some long forgotten murder-hole or the like. (See Chaos Index for some possible related hooks.)

Depending on the severity of the quest and his feelings toward the character (or party), he will also invariably reduce the cash amount to a third or half the typical rate.

See p. 14, p. 31.



František the Checkered Mage

Fraža the Freakishly Honest Curio Dealer

A bone-thin man, Fraža has a reputation for deeply misguided honesty, a rare aberration in avaricious Marlinko. In fact, due to his mishandling of a particularly powerful Efreet, Fraža has no filter whatsoever on his thoughts. Unfortunately his lack of message control is coupled with a deep abiding racism, and he will tell demi-human or foreign customers and sellers alike in great detail how he “secretly” fears and hates them.

Fortunately for customers, he is deeply fascinated by all items arcane, rare and precious. More importantly, he can also be counted on to give a square deal on any and all transactions: offering exactly 1/3 of the value of any treasure, magic item or other item of interest harvested from adventure sites.

See p. 8, p. 10, p. 18.

JAREK THE NAGSMAN

Bon vivant, salon wit, and horse trader (literally), Jarek is an aging rouge-wearing playboy just beyond his prime. He also runs Marlinko’s first and only tiger wrestling arena (see p. 61.)

See: p. 6, p. 7, p. 18, p. 61.

HURLOJ KLADIVO

Supreme hard-ass that he is, Hurloj Kladivo lords over the The Guild of Accipitraries, Drovers, and Ankle-Beaters as its master. Hurloj can provide dual service as patron (hiring the party to fetch various fantastic creatures, p. 47) or as antagonist (especially if the party chooses to kidnap one of his offspring, p. 57). Hurloj also covertly controls the bandit band of Libor the Lugubrious (see p. 22) and will go to great lengths to protect that secret.

See p. 6, p. 18, p. 57.

ONE-ARMED JIRI

The greatly (and rightly) feared One-Armed Jiri is rather bland and unassuming in countenance and perversely has two functioning arms. His doughy everyman appearance masks a determined ruthless nature (and that he is a 7th level thief). Like Hurloj, Jiri can be both patron (hiring the party for various criminal tasks, p. 22) or foil (if the party finds itself stealing goods without sanction from him, p. 38). Jiri plays kingmaker in Golden Swine Contrada and consequently holds tremendous power in that quarter of the city (see p. 36).

See p. 12, p. 17, p. 22, p. 55.

VATEK SON OF VATEK. Former anti-cleric in the Anti-World Turtle demonic cult, saved and converted by the otherworldly Father Jack. He is the primary propagator of the entirely wrong Church of the Blood Jesus (see Adventure Site 2, p. 31, for further details). It’s unclear how he draws the powers of a 2nd level cleric. He is surprisingly (perhaps willfully) ignorant of the more violent side of his own sect, and will only be convinced to take action after being beaten over the head with evidence. Or just beaten over the head.

See p. 11, p. 29, p. 34.

NEWS OF THE DAY

Rumors, hooks and local color can be picked or rolled from the following table once a week or 2-3 times a week if the party is in town for the majority of that time. Because urban adventures tend to revolve more around chasing down information than the more rigorous site-to-site exploration of dungeons and wilderness, these tidbits should be used liberally to present the party with adventurable options in town. Event items should be crossed off as they come up and the result should be the next following item on the chart.

MODIFIERS

Chaos Index at 0 or lower	-5
Chaos Index at 3-5	+1
Chaos Index at 6 and higher	+2

ROLL D20

2 or less Slow News Day. Really just not much happening. How about this weather?

3 Feeling ill, battle-stricken or anxious? Seek out **Irenka the Herbalist** in the Yare Domesman contrada; she has a baggie for you. Or if you prefer to subsidize the monastic life of those devoted to our supine Sun Lord one can find the **Brothers of the Other Mother** in Golden Swine contrada to sell a spell or three.

4 Seek **Lord Pahr** in the streets of Yare Domesman contrada. He may seem a drooling fool but he secretly gleans great knowledge of the riches of the underworld. [No, he's still an idiot.]

5 Magic is to be found in the **Mongotorium bath house**. Place a bag of gold near one of the bath-servants and they will show the way. [Just no.]

6 **Glamdalf** in Yare Domesman is not by any means a great wizard, but he can provide an affordable way to add panache to your party.

7 There are deals and unusual, interesting items to be found throughout the markets of **Mendacious Mercator contrada** - but keep an eye on the merchant's thumb on the scale or other forms of easy grift. Fraža the curio dealer is, however, freakishly honest. Go to him if you want to sell something hauled out of a murderhole.

8 The Decade King of the half-ruined southern metropolis of Kezmarok is offering a 2000 gp bounty for the out-of-favor High Autarch, **Krimm the Contumelious**. It is rumored that he is hunkered down somewhere in Marlinko. [He has been *polymorphed* into a rabbit, see p. 31.]

9 Guildsmen of the **Illustrious Workers of Wood** (commonly referred to as the "Totterers") are celebrating the fifth century anniversary of their local lodge this week. A giant wicker man has been erected in the Plaza of the Horned Oracle in the **Sullen Apiarian contrada** for the festivities.

10 **The Stiffbind Circus**, a traveling troupe of mummers, nipple-pierced bears, and performing freaks, will be **running shows this week in the Tomb-Plaza of the Town Gods**. Given last year's impalement of circus members, mimicry will not be featured. [If they attend, there is a 30% chance that the party will encounter pickpockets, **p. 9**.]

11 Renowned highwayman and scoundrel, **Libor the Lugubrious**, is working the main road south of Marlinko again. The canton Rada has set a bounty of 1,000 gp for his head and 50 gp for each of his dolorous band. [Libor is a melancholy poet-warrior who will be holed up in a small cave complex near town. Treat as a bandit lair (*LL* p. 87) in terms of manpower and hoard class. Libor gives a cut of his loot to his covert patron Hurloj Kladivo (**NPCs of Note, p. 20**). If the party defeats Libor, they have gained a new enemy.

Libor: AC: 5 half-plate, Hp: 18, 3rd-level fighter, Attk: 1 (weapon), sabre d8, XP: 65.

12 Ambitious, hard-driving **Hurloj Kladivo, master of the Guild of Accipitraries, Drovers, and Ankle-Beater** (**NPCs of Note, p. 20**), is said to have a vulnerable spot: his **daughters Eliska and Matka, and his son Littlest Pavol**. Hurloj's behavior towards his strangely disappointing children is the closest he will ever come to affection. A wily kidnapper could probably net a ransom in the high thousands for their safe return. [While relatively easy to snatch any of Hurloj's children from the Kladivo townhouse, local minds underestimate the sheer ruthlessness of Hurloj. While it is true that he has emotional attachment to his children that goes beyond his usual misanthropy, he will see the stain on his honor to be of greater offense than their lives and will go to great measure to spend large sums in hiring assassins to deal with would-be kidnappers. Furthermore, Eliska is both a high-functioning sociopath and self-mutilator, while Littlest Pavol is a dreary droning 'writer' who attends the latest salons while failing to produce any work.]

13 It's a well-known public secret that the entrance to the catacombs of the bizarre alien cult **Church of the Blood Jesus** is through a humble slum tenement a few blocks behind the Golden Swine contrada hall. The passcode "**bree yark**" will keep you clear of a drubbing by the fanatical guards. [It will not.]

14 **One-Armed Jiri** (**NPCs of Note, p. 20**) has posted notices for a "sanctioned borrowing of an item of great import." The redoubtable Man Around the Underworld is offering good coin - 1,200 gp - upon completion of the job. Interested parties should present themselves to the League headquarters in the Square of the Bog Haruspex for further details. Grooming optional, but appreciated. [Jiri is interested in hiring the party to recover a seemingly-worthless bronze axe from the entrance hall of Lady Szara's (**NPCs of Note, p. 18**) townmanse (Adventure Site #1, p. 23). Doing so will naturally incur her wrath.]

15 This year's **Great Race** is expected to be tight and fiercely competitive. Pre-race sanctioned shenanigans are a time honored tradition. **Jakus the Yakholder**, Grandmaster of Hives and head of Sullen Apiarian contrada, is offering 500 gp apiece for "discrete gentlemen" who "appropriate" trophies from the well-guarded Golden Swine contrada hall (see p. 41).

16 **Steelpike the Younger**, purveyor of secrets and climber of social ladders, has been making a great show of wanting to sell a sea chart of "great and valuable material worth" for the "low, low price" of 500 gp at his digs in the Drunken Troll. [The map either shows the

safe passage charts to the *Misty Isles of the Eld* or another appropriate and difficult-to-approach coastal area in the Labyrinth Lord's campaign.]

17 Marlink bon vivants, fops, rakes and salon intellectuals are saddened by the abrupt abandonment and cancellation of Lady Szara's annual **Bathe in the Blood of Your Servants Charity Ball**. Someone really should look into that. (**NPCs of Note, p. 18.**)

18 The eastern hinterland town of **Bad Rajetz** (known as Rientzdorf by Nemeč-speakers) have stopped all exports of their renowned leather goods to Marlinko. No caravan has left the town for going on two weeks now. Rada council members and fetishists (not exclusive categories) are deeply concerned and are offering 2000 gp for someone to clear up the matter. [See the Bad Rajetz section of *What Ho, Frog Demons?*]

19 Sub-boyar **Ritek son of Ritek** is claiming to have unearthed a **500-stone beet** from his tenant farmer's field in the southlands hamlet of Ctyri Ctvrt (six miles south of town). Most strange of all is the twisted face-like blemish near the giant beet's crown. A local shepherd claims to have heard a booming voice emanate from the storage hut where it is currently housed two nights ago. [See the Beet God section of *What Ho, Frog Demons?*]

20 **Bohumir**, a salt merchant from Ostrovo (a city 40 miles to the north), has been spreading a wild tale about a wrong turn he took on a cantonal trade road ten miles southeast of Marlinko: "about 600 paces back from the crossing the hills shifted crazy abrupt. The chalk-oleander, ferns, and wild rye all just started to fade. The ground around us went from soft green to dull and dark as if you turned up a chimney on it. We started to feel weak in the knees and our heads set to spinnin'. Darkness fell on us and a distant bell rang twenty-three times. We saw a great shining palace affront of us gleaming in ivory, but boy we didn't wait to find out what might happen next. We ran like the dickens outta there." [If the party travels to the area, a gate to the Pagoda City (see the Pagoda City section of the *Misty Isles of the Eld*) will appear exactly at noon in the way described above and disappear again in 30 minutes. After this it will never appear here again.]

ADVENTURE SITE 1: LADY SZARA'S TOWN-MANSE

Beyond serving the dual role of somewhat normal(ish) place of residence and surreptitious underground strigoi lair, Lady Szara's (**NPCs of Note, p. 18**) manse also serves an epicenter of her conspiratorial machinations. If the Lady is still alive after any intrusion by the party she will call in Rada officials on the take to find the perpetrators.

FIRST APPEARANCES

Although not the roomiest or most opulent town-manse on the block, the home of Lady Szara stands a full story higher than its neighbors and is crowned with a magnificent bronze and smoky green glass comb. Running up the front side is a golden-yellow painted stucco facade with deep blood-red trim and ancient rural decorative flourishes. The avenue-facing windows are bricked and painted over. The front door gleams with its distinctive bronze facing.

1. Antechamber. A wide, deeply-polished red marble floor sweeps up to a grand open central staircase to the second floor. Standing silently at attention just behind the door is Mrtvol, the pinched looking, uniformed major domo whose elaborate, white face powder disguises the fact

that he is in fact a wight. Various knick-knacks from the Weird are displayed on gilded shelves including a gold-leafed, foot-long model of the Golden Barge (worth 200 gp), the head of a lammasu in a briny jar (worth 300 gp), hideous “so nouve” gilded statuettes (worth 200 gp), and a broken bronze axe (purely sentimental).

A concealed second staircase (leading to the dungeon) sits behind a secret panel in the rear of the grand staircase. There is a trap on the panel. An electric wire on the opening latch causes 4d6 damage (half damage on a save versus spells).

Mrtvolo the wight: AC: 5, Hp: 15, HD: 3, Attk: 1 (touch), drain life energy, XP: 110, LL p. 102.

2. Dining Room. A 20 - foot long, black mahogany table is set here with empty, long, heavy silver dinner trays. A fine layer of dust has settled on the table, chairs and silverware. The table is quite bulky and heavy (taking at least 8 normal humans to carry it and requiring a full turn to squeeze out the doors) but is worth 2,000 gp. The silver set is worth 600 gp.

3. Kitchen. Long abandoned iron cooking pots, empty pantries and dusty prepping tables sit undisturbed here.

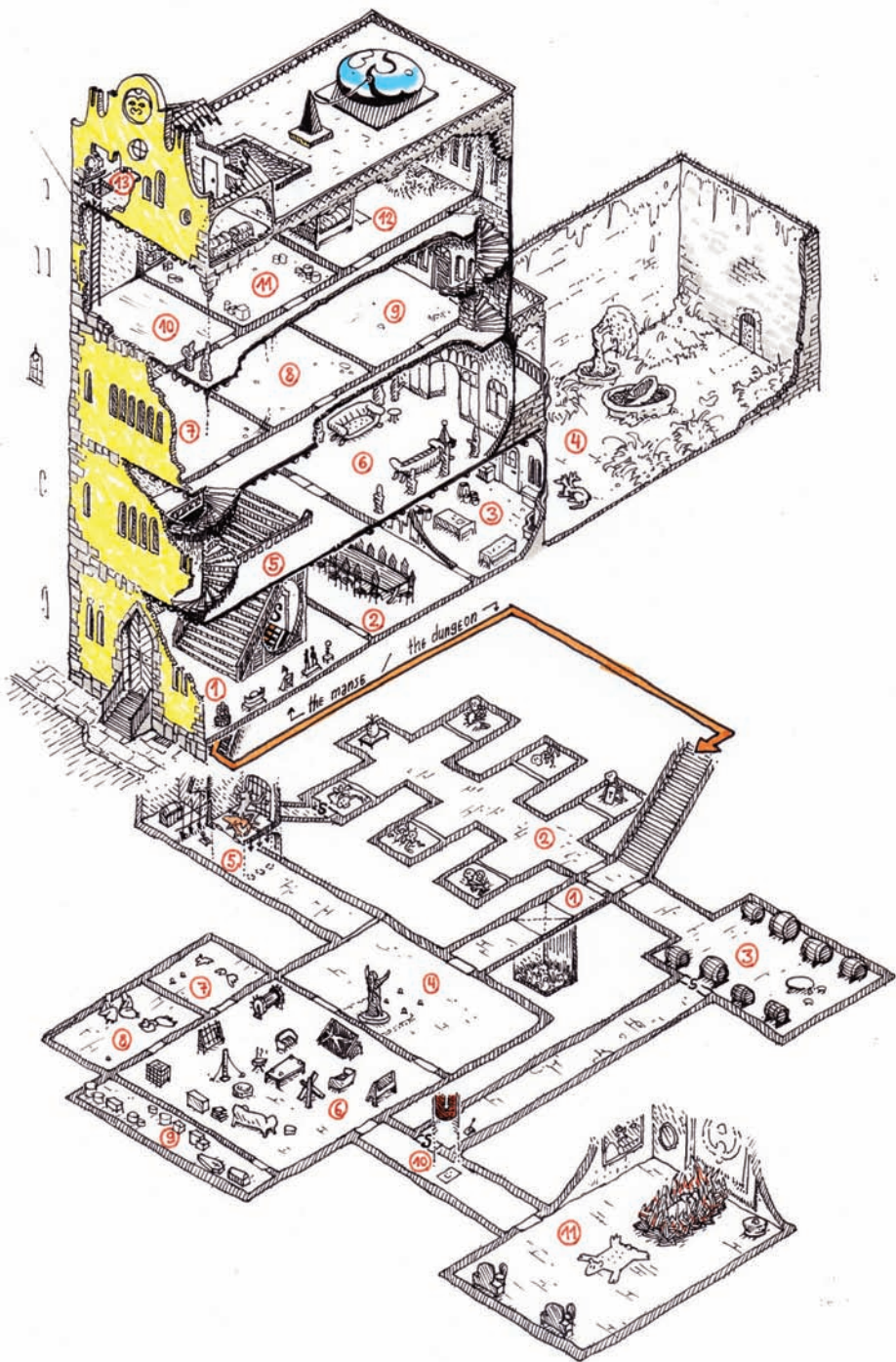
4. Garden. The garden is enclosed by a 25-foot-high stone wall (a full 15 feet higher than the surrounding garden walls). Broken, embedded glass crowns the top of it and will cause 1d3 damage to any climber not taking the proper precautions. The locked back gate is solid iron with rusty hinges. The gardens and empty, central fountain are greatly neglected and overgrown. Curled up in front of the kitchen door and mostly watchful is a Two-Headed Hound of the Hot Hell. There is a 1-2 in 6 chance that he is asleep. Noise (such as opening the rusty door) will instantly jolt him awake.

Hound of the Hot Hell: AC: 4, Hp: 30, HD: 6, Attk: 2 or special, 1d6 bite or howl of fear (*Cause Fear* [AEC p. 38] against all targets in 60’ radius), detect invisibility 75%, XP: 820, otherwise as *Hell Hound*, LL p. 81.

5. Circular Staircase Room. Two zombie maids with bloated-corpse bodies straining against their tight-fitting uniforms are cleaning up the remains of three urns shattered by Lady Szara in “one of her moods.” A narrow circular staircase winds its way up to the third floor (outside Room 7) in the corner of the room.

Zombie Maids: AC: 8, Hp: 10, HD: 2, Attk: 1 (bite), bite d8, XP: 29, LL p. 103.

6. Solar. This spacious and tastefully furnished sitting room with a wide double set of glass doors (open on summer days to the balcony beyond) is where Lady Szara will invariably be stationed if the player-characters have an appointment with her (all undead servants except for the major domo will be hustled “off stage”). Lady Szara possesses a magic brooch which allows her to survive exposure to sunlight for an hour and will appear here in full daylight to allay any suspicions about her true nature.



7-9. Empty Rooms. All three rooms on the third floor will be utterly empty here unless the Shit is Getting Weirder level or higher has been reached on the Chaos Index. In that case, all of the interior walls have been crudely knocked down, making the entire floor a single open room containing an enormous, blue-white egg crackling with electricity. (The egg is in point of fact an Eld-made organic battery soaking and storing the “anti-orgones” from local residents’ bad sex.) Walking past the egg to the ladder on the far wall will cause arcs of energy to extend outward, striking anyone moving past for 1d6 damage unless a save versus breath weapons is successfully made.

10. Roof Access. A wooden ladder is bolted on the wall leading up to the roof (an alternate, unguarded entrance to the manse with a simple iron mast for mooring Eld bubble ships). The locked trapdoor is guarded by a horizontal scythe trap (2d6 damage) that will swing twice before needing to be reset. If the Chaos Index is the Shit is Getting Weirder level or higher two Eld guards will be posted here.

Eld Guards: AC: 5, Hp: 8, HD: 2, Attk: 1 (weapon), Eldish sabres 1d8+1, XP: 47, SUD p. 47.

11. Storeroom. Shelves with utterly mundane household goods line the room. Careful inspection will reveal that many of said goods are more than a century old.

12. Eld Envoy guest quarters. A large, four-poster princess bed and stainless steel writing desk take up the western half of this room. Two piles of beast-stinking sleeping hay are pushed against the opposite wall. If the Chaos Index is the Shit is Getting Weirder level or higher, the room will be occupied by the Eldish envoy Mizkplx. He is equipped with a Mindbox, a glowing bulb affixed to a thin metal headband (useable only by spellcasters with a total INT and WIS of 30, *Charm Person* (LL p. 28) twice a day) which he will use as his two Four-armed White Ape slaves attack. Tucked away under the table (if the envoy is present) is a large sack of 1,200 gp of Rada bribe money and a small graphically-illustrated Eld BDSM manual mostly seeming to employ small heated vacuum jars (worth 100 gp to a colossal perv such as Medved, the Master of the Slumbering Ursine Dunes).

There is a 10% chance if the Eld envoy is present that Lady Szara will be here smoking grey lotus hash with him in bed. Horrifyingly, they will be both be naked.

Mizkplx the Envoy: AC: 3 ceramic plate, Hp: 28, HD: 5, Attk: 1 (weapon), chain-sword 1d8+2 non-magical, Mindbox (*Charm Person* [LL p. 28] 2/day), XP: 550, SUD p. 47.

Four-armed White Apes: AC: 6, Hp: 19, HD: 5, Attk: 4, pummeling arms 1d6/1d6/1d6/1d6, XP: 350, SUD p. 27.

13. Attic. Supporting the roof comb is a large, low-ceilinged attic. The room is packed with an assortment of sagging old chests, all of which contain moth-eaten dresses, gowns and other high society clothing that stretch back for three centuries of fashion trends.

LADY SZARA’S DUNGEON LEVEL

1. Trapped corridor. A covered 20-foot-deep pit trap sits just after the entrance door. The cover is well made and hard to detect (with only a 2 in 6 chance if the first rank is actively

looking for traps on the floor, dwarves and thieves have a 3 in 6 chance). Springing the trap door will cause an audible alarm gong to sound in Rooms 6 and 11. The trap cover is, however, partially-broken and will not swing shut over those who fall in. Human bones line the floor of the pit.

2. Sealed Up Alcoves. Six bricked-up alcoves branch off here. Characters using picks or similar tools can break through the bricks in 1-3 turns worth of work, revealing a skeletal corpse in each. The skeleton in the southeastern alcove is wearing a magical amulet that grants the wearer use of a Dimension Door spell if the codeword “fomo” inscribed on the back is spoken backwards.

Tragically, the wearer was unaware of its magical function. The amulet has only two more charges in it. The southwestern bricked wall conceals a secret door that leads to a short ascending ramp to the ghoul cage over Room 5 (the ghouls can be struck at safely from the locked cave in this direction).

3. Cask Cellar. Stout oak wine and beer casks and barrels (six can be rolled out and are worth 150 gp if sold) line the room. One of the brandy casks in the southern wall conceals a secret door which can only be opened if the spigot is rotated counterclockwise for a full revolution.

4. Self-Veneration Shrine. An 8-foot tall white marble statue of the Lady Szara looms over the room. She is depicted in a highly-idealized, more-youthful form and sports twin ruby eyes (worth 500 gp each). Iron shackles are bolted to the floors for when the Lady feels the need for a captive audience.



5. Ghoul Trap. A metal chest lies behind a closed portcullis at the end of this corridor. A large iron lever sits on the wall. Pulling the lever directly from the front (no amount of oblique pulling from the side will trigger it) will drop a second portcullis 5 - feet behind the lever and release two ravenous ghouls from a trap door above that will jump on whoever is inside the trap zone. Either portcullis can be lifted in a single turn with a combined STR of 30. The chest is locked and surprisingly contains 2,000 silver coins of antique vintage.

Ghouls: AC: 6, Hp: 12, HD: 2, Attk: 3, claw/claw/bite 1d3/1d3/1d3, paralysis, XP: 47, LL p. 76.

6. Torture Salon. Comfortable divans and chairs dot the spaces between blood-stained torture implements here. Stacks of the hottest, middlebrow literary and philosophical treatises currently in fashion in the Overkingdom are artfully arranged around four tall copper tea samovars (worth 50 gp each). There is a 20% chance that Lady Szara (see room 11) is here lovingly draining the life out of a poor servant girl while lazily reading *The World Dialectic: Is it For You?* between bites - if she hasn't been encountered previously.

7. Cell. This holding cell is currently empty. Rags drenched in tears line the floor.

8. Cell. This cell contains three rather ordinary-looking and quite terrified young local townswomen (one of them, Katka, is actually an on-again/off-again spy and 1st level thief for the Scarlet Sultanate). Freeing them will net a "hush money" 400 gp bonus from the Town Rada who declared them officially "killed and eaten by pelgranes" after an embarrassingly mis-managed manhunt. Additionally, Katka may prove useful to a party who seeks to recover the Golden Barge from the Scarlet Sultanate. See the Further Adventures section of *Slumbering Ursine Dunes* for more information.

9. Dungeon Supply Room. Various supplies for maintaining a well-functioning dungeon are contained here: grease for traps, replacement spikes for torture devices, ghoul bait, etc.

10. Block Trap. A rather large stone block falls from the ceiling here if the floor panel is disturbed. Everyone in the first and second ranks of the party must roll 3d6 against their DEX to dodge the block or receive 3d6 damage. A concealed trigger just inside the secret door to the east will deactivate the trap.

11. Lady Szara's Lair. An enormous wicker-looking bird's nest (Lady Szara's resting place) dominates the northern half of the room, with the other side of the room taken up by elaborate vanities, racks of expensive ladies gowns (all told worth 500 gp) and broken mirrors. The now ironically-named Kugel the Lucky, former thief and current wight will be here during the day and 30% of the time at night. Kugel appears much as he did in real life, with a large, wide-brimmed and bejeweled foppish hat. His undead face has twisted into a quizzical "why me?" look, and his hair stands straight up much as if he had just received an electric shock. He is incapable of speech and will attack on sight.

Lady Szara will also be here 70% of the time during the day and 25% of the time at night unless she has been encountered elsewhere in the manse.

The room contains the following treasures: a giant, purple-streaked bear rug (worth 1,000 gp), a small, porcelain bowl filled with 20 tiny tiger opals (worth 200 gp each), a large collection of jangly gold jewelry (worth 1,000 gp), and a “petty cash” chest containing 2,500 shiny new gold pieces, 2 electrum pieces, and a Susan B. Anthony dollar from 1982.

Kugel the Lucky, wight: AC: 5, Hp: 19, HD: 3, Attk: 1 (touch), *drain life energy*, XP: 110, *LL* p. 102.

Lady Szara, Strigoi and 4th-level M-U: AC: 2, Hp: 50, HD: 9, Attk: 1 (touch), d10 and *drain life energy*, Spells: *Sleep* (*LL* p. 39), *Ventriloquism* (*LL* p. 41), *ESP* (*LL* p. 31), and *Detect Invisible* (*LL* p. 30) XP: 7,500.

ADVENTURE SITE 2: CATACOMBS OF THE CHURCH OF THE BLOOD JESUS

The otherworldly cult of the Church of the Blood Jesus is a strange syncretistic sect combining the alien religion of its accidental founder, Father Jack (an alcoholic, time-misplaced, Irish cleric) with the bizarre, mystery-religion interpretations of its first apostle, Vatek son of Vatek.

Having absorbed Church teachings through a series of Father Jack’s increasingly incoherent drunken ramblings, Vatek son of Vatek has spun off interpretations of the sacrament of communion that place heavy emphasis on the ecstatic rending of living flesh and consumption of blood and raw bodily remnants. Divine cannibalism — the consumption of dying or weak gods by beings and the assumption of their power — plays a recurring and important role in the cosmology of the Hill Cantons, allowing Vatek’s spin to gain a certain resonance among the more desperate elements of Marlinko society.

Although mostly a harmless, if strange and not-particularly-tolerated, cult when the Chaos Index is below the Shi’s Getting Weirder level, actions by some of its believers—especially that of the fanatical nun-maenads - become increasingly violent and will put the cult on a crash-course trajectory with Marlinko society and possibly the party (see Chaos Index, p. 43). Most of the Church’s followers are ignorant of the kidnappings and murders, including the leader Vatek (who may be convinced, if shown sufficient proof, to rein the nun-maenads in).

The various murders and kidnappings (and then sacrifices) will rather transparently be the work of the cult. Only the outstanding incompetence (and greased palms) of the Rada have kept the town militia from finding and closing down the sect. A series of rather obvious clues (witnesses, drag marks, wafer crumbs, etc) will lead straight back to the primary catacomb entrance in the slums of the Golden Swine contrada.

FIRST APPEARANCES

The ladder entrance to the catacombs is inside the first floor of a narrow, unassuming, slum rowhouse. The interiors of the catacombs are cut from living rock with a precise angularity, thanks to the artful hand of the robo-dwarf engineer, Termex (an adventuring companion of cult founder Father Jack, both members of the adventuring party known as the Nefarious Nine).

Aboveground. The first floor is a single room cleared of furniture with a lone, threadbare carpet barely concealing an oversized trapdoor and winching device. Four stubble-faced, thug-like “altar boys” guard the entrance.

They are quite fanatical and are directly tied in with the shenanigans of the more murderous faction. As such, they will certainly attack anyone entering the slum room who isn't quick with the passphrase: “three in bloody one.” If combat breaks out, one of the boys will attempt to shimmy down the ladder to sound the alarm among the flock below.

Altar Boys: AC: 8 leather, Hp: 5, 0-level, Attk: 1 (weapon), quarterstaff 1d6, XP: 5.

1. Ladder Well. A wide well-built ladder descends 50 feet to the floor here. A winch above serves to bring up and down animals and bundles weighing up to 200 pounds. If an alarm has been raised from above, two altar boys will be present just inside the lip of the exit to pluck off anyone coming down the ladder.

Altar Boys: AC: 8 leather, Hp: 4, 0-level, Attk: 1 (weapon), crossbow 1d6, XP: 5.

2. Burial Alcoves. Small tight burial nooks line the walls here, all filled with boiled skeletons, each marked with a single bloodstain cross on the skull. There are hundreds of alcoves present — considerably more than the natural dead of the cult (which is less than three years old) warrants. The cultists have in fact been stealing the remains of their own ancestors in a belief that they can be “retrobaptised” on consecrated ground.

Each turn spent searching the alcoves will uncover petty treasures (1d20 sp, a small semi-ornamental stone worth 20 gp or a silver comb worth 10 gp) on a roll of 1 on a d6. Such searches will also bring, on a roll of 1-2 on a d6 per turn, 1d8 cultists who will be violently outraged at the desecration.

Cultists: AC: 8 leather, Hp: 3, 0-level, Attk: 1 (weapon), wavy dagger 1d4, XP: 5.

3. Animal Pen. Nine goats, six white lambs, a soft-eyed rabbit and a mangy badger who will attack if freed are tethered here in pens waiting *sparagmos* (ritual tearing apart). The rabbit is, in fact, the unfortunate victim of a *Polymorph Other* practical joke, Krimm the Contumelious, one of the High Autarchs who formerly ruled the grand old half-ruined metropolis of Kezmarok (see p. 21).

Pan Jesev the Badger: AC: 4, Hp: 4, HD: 1, Attk: 3, claw/claw/bite 1d2/1d2/1d4, XP: 13.

4. Mess. This room is part open kitchen and part serving area with long, white pine tables. A cooking pit and chimney (with hidden entrance in an alley above) sit in the northeast corner. A rickety, empty bookshelf hides a small concealed door in the eastern wall. In the day 2d6 ordinary(ish) lay followers are here eating and baking, 1d4 at night. They will take no hostile action unless attacked or the catacombs are in a state of alarm. They will be ignorant of any Church wrong doings.

Lay Followers: AC: 9, Hp: 2, 0-level, Attk: 1 (weapon), wavy dagger 1d4, XP: 5.

5. Living Quarters. Bunk beds and sleeping maps line the walls and floor here. At any given time 2d6 lay followers will be resting here. There is a 75% chance that Deacon Bohuil, an exceedingly-lazy and craven footpad who has joined the Church in search of low-key criminal opportunities, is here goldbricking his duties. Unlike most of the Catacomb dwellers, Bohuil will instantly recognize the party as outsiders. Being a coward and an opportunist, he will either: (1) attempt to enlist the party in a scheme to lift the Church coffers in Room 13 (offering a 50-50 split to lead them there) or (2) attempt to covertly shadow the party in hopes of easy pickings. In either case he will minimize his own danger and effort.

Lay Followers: AC: 9, Hp: 2, 0-level, Attk: 1 (weapon), wavy dagger 1d4, XP: 5

Deacon Bohuil: AC: 8 leather, Hp: 4, 1st level thief, Attk: 1 (weapon), 1d6 short sword, 1d6 short bow, XP: 13.

6. Storeroom. Food and other mundane provisions are stored here. A foul latrine hole sits in the northeast corner. Martka, a forlorn, hollow-eyed 8-year-old girl, will be here in the day, role-playing mass with sacks of flour. If the party engages her in a friendly way, she will cry and implore them to free Pan Jesev, the badger in Room 3. If the badger is brought back to her unharmed, she will open up a secret stash hidden beneath a loose rock under one of the shelves and hand over the contents: 12 cp, a ball of wool yarn and a ragged, once-opulent, white waist-sash. The sash is in fact the Resplendent Cincture of Lammaus, Arch-Pulpitarian of Deyh the Hyperborean Elk-Goddess, a magical belt that has the the following properties if identified and worn by a Lawful (or any good alignment, in systems that do not use tripartite alignment) character:

1. The character will always know the cardinal direction they face and will never become lost in the wilderness.

2. Once a week, the character can call an enormous white elk as a mount. The elk will remain in service for three days (or until death, whichever comes first) before vanishing in a puff of noxious green smoke.

White Elk of Deyh: AC: 7, Hp: 18, HD: 3, Attk: 2, horns 1d6/1d6, XP: 50, otherwise treat as *Horse, War, LL p. 82.*

7. Escape Ladder. This ladder leads up to the slum hovel of a family of Church believers. Close interrogation of any Church adherent (who is not noted as a fanatic) will reveal its existence if a direct question is posed 75% of the time.

8. Tunnel. This long, sloping tunnel leads beyond the city walls to a dense thicket of bushes. The secret door is known only to Vatek and Metrplx.

9. Robo-dwarf Lair. The short corridor entrance to this room contains two back-to-back, 20-foot deep pit traps with trapdoors that will swing shut upon triggering. Gleaming steel barrels of a viscous oil line the walls. Two “resting bays,” silver metal disks, sit on the eastern wall.

Metrxplx, a grey-skinned, android-like robo-dwarf (and “pod brother” of Termex, the absent robo-dwarf engineer that built the catacombs complex) is here and will attack any intruder who does not knock first. Metrxplx will use a Baton of Poison Gas (20-foot radius, save versus poison or die, one charge) in the first round before switching to his vibrating axe. He, and all other Robo-Dwarves, are immune to the effects of the gas.

A stainless steel locker contains 1010 gp and a strange fish-bone diorama showing a domestic scene from the creepy seaport town of Muth.

Metrxplx: AC: 3, Hp: 18, HD: 3, Attk: 1 (weapon), non-magical vibrating axe 1d8+2, Baton of Poison Gas (20’ radius, save vs. poison or die, one charge, Robo-Dwarves immune), XP: 65, see New Monsters p. 59.

10. Unfinished Galleries. Work on the catacombs expansion is taking place here and will be heard down the corridor. Six lay-follower miners are here hewing stone. They will only attack if provoked and will be ignorant of any alarm.

Miners: AC: 9, Hp: 4, 0-level, Attk: 1 (weapon), d4+1 mining pick, XP: 5.

11. Tunnel. A long, sloping tunnel leads to a secret entrance inside the Rada hall. Metrxplx is the only catacombs inhabitant with knowledge of its existence.



12. Fane. The cult's ceremonial center is a low-ceilinged, spartan space with simple, dark-wood benches and a large, unadorned, blood-splattered altar (with floor drain). A brand-new, richly-woven tapestry covers the north wall, depicting Father Jack preaching to his flock as nun-maenads rip apart a puzzled-looking goat in the foreground. In the four corners of the room are mounted four large boar tusks smeared with dried blood.

Slightly-off, markedly out-of-context Bible quotations are written on the walls in neat, large letters in red paint: "For they have shed the blood of saints and pelgranes, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy." "And thou shalt take of the blood thereof, and put it on the four horns of it, and on the four corners of the settle, and upon the border round about: thus shalt thou cleanse and purge it."

There is a 20% chance during the day that a mass will be in service (otherwise it is empty). During mass 10-40 ordinary lay followers, five nun-maenads, and Vatek son of Vatek will be present. If an alarm has been raised they will be alert and preparing for a counter-attack.

Lay Followers: AC: 9, Hp: 2, 0-level, Attk: 1 (weapon), wavy dagger 1d4, XP: 5.

Nun-Maenads: AC: 7, Hp: 7, HD: 1, Attk: 2 (hands), clawed hands 1d4/1d4, +2 to attack during combat, XP: 21, treat as *Men, Berserker*, LL p. 87.

Vatek son of Vatek: AC: 9 or 5 if alerted, Hp: 15, 2nd-level cleric, Attk: 1 (weapon), mace 1d6, *Cure Light Wounds* (LL p. 21) and *Light* (LL p. 23), XP: 29.

13. Vatek's Chambers. Empty slivovce (plum brandy) bottles line the walls and a simple bed and desk sit along the north wall. The church's treasury chest is hidden in an alcove under the bed and contains 3040 sp and 5302 cp in tithes. There is an 80% chance that Vatek will be present and a 40% chance that a particularly attractive nun will be here...umm...receiving church teachings.

14. Reliquary. Currently empty except for gilded shelving awaiting the bones and limbs of martyrs.

15. Nuns' Quarters. A deep, funky, unwashed body odor smell pervades the filth and chaotic, almost-artful disorganization of this room. Piles of dried, crackled hide, shattered bones, broken/burned furniture, pottery shards, dessicated feces, etc. have been piled up into uneven arches and pillars. Between the debris are ten shallow "sleeping holes." Scrawled on the north wall is a crude picture of a slender bearded man being castrated bloodily by large-teethed, grinning women, and the slogan "and I will give thee blood in fury and jealousy."

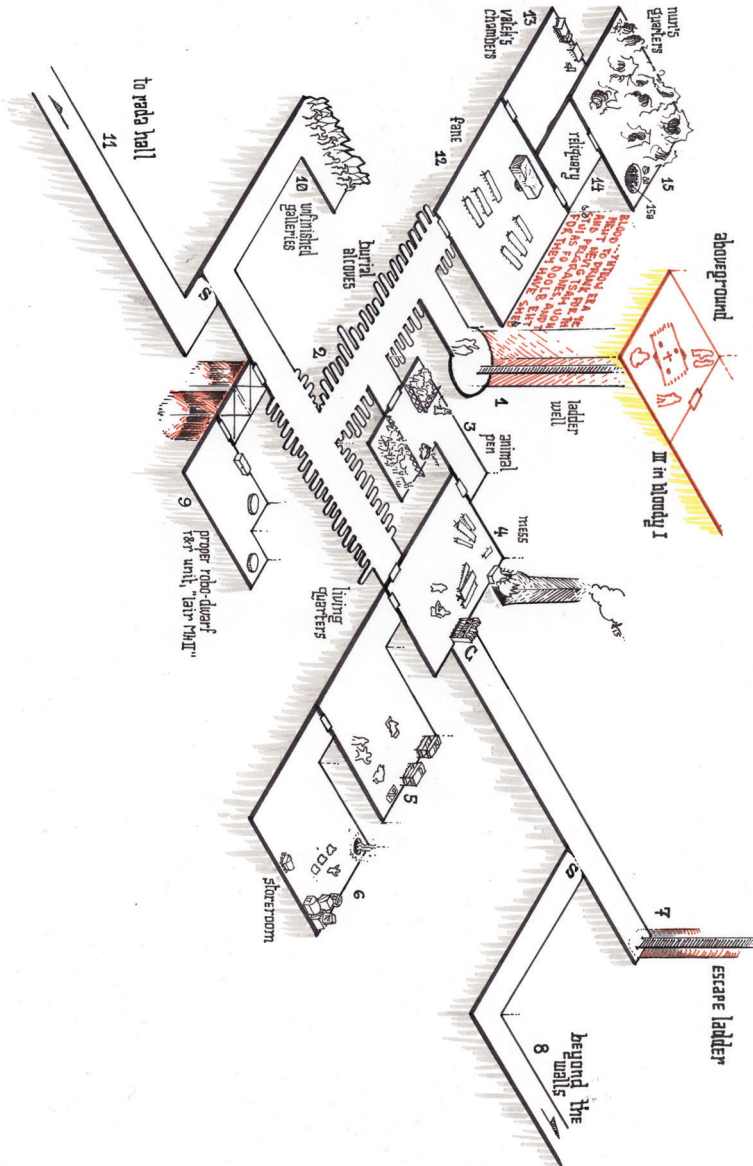
If a mass is occurring in Room 12, this will be empty, otherwise seven nun-maenads will be here with a 50% chance of being asleep at any time. Apolena, the filth-smeared, crusty-blood dread-locked leader of the nun-maenads, is always here awake and rocking in the corner quietly singing a Pahr mountaineer murder ballad.

Nun-Maenads: AC: 7, Hp: 7, HD: 1, Attk: 2, clawed hands 1d4/1d4, +2 to attack during combat, XP: 21, treat as *Men, Berserker*, LL p. 87.

Apolena: AC: 7, Hp: 12, HD: 2, Attk: 2, clawed hands 1d4/1d4, +2 to attack during combat, XP: 47, treat as *Men, Berserker*, LL p. 87.

15a Prisoner Pit. A narrow, 20' deep pit sits here next to a coiled rope and bucket that contains a small flask of skin lotion. Any captives taken by the nuns will be trussed up and gagged here. Its current resident is Aleš, a fat-cheeked, pompous amateur poet and backwoodsman who will offer to join the party if rescued. He has little to offer but his profound insight into the workings of Man.

Aleš: AC: 9, Hp: 3, 0-level man-at-arms, XP: 5.



THE TOWN GODS AND CONTRADA SOCIETIES

While the true nature of all deities in Zěm is obscured by enduring, hotly-debated mystery, the power of even the weakest godling is manifestly evident in the magic that is spit back to the most faithful. That the town gods of Marlinko have neither been seen in the lifetimes of any of its current, living citizenry, nor have they passed spells to their civic-minded followers in recent centuries, has not lessened the fear and quiet-toned awe of those raised in the city for its hometown supernatural beings. The somber mystery rituals and oral tradition of each contrada society - and the quiet but incessant humming emanating from behind the five unlit, night-black stone doors in the Tomb - are enough to assure the faithful.

Town tradition holds that Marlinko was preceded more than a millennium and a half ago by the awkwardly-named Vemb of the Twenty-Seven Forms, a small border site founded by one of the myriad Hyperborean successor states of that era. The necromancer-kings of those fell states vied with each other in jealousy and vanity. But most importantly, each sought to shuffle off their fleshy existence, undergo thousands of years of cocooned, dreaming metamorphosis, and then ultimately transcend into a new life as a divine being of the purest energy.

What is odd is that Vemb, a smallish outpost of Hyperborean civilization, would find itself with five such aspiring “space gods.” But speaking of such things is both uncouth and unwise in a city whose gods slumber a few blocks away.

Vemb perished, but its heart, that low black cube of a building, did not. No cracks mars its seamless exterior, and no dust clings to its silent floors. Portals to other worlds are said to be behind each of the five doors, but even those brave enough to enter the quiet, narrow, featureless hall are confronted by a structure that defies further ingress.

ANFOLF

Sullen Apiarian Contrada “worships” or placates Anfol, the vaguely bee-headed town god said to be a rainmaker and bringer of both wealth and anxiety.

When Anfol in his glowing golden nimbus walked the streets of early Marlinko, impressing the bearded Pahr immigrants just getting used to lives not spent on horseback, He was said to literally shower them with the sweetest of honey—and the swiftest of kicks. The newly-citified folk who had camped in their rude tents to the northwest of the plaza thought such strange benedictions and abuse to be part and parcel of what civilized life is meant to be and took these lessons to heart. Money, and the anxiety it brings, has always been the strength and the weakness of this contrada.

Though it shouts “conspicuous consumption,” the yellow-limestone and quartz facade of the Sullen Apiarian contrada hall with its amber and lapis lazuli-encrusted honeycombed frescoes stands handsomely over its small, tight square. The contrada society itself is a broad one with a large burgeoning hierarchy of ceremonial officers arrayed in 27 ranks. Incongruously the higher, more labor-intensive (and not unpowerful) positions are held traditionally by the less affluent members of the contrada (or “temporally-embarrassed grandees” as they like to call themselves). The current Grandmaster of Hives, Jakus the Yakholder, in point of fact, doubles as a mere journeyman beast-drover in his day-job hours.

SKAMOPLX

The Mendacious Mercator Contrada maintains Skamopl x, the silver-faced, three-armed town god of transactions as its patron.

Skamopl x is said to have uplifted the huddled barbarians camped to the southwest of the Tomb-Plaza. Patting affectionately their shaggy heads with two hands as he held out his third hand palm-up for cash donations, Skamopl x was said to have liberated the Pahr of his ward from their previous over-reliance on gifting and free emoting. His tersely described Law of Equipose maintains that what is given must be paid for in equal measure, a single silver coin more or less and the World Dialectic “will pitch an epic fit” according to Skamopl x’s teachings. As such, all things, even love and the making of the two-backed beast, must be quid pro quo—preferably with cash on the table.

The Mendacious Mercator rada hall, despite the sheer amount of gold and silver floating in its members hands, is quite modest, a narrow grey-slate structure nestled between the two great countinghouses of the city. The contrada society offices are annually rearranged in a complicated system of silent bidding - the proceeds naturally flowing back into the society coffers. Vilma of Sprechenhaltestellehymen is the current grandmistress and is said to have a controlling interest in the famous Underbrothel rumored to exist under the streets of Kezmarok (the Underbrothel will be detailed in the upcoming Kezmaroki Undercity supplement, coming soonish).

REVOC

The Golden Swine Contrada offers supplications to Revoc, a (literally) razor-tongued town god that is rumored to be, in fact, an idiot. Revoc is said to hold dear misplaced anger and noise for its own sake.

The Pahr raiders that settled to the northeast were a sad sack mix of cottars, horse-thieves, outcasts, poets and quarter-orcs. Revoc strode among them banging on his great pots. With each whip of his tongue and each laceration, he brought them new life. His way was simple, if perhaps fleeting, in the esteem it brought: a life spent pushing uphill against the stronger or improving your lot is wasted: quicker and easier just to bring those around you tumbling down to below your own miserable station!

Despite the grinding poverty of much of the district, Revoc sports a massive, sprawling contrada-hall. Great copper fixtures thick with green verdigris mount the exterior where its massive, eternally-guarded trophy case brags to the city of the contrada’s continuing dominance of the Black Race. Society officers are picked through a grueling process of hazing with those who suffer without breaking through the humiliations of being picked for office. The current King of Ass, Lemoc, is said to be in the pocket of One-Armed Jiri (NPCs of Note, p. 20).

CAZ THE CORPULENT

The Yare Domesman Contrada holds Caz as its town god. Caz appears as a rounded, green-faced being whose features have been blurred by an aura of extreme self-satisfaction.

Though in his early years outwardly projecting an air of slight menace, Caz is a strangely pleasant and complacent demi-god. As such he was accepted quietly and without much fuss by the rather nondescript not-too-aggressive, not-too-passive members of the Pahr tribe.

Somewhat snubbed in Old Pahr society - Svat the Four-Faced teaches “beware the path of respectable moderation” - the new citizens took well to their new patron. What Caz stands for is largely unknown - and really, no one in the contrada cares. So why do you ask?

Yare Domesman's hall is a model structure for the ward. With its fine, freshly maintained whitewash and cheery wooden roof slates it is bland, clean and vaguely cheery. Society officers are picked in well run, uncontested elections. The current High Yeoman Council is made up of five burgomeisters so forgettable that their names escape all.

THE ONE LEFTOVER

The Fifth God is mentioned in no town record nor has any following. Direct talk of the Town Gods only occurs in the dark, unlit ceremonial chamber of the contrada halls and of that the rituals only mention that of their respective patrons. As such, the One Leftover is virtually a nonentity. Naturally his palpable existence is somehow all the more terrifying. (In point of fact, the Fifth God is held captive and being used to power an Eld magical amplifier in the Misty Isles of the Eld.)

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

SANCTIONED CRIME

THE LEAGUE OF THE FREE-HANDED

Part mutual aid society, part criminal syndicate, the League of the Free-Handed is entirely too Marlinkian to rigorously enforce its claimed monopoly on individual major criminal acts (any crime presumably involving anything over 200 gp of goods or worth) in the City. Instead it mainly gets by selling “reappropriation indulgences,” a flat monthly rate of 100 gp to commit “sanctioned” property theft or nonviolent crime (see Punishment for reduced sentencing guidelines and NPCs of Note for more on the league, p. 12).

A flagrant violation of the licensing agreement will produce a 25% cumulative chance per week after the first violation of a visit by 1d10 **enforcers** and “**Little Pavol**,” a League attorney, to collect the fee. (He will get quite petulant and indignant if it is pointed out that another NPC on p. X15 holds the same nickname.)

Enforcers: AC: 7 studded leather, Hp: 5, 0-level, Attk: 1 (weapon), iron-shod quarterstaff 1d6, XP: 5.

Little Pavol: AC: 6 leather plus DEX bonus, Hp: 12, 3rd level thief, Attk: 1 (weapon), sabre 1d6+1, XP: 65.

CONTRADAS

Contrada societies, due to their deeply-ingrained stranglehold on the Marlinkian mind, permit their approved agents to commit sanctioned crimes *inside the boundaries of their quarter and only while on official business of the contrada officers*. These crimes are rarely property related and are mostly of the nature of beatings (and rarely killings) of personages deemed politically problematic.

A single major exception is made in the week preceding the Ebon Horse Fair in which by long tradition contradas have license to covertly scheme and wreck the chariot racing efforts (and counter-efforts) of each other. Agents of contradas will quite often be found stealing, doping jockeys, poisoning horses, and generally causing mayhem against opposing wards.

RELIGIOUS

Crimes of passions - short of obvious murder - arising from the exceedingly common and violent disputation of religious or grand philosophical themes are often overlooked or downplayed in significance in the court of law.

UNSANCTIONED CRIME

EVERYDAY FRAUD

Like hydrogen and stupidity in our world, small acts of fraud are the basic building block of social activity in the City. Soft fraudulent crimes are so widespread as to meet tacit cultural approval; as such, stealing by the pen, thumbing scales, subbing of inferior goods and the like is met with a knowing “you’ve been a naughty, naughty scamp” wink and slap on the hand by the magistrate.

To simulate this everyday bilking, the Labyrinth Lord may opt to add an additional 10-20% to all prices paid by the PCs while in the City. Mountebanks or characters with WIS 14 and over are exempt from this “surcharge.” It is recommended that this fleecing be roleplayed once or twice to give players a flavor.

Marlinko harbors a robustly large population of full-time flimflammers, grifters, frauds, hoax-specialists, shysters and other mountebanks. As such there is a 10 percent chance per month spent in the city that the party has a short or long con attempt pulled on them (see **Running Long and Short Cons, p. 39**).

OTHER ACTS

Small acts of petty theft (pickpocketing, grab and dashes, rolling drunks) are quite common. Burglaries, mugging and crimes involving violence are surprisingly very rare. Unless indicated on the encounter table or desired by the Labyrinth Lord no special rolls should be made.

PUNISHMENT

Marlinko is a decidedly lazy city when it comes to the rigors of law enforcement. The Chlapecs, or city watch of the Rada make loud, lackadaisical patrols of the main avenues every third hour with 3d6 0-level men-at-arms, but can mostly just be found drinking jugs of corn liquor and playing pelgrane-bone dominoes in the long arcade of the Rada Hall.

City Watch: AC: 5 half plate, Hp: 3, 0-level, Attk: 1 (weapon), d6 crossbow, d6 short sword, nets, XP: 5.

Most nonviolent crimes, even when openly witnessed by a local resident, will be met with a shrug a full 50% of the time. Indeed even the aggrieved party will quite often not turn to the city watch, either preferring to handle it directly or more often by calling in favors or paying fees to their Contrada, the League of the Free-Handed, or in truly grievous cases to the Guild of Slayers and Bloodletters.

With the sole exception of treason, those sad sacks that actually manage to be apprehended will have their crimes adjudicated by the “Sitting Hen,” a rotating position filled by Rada members who bid on the lucrative position monthly. The Hen holds court in their opulent, comically elaborate feathered robes of office most days of the week. Few prisoners serve more than a day or two in the crowded cell-pits under the Rada Hall, for it is in the interest of the magistrate to move as many infractions into the inevitable and profitable range of punishments below (no one is ever deemed innocent without money changing hands) as they can. Indentured servants (a good 10% of the local population) are mostly sold out to local guilds and merchants and are the primary source of income for the Cantonal government and its sitting members.

Fraud, Defecation in Public Without a License, Amorous Relations with A Non-Consenting Animal, Nonviolent Crime Sanctioned by Contrada or the League of the Free-Handed (see above):

Fine of 1d6 x 50 gp paid to the retirement fund of the Sitting Hen.

Assault, Petty Theft, Heresy (implying that the Sun Lord's chariot has no wheels, open supplication/prayer to Habeka the Celestial Lady or other deities, etc), Violent Crime Sanctioned by Contrada or the League of the Free-Handed (see above):

1d4 years of indentured servitude to the Rada (erase six months for each 100 gp “inducement” paid).

Theft Most Grievous (involving goods over 200 gp or against a noble personage), Slandering the Reputation of the City (mostly by directly referencing official corruption without euphemism), Libeling Another's Leisure Activity, Cheating with Dice, Manslaughter:

Tarring and feathering plus 1d6+1 years of indentured servitude to the Rada (erase six months for each 100 gp inducement).

Premeditated and Non-Licensed Murder of a Commoner, Arson, Verbal Denigration of a Titled Noble, Rape:

Withering satirical public ridicule and death by slow hanging or condemnation as an Ebon Horse Fair convict-jockey. A mountebank or character with CHA 15 and over can bribe their way out of this for 1d4x1000 gp and discreet exile for a year. Others must pay 1d8x1000 gp and agree to make themselves scarce for 1d3 years.

Treason, Murder of a Titled Noble:

Flaying and then brine pickling while listening to a meter-challenged poet or a philosopher of aesthetics or legal ethics until death. Punishment meted by officials of the Overking and thus little recourse in escaping punishment with the bribery of local notables.

RUNNING LONG AND SHORT CONS

Confidence tricks or games have a long and perversely honored history in the world of Zëm. While there are some striking similarities to the grifter's arts of Earth, con artists of the Cantons almost relish the transgressional thrill of being caught (especially after gold is in the pouch).

Running cons as a Labyrinth Lord can thus be played in several ways: 1. an earnest trick to try and swindle the players out of their hard-delved cash, 2. as a bit of Vanican comic relief (see the incompetent mountebank scam on p. 15) where the hand of the mountebank is painfully obvious, or 3. one that actually involves the player as an associate of the NPC mountebank.

Confidence tricks come in two varieties:

1. The short con (a quick swindle usually by a low status/level mountebank) that takes a few minutes such as a shell game, pretending to be an oracle, or shoddy goods switch out. A short con can include sleight of hand or misdirection over a valued good (an item with a false magical aura, a piece of jewelry or the like) or small act of confidence such as selling the map to a fake treasure cache.
2. The long con that involves many steps, preparation and days if not weeks to play out. Long cons often feature many NPC “cast members,” props and settings. All cons will target the naivete, greed, lust and other manipulable emotions of the mark. Fortunately murderhoboes tend to have these qualities in spades.

SAMPLE CONS

The Kezmaroki Prisoner. A mountebank disguised in the velvet doublet and baggy pantaloons of a southern nobleman approaches the marks. He will state that his house has held a long alliance (or some other close relationship) to the Pavhlo house of nobility in Kezmarok (an actual existing though utterly destitute family) and that his “good friend, almost a brother, Akko Pavhlo has been imprisoned in the secret political prison of the city’s Autarchs.”

The mountebank will spin an elaborate story about how Akko has been imprisoned in order to ferret out the hidden family heirlooms of the Pavhlos and that he wishes to mount an expedition to rescue the prisoner. He will ask the party to put up a third of the expedition cost, a mere 633 gp, to hire mercenaries, grease palms, etc. Of course if the money is paid over he will promptly disapper. The mountebank will spend up to 200 gp in hiring minor cast members (notably fake mercenaries or Kezmaroki “relatives” of the imprisoned), renting appropriate digs, and borrowing armor, arms, provisions, etc).

Salting. A mountebank disguised as a prospector offers to sell his mine or lot to the marks for 600-2000 gp. He will spin a hard luck story about “his overwhelming debts and how his one and only son died in a tunnel collapse” and “how he just needs to get out and move on.” Up in the hills several miles from town he has set up a fake mine complete with short tunnel, wooden supports, etc. If pressed about proving the mine’s quality he will “salt” the mine before the marks arrive with gold dust, tiny raw gemstones and the like.

CONTINUING ADVENTURES IN MARLINKO

Urban settings can produce endless hooks and adventurable things to do while in town.

Here are a few guidelines for sites that the Labyrinth Lord may want to develop.

TAPESTRY OF XVIKZ

Hook: Of the many family-dominated usury guilds to escape the collapse of last decade, the Fražas were among the most infamous in deftly transferring their massive debts back to the public treasuries of the cantonal councils. But long before this, they had accrued notoriety far and wide for another feat: the weaving of the Tapestry of Xvikz. A full two centuries ago, then Fražas family head, Franzoht Fair-Breeched, called on his dark powers to summon and bind the Xvikz, a demon from the darkest, deepest hell of high finance. A great lover of petty humiliation, Franzoht tormented the creature by refusing to put the dreaded demon’s powers

to appropriate use, instead compelling him to weave a great commemorative tapestry from the velvety firmament of the domed heavens. That the required scene was both cloying and derivative only added to the sulk of the demon who plodded away needle point in hand. Years stretched into decades as the demon passively-aggressively refused to finish in a timely manner — and each successive generation of bull-headed Fražas refusing to release the demon in turn led to impasse.

Inexplicably, fourteen years ago, Xvikz declared his last stitch sewn. Though the resulting tapestry was horrifically underwhelming, its unveiling was heralded as a major cultural achievement in Overkingdom aesthete circles and became a much-sought fixture of upper crust soirees in the borderlands. The tapestry will be on display this month in Marlinko at the three day opening gala of the Fražas branch-house. Now this week, quiet word has been spread through underworld circles of a shadowy patron offering a magnificent bounty of 15,000 gp for an unimaginably daring crime: stealing the Tapestry of Xvikz out from under the noses of this haughty family.

Building Specs: A large walled country estate with manor house, stable and gate house.

Security: Traps, magical wards and human guards of a difficult nature.

Treasure: The tapestry naturally plus luxury items usual to the wealthy (expensive silverware, opulent baubles, rugs, etc).

THE GOLDEN SWINE CONTRADA HALL.

Hook: See entry 14 on the **News of the Day** chart (p. 22).

Building Specs: See p. 36 for external physical description. The hall is a big rambling two story affair with many rooms for cryptic ceremonial purpose, meeting spaces, ballrooms, storage rooms, chariot equipment, stables, cells for convict-jockeys, etc.

Security: The front entrance and outside trophy case are guarded at all times by 2d4 0-level pig-masked men-at-arms (contrada fanatics). The back entrance is locked and trapped. Patrols wander the halls and certain portals and corridors will be lightly trapped. There is a 35% chance that at any time of day the hall will be in ceremonial use. In that case the building will be packed, with most rooms and halls filled with large numbers of people (otherwise it is fairly empty).

Treasure: The hall contains several well-guarded, trapped and hidden treasure vaults mostly containing past trophies and valuable ceremonial props such as ivory-handled whips. Trophies can be sold illicitly to other contradas for 500 gp apiece. They are quite worthless otherwise, as no fence in their right mind will cross a contrada society. (Golden Swine has over a hundred such former trophies scattered through their various vaults.)

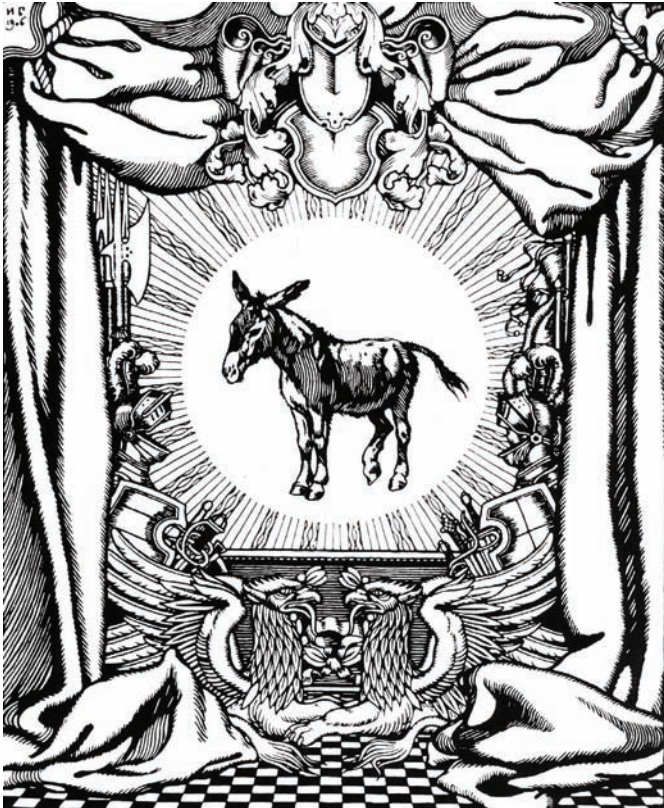
THE TOMB OF THE TOWN GODS

Hook: Curiosity killed the cat. While any number of hooks can be drawn up to get the party here, it is best perhaps to leave the tomb as an open, nagging (and likely deadly) mystery.

Building Specs: See p. 36. The interior is as spartan as the exterior. There is no furniture or lighting and the rock itself appears seamless — almost like it was poured concrete rather than constructed by block. A deathly quiet hangs over the place and five immense sealed stone doors dominate the central entrance hall. A randomly shifting extra-dimensional portal to another plane/world/adventure site glows at the back end of the entrance hall. The exterior stone door is unlocked but requires an open doors check due to long disuse. Town residents in the plaza will attempt to stop (but not detain) anyone they see attempting to open the outside door.

Security: the doors to the vaults are magically sealed. A *Knock* spell (LL p. 33) is of insufficient power to open the doors but *Dispel Magic* (LL p. 30) will. Four of the five vaults contain demi-gods that match their descriptions. Opening the door will awaken them in 1d6 turns and only the most fast talking of characters will have the slimmest of chances of preventing them from attacking with great malice. Though they appear as beings of pure energy and cannot be turned, the town gods should be treated as 18 hit dice liches in all other respects.

Treasure: Each vault contains hoard class XXII worth of goods and an extra-dimensional portal that leads to another part of the campaign world or a sub-plane such as the Misty Isles of the Eld.



“The Answer”

CHAOS INDEX

Marlinko sits in the Borderlands, the boundary between human civilization and the Weird. The Chaos Index is a tool used to generate the ebb and flow of the Weird. The various actions that the party takes (see modifiers at the end of the Index below) can cause the borders around Marlinko to shift and more of the elemental chaos of the Weird to influence the city. As the scenario opens the Index is set to 1. As strange and chaotic events occur around Marlinko, the Index increases more and more. At the start of each game session, the GM should roll 1d4-1 to determine how much the various power groups and factions inside the city have increased the index.

Gamemasters desiring a little more fever in their fever dreaming city may want to set the initial Chaos Index higher (the author would). Setting it from 2 to 5 will cause events in to be stranger and set off some of the triggers. Setting it in the 6 to 9 range will make the city downright weird and decidedly more dangerous. Because Marlinko is a borderlands area, with a foot in the rational order of human civilization (and not the full-on otherworld of the Slumbering Ursine Dunes), the Index will never rise higher than 9.

Actions by the players, or even their mere presence in certain areas (especially those in nearby points in the Dunes and other mythical wilderness), also affect the Index; add or subtract relevant actions (or others of the Labyrinth Lord's devising). Move the Index up and see the effect it has on the urban environment.

PARTY ACTIONS THAT HAVE AN IMPACT

Each round trip to the Slumbering Ursine Dunes, the Weird (supernatural wilderness) or other adventure site +1

Each casting of a third or higher level spell in Marlinko +1

Crossing the threshold of the Tomb of the Town Gods (each time) +1

Killing František +5

Killing Vatek son of Vatek +1

Killing 3 or more of the nun-maenads -2

Killing Kugel the wight -1

Killing Lady Szara -5

Clearing a major dungeon (3+ levels) such as the Glittering Tower within 20mi. of the city -4

Clearing a minor dungeon (1-2 levels) within 20 miles of the city -2

Killing monster above 6 hit dice withing 20 miles of the city -1

-2 or less The Weird Ebbs

0 Equilibrium

1-2 The Weird is Rising: There is a tangible, mildly electric buzz in the air. Roll once every day on the following chart:

1d6 Event

1-2 No event.

3-4 Mercurial Townies. Strange fluctuations in moods seem to grip the local yokels. Ignore the usual reaction rolls if used, all encounters for the day will either have the local residents being amped-up / friendly / exuberantly warm or argumentative/quick-to-temper/supremely grouchy in their interactions with the party.

5-6 Tiger-Wrasslin'. Servants and criers of Jarek the Nagsman (NPCs of Note, p. 20) announce his first bout: a single header with Old Slinky Panc for a prize of 300 gp (see p. 61).



Jarek the Nagsman

3-5 **Shit's Getting Weirder.** Roll once every day on the following chart:

Roll

1d12 Event

1-2	Cult Rumbings. The nun-maenads of the Church of the Blood Jesus flock begin committing a wider range of murders and kidnappings (70% chance that hireling of the party gets kidnapped; if not rescued in two days he/she will be ripped apart in a <i>sparagmos</i> rite).
3	Street Blessings. Priests of the Sun Lord and lay clergy from the Brothers of the Other Mother are out en masse in the streets today trying to curb the weird by offering blessings (and collecting "suggested donations" of 20 gp). There is a 50% chance that the first group of clerics the party encounters are in fact hucksters (and a further 30% chance that 1d4 pick-pockets will be among the group plying their trade). If a donation is given to a legit group there is a 25% chance that a priest will cast an honest to goodness <i>Bless</i> (LL p. 20) or <i>Protection from Evil</i> (LL p. 24) spell.
4-6	Blood Rain. A thick red rain falls all day, leaving pools of a syrupy substance that coat the streets with sticky puddles. Distantly above the thunder can be heard the distant moans of the Sun Lord as he is whipped by the silver chains of his estranged divine wife. By long standing religious tradition all residents will wear a single item of mustard-yellow apparel in solidarity with their suffering deity. Any character not so adorned will suffer a -2 to reaction checks for the rest of the day. (Though annoying and dramatic, the rains produce super nutrients to the soil that increase crop yields beyond earthly medieval equivalents.)
7-9	Street Brawl. A dispute between 2-3 groups of citizens about a seemingly tiny detail of theology, legal theory or gaming activity boils over into a straight up brawl. There is a 50% chance that the brawl will turn into a full-on riot in a single turn incorporating 1d4x100 citizens of the contrada who will set fires and randomly beat those who are not from the ward. There is a 75% chance that a group of 1d12 otherwise-normal people attacks the party if they are not recognized members of a local contrada. Otherwise-normal People: AC: 9, Hp: 2, 0-level, Attk: 1 (weapon), club d4, XP: 5.
10	Jarek the Nagsman (NPCs of Note, p. 20) announces his second bout: a double header tiger-wrasslin' (see p. 61) with Simka (600 gp prize) and Pan Meow-Meow (1000 gp).
11	Street Party. Most to all residents in a random contrada will host a spontaneous, multi-block street party complete with bonfires, binge drinking, badger juggling and public lewdness. All businesses will be shut down city-wide and no commercial transactions will occur.
12	Comet Sighted. A long hot white comet is seen slowly streaking over the night sky for 1d6 days. Cold-based magic is doubled in intensity throughout this period.

6-9 Shit Got Weird. Roll once every day on the following chart:

Roll

1d12 Event

- | | |
|-------|--|
| 1-2 | Monsters in the Night. A dark cloud and sense of dread hangs over the city during the day and town residents bolt home to bar their doors. All encounters at night should be made on dungeon and wilderness encounter charts of the Labyrinth Lord's heart's desire. At the first cock's crow in early morning, the critters will vanish. |
| 3-4 | Mass Hallucinations. Roughly a third of the local citizenry (encounters will be effected at 50%) suffers from reoccurring hallucinations throughout the day. Citizens can be seen in the streets howling, gripping their faces, pretending to be animals, running down the street bare-ass naked, etc. Unaffected residents will be either at home with doors locked or outside administering to the crazed. |
| 5-7 | Night Visitations. Deep disturbing nightmares haunt all who sleep in the city. Hit points are not regained and spells cannot be memorized. The entire population is grouchy and sleep deprived, -3 to reaction rolls. |
| 8-9 | Group Wedding. A massive marriage ceremony presided over by Elder Pavol the Younger, the local high priest of the Sun Lord, occurs in the Tomb-Plaza of the Town Gods involving hundreds. Among the traditional marriages will be small polyamorous groups seeking a mass marriage, several peasants desiring to marry farm animals and a noble lady seeking to marry a broom handle. |
| 10-11 | New Cult. The cult of the Fifth God rears its head. Stolid, bourgeois housewives in Yare Domesman Contrada hire thugs and tax assessors to kidnap locals and dump them inside the Tomb of the Town Gods as "offerings." 60% chance that the party, as a group of weirdos and likely foreigners, is targeted. |
| 12 | Demon Rampage. Some dolt unwittingly sets off a trigger in the Weird that releases a hate-dream avatar of Revoc from the Tomb of the Town Gods, a hideous frog-tongued demon. The demonic avatar will rampage for 1d4 hours destroying buildings and killing anyone it comes across before being satiated and returning to Revoc's mind. If slain the Rada will present the party with 2000 gp, honorary citizenship and a life-time supply of rendered pork fat.
Frog-tongued Demon: AC: -2, Hp: 50, HD: 9, Attk: 3 (claws 1d3/1d3, razor tongue 4d4), Cause Fear, Detect Invisibility (LL p. 30), Telekinesis (LL p. 40), XP: 3,110, treat as Demon, Hezrou, AEC p. 111. |
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ON THE BUYING AND SELLING OF GOODS AND SERVICES

FASHION (SOUTH MARKET)

Though a rough and tumble borderlands, Marlinko doesn't lack for a love of haute couture (albeit provincial and strange by the jaded standards of the Overkingdom core domains). Beyond the Weird, the clothes still make the man. A wide array of clothing options are available for the discerning shopper in the South Market (see next page).

OPTIONAL RULE

Whilst in the Hill Cantons players may be awarded 1 exp for every 2 gp spent on his or her apparel. This bonus is above and beyond that of the exp value of gold acquired as treasure.

EXOTIC ANIMALS (THE GUILD OF ACCIPITRARIES, DROVERS, AND ANKLE-BEATERS)

Horned Donkey, 20 gp

AC: 8

HD: 1-1

Attk: 1 headbutt 1d3

Movement: 120'

Small, braying asses with two sharp, goat-like horns. Favored by Rada (cantonal council) members and those with a tendency to self-promotion.

Badger (Trained), 75 gp

AC: 4

HD: 1+1

Attk: 3 (2 claws 1d2/1d2, 1 bite 1d4)

War Ocelot, 250 gp

(see *Slumbering Ursine Dunes* p. 52)

Giant Robin, 500 gp

AC: 7

HD: 2

Attk: 1 peck 1d6

Movement: 120' (flying), 90' (walking)

A 6-foot tall mutated version of the common robin, specially bred by the Guild for combating Wereworms. A halfling-sized creature can ride this creature for four hours before it tires.

Tarn, 5000 gp

AC: 4

HD: 6

Attk: 3 (2 talons 1d6, 1 peck 1d8)

Movement: 120' (flying), 90' (walking)

Large vaguely hawk-like creature capable of carrying up to 500 lbs of weight. Despite centuries of training and careful breeding, the Zémian Tarn has the nasty habit of dropping riders exhibiting misogynistic tendencies mid-air.

Headgear	Cost
Jaunty Cap	3 gp
Foppish Hat, unbrimmed	5 gp
Foppish Hat, long-brimmed	6 gp
Foppish Hat, ostentatious	20 gp
Boyar Hat, furry	20 gp
Burgonet, gilded	100 gp
Footwear	Cost
Boots, ghost minotaur	100 gp
Boots, frog demon	200 gp
Sandals, penitent	2 sp
Cogs, wooden	1 cp
Sandals, hypocrite	2 gp
Shoes, pointy	1 gp
Slippers, stealthy	3 sp
Otherwear	Cost
Cod piece, adequate	3 gp
Cod piece, pronounced	5 gp
Cod piece, ostentatious	10 gp
Bodice, bonelace	10 gp
Bodice, bejeweled	100 gp
Thong, chainmail	10 gp
Clothing	Cost
Landsknecht, get-up, serviceable	8 gp
Landsknecht, get-up, elaborate	15 gp
Doublet, velvet	5 gp
Doublet, poncy	30 gp
Gown, ball	30 gp
Hairshirt	3 cp
Pantaloons	2 gp
Robe, boyar	8 gp
Robe, deo-fox	150 gp
Robe, pelgrane	300 gp
Robe, giant sable	180 gp
Robe, sackcloth	5 cp
Skirt, hooped	5 gp
Chiton, Amazon	2 gp
Toga, black	5 gp



Fraza the Curio Dealer

FOOD AND DRINK (INNS)

Halushky, Offal quality	3 cp
Halushky, Edible	6 cp
Halushky, Yummy	1 sp

White Gravy

Cost: 1 sp/clay jug

An omnipresent, semi-viscous white salty mess liberally poured on two of the major food groups of the Cantons: dumplings and halushky. Mako, a black, peppery spice ground into the gravy, is in fact a beneficial mutagen conveying an immunity to psychonauts and other meta-pathogens that affect agency.

Radegast's Dark

Cost: 20 gp/stein

The Dark is a special dark-as-night ale drawn only at select feast days in honor of Radegast, the Old God of Hosts, Fermented Drinks, and Magister Ludis. Reportedly has supernatural powers, such as the ability to pass into the "spirit realm," when enough is drunk to become inebriated. Only served at the Drunken Troll.

ARMOR (STREET BOOTHS, AVENUE OF MERCHANTS)

Half-Plate

Cost: 70 gp

Weight: 25

AC: 5

Fluted breastplate, groin protection and upper arm guards. Because of advances in metal-working in the Hill Cantons, half-plate is both cheaper and lighter than full chainmail. The gilded version costs 520 gp.

Burgonet

Cost: 10 gp

Weight: 3

The burgonet is a steel helmet characterized by a high-combed skull, brow peak, hinged earpieces and blackened sections.

RARE WEAPONS (FRAŽA'S BROKERHOUSE)

Poignard of the Overworld

Cost: 100 gp

Damage: d4+1

Weight: 1

A long, lightweight thrusting knife with a tapering, acutely pointed blade and crossguard forged from a luminescent green ore from the "falling overworld." Because of its properties it can strike otherworldly beings. Usable by Magic Users.

Ostrovan Luft-Pike

Cost: 40 gp

Damage: d6+1

Weight: 12

A 24-foot hollow steel pike crafted by the weaponsmiths of Ostrovo and employed in the tight phalanxes of the townbands of the Hill Cantons. The pike breaks down into four sections which are carried in a leather tube while on the march. Always strikes first in the opening round of melee. The weapon can be used from the third rank of a party, but only with sufficient head room (i.e. a terrible weapon in the dungeon). Deals double damage when receiving a charge.

Petard

Cost: 300 gp

Damage: 3d6*

Weight: 20

Small, conical, leather and chain bounded bomb filled with the “Seed of the Sun Lord” (an explosive material whose secrets are tightly controlled and regulated by the temple hierarchy). Typically employed to force a gate or breach a wall in a siege. The device uses a 1-minute fuse. There is a 1 in 6 chance of a dud fuse, necessitating a change out.

If an “18” is rolled, the damage dice explodes, roll another 3d6 and continue rolling if further 18s are scored.

KILLING PEOPLE (GUILD OF SLAYERS AND BLOODLETTERS)

Technically the assassins of the Guild will only accept contracts from citizens of the city who have a “proof of wronging” (evidence or sworn witnesses attesting to a slight, crime or wrong-doing). They will however provide a surrogate citizen and witnesses for a fee of three times the amount below.

200 gp: hit on low social class and unleveled local citizen, foreigner unleveled and under second level or hit dice, 75% chance of success (no refund).

500 gp: hit on middle social class and unleveled citizen, foreigner 2nd-3rd level or hit dice, 40% chance of success (no refund).

1,000 gp: hit on 4th level or high status foreigner, 30% chance of success (no refund).

The guild will not accept contracts on local nobles, Rada officials, ranking contrada officials, and any person or being 5th level or hit dice and over.

MAGIC USER SPELLS (FRANTIŠEK)

Characters who work their way into the Checkered Mage's good graces may gain access to his spellcasting or spell book. Naturally, this always comes at a price: cash on the drum and the inevitable quest to find such and such item in some long forgotten murderhole or the like. (See Chaos Index for some possible related hooks). Depending on the severity of the quest and his feelings toward the character (or party), he will also invariably reduce the cash amount to a third or half the typical rate. He will cast *Geas* on the leader of a particularly untrustworthy party.

Any First Level Spell:	100 gp to cast/250 gp to copy to spell book.
Any Second Level Spell:	200 gp to cast/500 gp to copy.
Third Level Spell (50% he has it):	600 gp to cast/1500 gp to copy.
Fourth Level Spell (30% he has it):	1500 gp to cast/4500 gp to copy.

AUGURIES AND FORTUNES (SERENE GUILD OF SEERS, AUGURS, RUNESCASTERS, AND WAIN-WRIGHTS)

Answers in Clear, Parseable Language:	4,000 gp
Answers in Cant, with Occasional Admissions of Ambiguity:	1,000 gp
Parable Based on the Life and Works of the Sun-Lord:	500 gp
Babble in an Unknown Tongue:	100 gp
New Wagon Wheels:	5 gp (includes installation fee)

HIRELINGS (THE GUILD OF CONDOTIERRE, LINKBOYS, ROUSTABOUTS AND STEVEDORES)

Hiring “scab” labor or incurring too many hiring fatalities can lead to blacklisting within the Guild. Hiring on a man-at-arms costs 30 gp monthly, while a linkboy, torchbearer, or other non-fighting position can be hired for 15 gp monthly. Members of the guild come with their own equipment (and sensibly deposit their hiring fees in the bank before joining the group).

Hirelings available at start of play (plus those listed in *SUD* p. 60):

1. Bohuil, Man-at-Arms, Hp: 3, scale, trident. Pudgy dude who looks a whole lot like a former stable-hand at the Flaming Goat.
2. Otto, Man-at-Arms, Hp: 3, studded leather, light crossbow, dagger. Former “repossession artist” for the League of the Free Handed.
3. Yaroj, Man-at-Arms and former peasant, Hp: 4, scale mail and shield, spear. Reeks of goat smell.
4. Branko, midget Man-at-Arms on a “vision quest”, Hp: 4, half-plate, pointy hat, short sword. Has a fevered, dreamy look to his eye. Bag of lotus powder.
5. Danika, non-spell casting priestess and member of the Starry Void secret society, Hp: 3, half-plate, sabre, throwing stars. Dark deep-set piercing eyes, rarely speaks.
6. Simple Sasha, Man-at-Arms and former village idiot, Hp: 6, leather, lt. crossbow, dagger.

7. “Boy”, gaunt bronze-skinned elderly linkboy wearing only a loincloth, Hp: 4, strange-barbed and painted dagger.

8. Vlod, Torchbearer and scullion, Hp: 2, meat cleaver, torches. Anorexic, refuses to taste his own food.

HIRELING REPUTATION CHART

The Guild of Condotierre, Linkboys, Roustabouts and Stevedores works to protect their members from sadistic employers, hazardous workplace conditions, and other abuses frequently heaped upon hirelings by PCs.

As such, the following is an optional reputation system for tracking the party’s relationship with the guild. The party’s reputation starts at zero, and is modified by the following:

- 1 if a hireling is killed
- 2 if multiple hirelings were killed over the course of a delve
- 1 if a hireling was left behind in the Weird
- 1 if a hireling is treated poorly
- 1 if a hireling is forced to undertake unnecessary life-threatening risks
- 5 if the party hires non-guild “scab” hirelings
- +1 if a hireling gains a level
- +1 if a hireling is treated especially well
- +2 if a PC risks their life to protect a hireling
- +1 if a hireling earns 100+ gp in a single delve
- +2 if a hireling earns 500+ gp in a single delve
- +3 if a hireling earns 2000+ gp in a single delve

Each week this modifier moves one integer closer to zero. Whenever a party visits the guild’s hiring hall, roll 1d3 and add the reputation modifier to determine the number of hirelings available. The maximum amount that the hireling number roll may be modified is 3, either positive or negative.

Additionally, parties which gain the enmity or favor of the guild may be punished or rewarded, as appropriate. The following chart provides a guideline:

+8 and higher: Patron of Labor: The guild reveals its most awesome secret to the party, the ritual to summon the Wobbly Giant (see Bestiary, p. 59). The Wobbly Giant may only be summoned to defend working people against threats of a truly tremendous scale (such as late-stage capitalism or a major demon rampaging through Marlinko). To call upon the giant, a ritual is conducted by the sorcerers of the Illustrious Workers of Wood that requires 1d6x1000 gp and a quest item of the Labyrinth Lord’s devising.

+4 to +7: Friend of Labor: The Illustrious Workers of Wood offer to sell the party magically-animated wooden statues of pantless barbarians that will act under vocal commands of the owner for 750 gp. Shipping to anywhere in the Cantons is free.

-3 to -4: Informational Picket: Members of the Guild (including the party's hirelings in their off hours) will walk about town bearing placards denouncing the party's improper labor practices, and there will be regular speeches at the Tomb-Plaza of the Town Gods informing the public about the party's misdeeds. Regardless, the party's hirelings continue to work normally and the party may still hire from the guild.

-5 to -7: Strike! All hirelings refuse to work during negotiations, demanding fairer treatment by the party. No hirelings are available from the guild until reparations are made, costing 1d6x100 gp.

-8 to -10: Blacklisted: The party is no longer allowed to contract the services of the guild. If PCs throw themselves at the mercy of the guild, reparations of 1d6x100 gp are required alongside a six month probationary period, wherein all hirelings are paid 2x the normal rate.

-11 and lower: Enemy of the People: For their egregious abuses the party is punished by the guild summoning the Wobbly Giant (see Bestiary, p. 59) to take them to task. The exact nature of their crimes will determine how harshly this spirit of labor will treat the PCs. Lesser crimes may only require a quest in lieu of a beating, while a truly upset Wobbly Giant may roast the party within a wicker man constructed by the Illustrious Workers of Wood. Regardless, the guild will never work with the party again.

CLERICAL SPELLS (BROTHERS OF THE OTHER MOTHER)

The Brothers of the Other Mother are sly, venal, and thoroughly corrupt - which is to say, they are normal residents of Marlinko. Dealing with them is a frustrating process, with regular pauses for kickbacks, but they do provide a viable source for clerical magic.

First-level Clerical Spells:	150 gp
Second-level Clerical Spells:	300 gp
Third-level Clerical Spells:	450 gp

HERBAL REMEDIES (IRENKA THE HERBALIST)

Irenka is an alchemist, and capable of not only analyzing potions and other esoteric liquids, but occasionally brewing her own.

Potion Identification:	5 gp
Sage, Lacefoam, and Shimmerweed Smudge:	300 gp (as <i>Cure Serious Wounds</i> , [LL p. 22])
Mustard Seed and Triffid Purgative:	15 gp
Marlank Gold Pipeweed:	25 gp

REAL ESTATE

Technically speaking all land inside the city walls is owned directly by the commune itself (the body politic of the city). Structures are owned privately however and most "leases" are inheritable — though potentially revokable by the Rada. For gaming simplicity the cost of a structure is considered to be a flat combination of buying the structure, lease and any attendant bribes to city officials.

Optional Rule: *Half of the gold spent on real estate counts as experience points.*

Type	Cost (in gp)	#Housed
Anchorite/Menstruation hut	100	2
Slum hovel	200	2
Slum flat	350	6
Tower, onion-domed	3,500	5
Townhouse, whitewashed	3,000	10
Townhouse, stuccoed	4,500	15
Meadhall, campy, faux-barbarian	6,000	20
Manse, creepy and decrepit	20,000	25
Manse, swanky	40,000	30

CAROUSING IN MARLINKO

Thanks to Jeff Riens for initially inspiring this optional rule (and many similar).

Adventuring parties often find themselves overburdened with an excess of wealth, which they may choose to rid themselves of through nights of excess and debauchery. In Marlinko, PCs may choose from a variety of pleasures based on the *contrada* that they choose to carouse in.

In the **Sullen Apiarian Contrada**, PCs may treat themselves to luxurious visits to the bath-houses, partake in the lotus powder dens (an expensive but mild and effervescent high), and sample the craft beers of the Flaming Goat. Cost: 1d8x100 gp.

In the **Mendacious Mercator Contrada**, all the pleasures of the South Market can be taken in. a variety of entertainments are offered, ranging from the mundane (street performers) to the lurid (after-hours back alley stalls that cater to unmentionable tastes). Cost: 1d6x100 gp.

In the **Yare Domesman Contrada**, psychic journeys (later only to be hazily recalled) can be undertaken from the comforts of a couch with liberal applications of Marlinkh Gold and Radegast's Dark. Cost: 1d4x100 gp.

Finally, in the **Golden Swine Contrada**, those desperate to forget their woes on the cheap can risk the powerfully harsh nightmare fuel that is hruz, a mollusk-paste that provides a short and highly addictive oblivion. Cost: 1d3x100 gp.

Carousing earns PCs experience equal to the amount paid in gp; that is, unless they Lose Their Shit, in which case no experience is gained.

LOSING YOUR SHIT

Sometimes an evening's pleasures can prove to be more than an insufficiently-jaded celebrant can handle. If the die roll made to determine carousing cost is higher than the level of the PC, the carouser must save vs poison. Alternately, if the PC has insufficient funds to cover expenses, he or she loses all gp and automatically fails the saving throw. Success indicates that, while an unpleasant affair, the carouser suffers from no additional ill effects. If the saving throw is failed, however, the PC must consult the table for the appropriate *contrada* below:

Several of these entries result in a carousing PC ending up trapped in a dungeon or other terrible location. These are designed to provide PCs with a tense and challenging experience, but are not intended to be certain deathtraps. Remember that PCs won't be wearing their armor and equipment, and will be somewhat stealthier than the average war-bear. Give them a fighting chance - you'll be dropping them in another horrible situation shortly, anyway.

GOLDEN SWINE CONTRADA (ROLL 1D6):

1: You must admit that waking up caked in dried blood is an alarming experience. Although not entirely certain, you believe that you may be a new initiate in the Church of the Blood Jesus (see **Dungeon #2, p. 31**). (They are, and lay followers add +2 to all reaction rolls. On a save vs spells the PC can recall the pass phrase to enter the dungeon.)

2: Joining in the bizarre rituals of the Church of the Blood Jesus seemed like an adventurous way to end the night, but upon reflection, you feel confident that the sacrament you devoured was, in fact, one of your hirelings. (Randomly determine which hireling was devoured in the nun-maenad cannibal murder-orgy.)

3: Who is lowering that wicker basket full of hand lotion down to you? How did you end up in this well? (The PC is being held by the nun-maenads of the Church of the Blood Jesus [see Room 15a of **Dungeon #2, p. 34**] in preparation for sparamagos.)

4: Although it seemed to be a bold statement of your rugged nature and manful courage when you urinated on the front steps of the League of the Free-Handed, you wonder now if you pushed the point a bit too far. (see One-Armed Jiri in *NPCs of Note*, p. 20, for more on the League. The exact nature of his vengeance is left up to the Labyrinth Lord.)

5: Perhaps those fellows in the back alley were not as friendly as they first appeared. (The PC is about to be rolled by ruffians in the employ of the League of the Free-Handed, see *Random Encounters of the Golden Swine Contrada*, p. 11.)

6: Hruz really is an underrated vice. Certainly your mother won't miss those family heirlooms? (Welcome to addiction. Carouse in the Golden Swine Contrada at least once per week or become violently ill (-2 to all rolls) until you do so or a *Cure Disease* spell is cast.)



One-Armed Jiri

YARE DOMESMAN CONTRADA (ROLL 1D6):

1: Every detail of your boorish and obscene behaviors are currently being dissected in a wilting satire by the town crier. Perhaps it was unwise to skip on your bill at the Drunken Troll? (You've pissed off Yadis, who has made you his most recent victim. -2 to all reaction rolls in Marlinko for the next month.)

2: Though forewarned by your compatriots, by night's end you decided to 'get right' by undertaking one of Irenka's purgatives. The effect upon awakening, however, was more combustible than anticipated. (If staying in an inn, the cost is doubled in cleaning fees. Additionally, the PC feels sick and weak for the remainder of the day, suffering from a -2 to all saves, attacks and ability checks).

3: The small-minded clerks, shopkeepers, and bureaucrats of the contrada simply could not comprehend the stunning spiritual insights that your experiments with Marlinkh Gold revealed. (An utterly dull night, ½ XP gained).

4: Drinking deep of the wisdom found within a pint of Radekast's Dark, you experience a most incredible sensation as you pierce the barriers of the physical and enter a shimmering void of pure thought. Yet, what is that distant land towards which you race? (PC dimensionally travels to the Misty Isles of the Eld or a sub-plane of the Labyrinth Lord's devising).

5: In a moment of exuberance for sport and neighborly pride you struck upon the idea of prominently tattooing the convict-jockey of the Mendacious Mercator on your (1d6): 1. left arm 2. right arm 3. neck 4. chest 5. lower back, above the buttocks 6. face, in the style of Mike Tyson (+2 to all reaction rolls in the Mendacious Mercator, -2 in all other contradas.)

6: Apparently one can indeed eat too much white gravy and halushky. Who knew? (Outside of feeling bloated and queasy, the PC also is immune to all mind-control effects for one month).

MENDACIOUS MERCATOR CONTRADA (ROLL 1D6):

1: You are awakened from a fitful night's slumber by the haunting sounds of a concertina wailing plaintively from a nearby hole in the ground. In a cold sweat, you suddenly realize that you are in the condemned home of the Nefarious Nine (p. 9) and are being serenaded by the horrifically-disfigured serial murderer Taurus the Clown, whose dead eyes stare at you unblinking from within his murderhole. (Taurus will make no aggressive moves against the PC unless attacked; otherwise, he will simply stare. PCs exercising the better part of valor must save vs wands or step in a piss bucket on their way out the door. Those foolish enough to attack Taurus will likely not live to regret their mistake.)

Taurus "The Clown" Hell's-Heart: AC: 0 (Eldish plate, Dex, shield), Hp: 62, 7th-level fighter, Attk: 1 (weapon), shortsword+2 d6+2, shortbow d6, +2 to ranged attacks, XP: 790

2: Certainly this collection of hand-painted porcelain figurines of bearlings, horned donkeys, and frog demons will increase dramatically in value in the years to come (they will not). Spend 2x stated cost in gp and gain an impressive collection of tacky tchotchkes.

3: You are confident that your host was joking when he informed you that, by obscure Rada law, mispronouncing the name of the plum brandy served has technically made you his indentured servant until the next blood rain (see Chaos Index, p. 43). (Although a lax master, Hinek the Wine-Seller of the South Market will occasionally call upon the PC to undertake mundane and time-consuming tasks; failure to do so will be treated as **Fraud in Crime and Punishment, p. 38.**)

4: Unfortunately, these markings of ancient dwarven runes (bearing a striking resemblance to penises) all over your face have proven remarkably resistant to soap. (Suffer a -2 to all reaction rolls over the following week and suffer the jeers of passersby).

5: Exactly whose mummy is this that lies in your bed? Although your vision swims, you could swear that its name plate reads 'Ludek the Revered, Most Favored of Skamoplx'. (The PC has drunkenly stolen a mummy from the rada hall; unless extraordinary precautions are taken, the crime is found out and the rada retaliates by contracting the services of the Guild of Slayers (see Goods/Services Index, p. 50), as well as charging 2x normal prices on all mundane goods).

6: It is utter darkness, and you appear to be bound. Where are you, exactly? (The PC has been left within the Tomb of the Town Gods by the cult of the Fifth God).

SULLEN APIARIAN CONTRADA (ROLL 1D6):

1: Unable to stumble home, you settle for the over-packed common room of the Flaming Goat. While here, you are (1d6): 1-2 attacked by ruffians (see Randoms Encounters of the Golden Swine Contrada, p. 11), 3-4 swindled by grifters (lose 50% of all wealth on hand), 5-6 infested with bed bugs (no hit points gained from sleep nor can spells be regained until purgative from Irenka's Herbalist Shop is employed (see Goods and Services, p. 53)).

2: Sword-wielding bravos of the Sullen Apiarian do not seem to appreciate your cutting wit, especially when applied to their lackluster past performances in the Black Race. En garde!

Sullen Apiarian Bravos: AC: 8 leather jack, Hp: 5, 0-level, Attk: 1, rapier 1d8, XP: 5.

3: Who can resist the charms of the brazen flirts that cluster around the contrada, seeking personages of status to keep them warm? Roll 1d6: 1-3: a persistent and unpleasant venereal disease (-2 to all saves and an inability to sit comfortably), 4-6: meet Eliska, daughter of Hurloj Klavivo (see NPCs of Note, p. 20) and your soon-to-be blushing bride / Littlest Pavol, Hurloj's feckless son, aspiring writer, and your new fiance as of last night. It is unthinkable that a Klavivo engage in bedroom misadventures like the boorish common folk; hence, the wedding ceremony will be held this morning, and your attendance is. . .mandatory.

4: Although your memory is a bit hazy on the finer details of the night, you do feel fairly confident that your pilsner ended up on Lady Szara's dress. Certainly she isn't the type to hold a grudge? (She is, and will actively plot to destroy the PC in retaliation. See NPCs of Note, p. 18).

5: Although initially intrigued by promises of a 'happy ending' to your night at the bathhouse, your masseuse's calloused hand and expression of bored disgust left you wanting. (If the PC in question visits Lady Szara's manse during the following month and encounter the anti-or-

gone egg in Rooms 7-9 (p. 26) they will experience feelings of shame and disappointment emanating from within).

6: Although generally more discerning when it comes to your choice of companionship, you found the advances of the aged Lady Szara to be oddly compelling last night. Perhaps that is in some ways related to your awakening in a prison cell. (The PC is trapped within Room 7 of the Dungeon Level of Lady Szara's Manse, p. 23).



Hurloj Kladivo

APPENDIX A: BESTIARY

Robo-Dwarf

No. Enc.:	1d6 (3d4)
Alignment:	Neutral or Chaotic (Evil)
Movement:	60' (20')
Armor Class:	3 (or 8 buck naked)
Hit Dice:	1+1
Attacks:	1 (weapon)
Damage:	Weapon
Save:	D1
Morale:	10
Hoard Class:	XVI
XP:	25

Rogue Robo-Dwarfs (see Class description in Appendix C) will on occasion be encountered as monsters in the wild and underground. Robo-Dwarf war cries of binary numbers and smell of dusty primrose strike fear into the organic heart chambers of humans and other bipedal life-forms. When encountered in groups over five, a 2 HD leader possessing a one-charge Baton of Poison Gas (20-foot radius, Robo-Dwarves immune) will be present.

Giant, Wobbly

No. Enc.:	1
Alignment:	Chaotic (Good)
Movement:	150' (50')
Armor Class:	3
Hit Dice:	14+1
Attacks:	1 (giant hammer)
Damage:	6d6
Save:	F15
Morale:	11
Hoard Class:	N/A
XP:	2,400

Summoned by the mighty collective sorcerous will of the Illustrious Workers of Wood, the Wobbly Giant wanders the four corners of the Weird in a massive wooden box car.

Red-skinned and broad of shoulder, the giant seeks to rebuild a new world in the ashes of the old by wreaking mighty havoc among cities that gain too great of a reputation for avarice.

All possessing more than 10,000 gp must save versus magic or flee on first sighting the Wobbly Giant. In his presence, not a single wheel will turn. He carries no treasure with him, other than the clothes on his back and the cudgel in his hand.

Strigoi, Cantonal

No. Enc.:	1d3 (1d6)
Alignment:	Chaotic (Evil)
Movement:	120' (40')
Fly:	180' (60')
Armor Class:	2
Hit Dice:	9
Attacks:	3 (touch and claws)
Damage:	1d6 claws, touch drains life energy
Save:	F8
Morale:	11
Hoard Class:	XVII
XP:	7,000

Strigoi are the foul Pahr cousins of the more common vampire and exhibit a large range of regional variations.

Mirroring the somewhat fatalistic, “what can you do?” worldview of the Pahr people, a Strigoi can either arise randomly upon someone’s normal death, or, as is more likely, upon their death at the hands of an existing strigoi (50% chance of this happening). The relative goodness or evilness of the person is irrelevant to the transformation.

Strigoi closely match the description of the *Vampire* (LL p. 101), with the exception of the following characteristics. They will appear to be aged with a slightly dried out and brittle look to them. They may not transform into a gaseous state, but otherwise retain the shapeshifting abilities of the Vampire.

They are also immune to the effects of crosses or holy symbols, but find the presentation of such as so profoundly amusing that they will lose initiative on the following round when such a symbol is presented (this will happen only once per combat).

To be fully killed, a strigoi must have at least three of the five following things done to it before it reconstitutes in 24 hours:

- Striking it with a rooster inside a sack.
- Decapitating it.
- Driving a silver stake through its shrivelled heart.
- Sprinkling slivovce (plum brandy) over the corpse.
- Cutting the body into four pieces and burying each piece on the corner of a crossroads.

APPENDIX B: TIGER WRESTLING MINI-GAME

Tiger wrestling is a novel, if potentially fatal addition to the leisure time activities of Marlinko. Jarek (NPCs of Note, p. 20) runs the only tiger-wrestling arena in town. The following mini-game can be used if players decide to throw their floppy hats into the ring.

Older tigers are used in the main, though Jarek fields three tigers of varying strength. The tigers claws and teeth are filed down and blunted to give the wrestler a sporting chance (though the tiger is still quite deadly). Jarek will have his beast-handlers step in and prevent the tiger from eating (over much) a dead contestant. The match continues until the tiger is reduced to zero or more hit points or is grappled for three round—or the contestant is defeated.

Contestants are barred from the use of magic (*Detect Magic* will be cast by Jarek's valet-mage). They are allowed to take a leather jack (AC: 8) into the ring with them.

THE TIGERS

Old Slinky Panc (HD: 4, AC: 6, Hp: 13), bounty for win 300 gp.

Simka (HD: 5, AC: 6, Hp: 20), bounty for win 600 gp.

Pan Meow-Meow (HD: 6, AC: 6, Hp: 25), bounty for win 1000 gp.

WRASSLIN'

Each round the contestant can pick a maneuver from the list below. The Labyrinth Lord selects (or rolls a d4) a maneuver for the tiger. Both maneuvers are crossed indexed for attack modifiers for the round: the contestant modifiers are on the left and the tiger on the right. Attack rolls are on the standard *LL* combat tables and are considered to be simultaneous during the round. A successful hits sends either party to the results table below the matrix.

	Pounce	Bat	Bite	Rear Claw Rake
Dodge	NA/-1	NA/-2	NA/-3	NA/-4
Punch	+1/+1	-1/+1	+1/0	+2/-1
Kick	-2/+2	-2/+2	-1/+1	+2/-2
Grapple	0/0	+1/0	-2/+2	+1/-2

CONTESTANT RESULTS

Dodge = contestant +2 to attack in next round if the contestant is not hit successfully this round.

Punch = 1d3 (plus STR modifier) stun damage on the tiger.

Kick = 1d4 (plus STR modifier) stun damage on the tiger.

Grapple = Tiger is in a hold and may not make a move in the next round other than to break free. The tiger must roll a d10 (or a d12 if its opponent has a STR of 16 and higher) under its hit points to break out. If the tiger is successfully grappled for 2 additional rounds the contestant wins.

TIGER RESULTS

Pounce = knocks contestant down, pinning him. He may not take an action until he breaks free on a roll of 4d6 under his STR. The tiger will attempt to bite him at +4 to hit for 1d4 damage each round he is pinned. (If the tiger successfully pins on a round that the contestant successfully grapples the two maneuvers cancel each other for no effect).

Bat = contestant takes 1d3 damage from paws.

Bite = contestant takes 1d4+1 damage.

Rear Claw Rake = contestant takes 1d6 damage.



APPENDIX C: NEW CLASSES

MOUNTEBANK

Requirements: INT 13, DEX 13, CHR 13

Prime Requisite: CHR

Hit Dice: 1d4

Maximum Level: None

The mountebank is the consummate con artist of the medieval-fantasy world. By use of smooth talk, sleight of hand, and magical illusion the mountebank stays one step ahead of the law - and earns a decent living in the mean time. Because of their specialized skill set they are often also employed as spies.

As a sub-class of the thief, they are allowed to wear leather armor and use any weapon. They are also allowed to pick pockets, move silently, hide in shadows, listen at doors, and back stab as per a thief of the equivalent level. They can further use disguises as per the assassin class. All saving and combat throws are made on the thief table.

They are also able to use a new skill, sleight-of-hand, at the level they can pick pockets - plus an additional 15 percent. Sleight of hand allows the mountebank to move, switch out, or otherwise manipulate a hand-sized object without being noticed.

At third and higher levels they begin to be able to use spells from the Illusionist class spell list--their spell assortment however tops out at level 11. New spells are gained by paying — or swindling — resident illusionists.

They are restricted to only using magic items open to thieves until ninth level at which time they can also begin to use items available to illusionists. An exception is for scrolls which they can employ at any level under the following conditions [Thanks to Evan Elkins for use of this paragraph from his own excellent Vancian-inflected take on the class]:

To use a scroll successfully the mountebank must make a saving throw versus spells with a penalty equal to the level of the spell.

If the saving throw is failed, the opposite of the intended effect of the spell occurs, usually in a way that is reflected back on the mountebank.

A mountebank may also attempt to cast a spell directly from a spellbook, but the spell disappears in the same manner as a scroll.

Mountebank Level Progression

Experience	Level	Hit Dice (1d4)
-	1	1
1,565	2	2
3,125	3	3
6,251	4	4
12,501	5	5
25,001	6	6
50,001	7	7
100,001	8	8
200,001	9	9
300,001	10	+1 hp only*
400,001	11	+2 hp only*
500,001	12	+3 hp only*
600,001	13	+4 hp only*
700,001	14	+5 hp only*
800,001	15	+6 hp only*
900,001	16	+7 hp only*
1,000,001	17	+8 hp only*
1,100,001	18	+9 hp only*
1,200,001	19	+10 hp only*
13,000,001	20	+11 hp only*

At ninth level, the mountebank attracts a crew of 2d6 grifters, con-men, and other ne'er do wells (1st level mountebanks) as followers.

Mountebanks cannot be lawful or “good” in alignment.

Beginning at first level, a mountebank can use their smooth fast talking and arcane powers to create semi-magical effects. All abilities are dependent on the character being able to talk in a language understandable to the target.

Mountebank Special Abilities

Level	Ability	Duration
1	Flim Flam, raises CHA to 18	1 turn, +1 per level
2	Hustle, lower or raise a price in a commercial transaction by 10 to 40%	Immediate
3	Gain Illusionist spells (see below)	N/A
4	<i>Charm Person</i>	1d4 hours
5	Manufacture Flash Powder, causes <i>Blindness</i> (AEC p. 49) in a 10' radius, one batch a day with appropriate materials (150 gp)	Immediate

Mountebank Spell Progression

Level	Illusionist Spell Level				
	1	2	3	4	5
3	1	-	-	-	-
4	2	-	-	-	-
5	2	1	-	-	-
6	3	2	1	-	-
7	3	2	2	-	-
8	3	3	2	-	-
9	4	3	3	1	-
10	4	3	3	2	-
11+	4	4	3	2	1

ROBO-DWARVES

Requirements: CON 9
Prime Requisite: CON
Hit Dice: 1d8
Maximum Level: 12

Strange tales are told in these hills of the appearance of squat constructs from beyond the Weird. Said to be made of equal parts living animate stone, whirling mechanical gears, and living tissue, these so-called Robo-Dwarves are the freakish creation of an irresponsible higher power.

Some blame the baleful White God, others an extra-dimensional ur-dwarf called Xhom. It matters little.

Though fleshy in feel, their skin is composed of a dull greyish-silver matter (natural armor of AC 8 if not wearing any other armor) and their eyes an unsettling black with no iris. Their hair is always a greasy, lanky black, and exudes an odor vaguely reminiscent of fresh primrose. Beards are always on the patchy short side with pencil-thin mustaches.

Robo-dwarves always speak in a halting monotone that makes vague references to “The Future”. They can speak their own tongue (Xho), common, dwarvish, and a halting pidgin tongue with living statues, gelatinous cubes, lurkers above, piercers, gas spores, rot grubs and other “dick” monsters. When angered in conversation, small black wisps of brimstone-smelling smoke issue from their ears.

Robo-dwarves consume no organic food, no water or distilled spirits—with the inexplicable exception of herd-animal milk which seems to have an intoxicating effect on their constitution. Indeed organic food and water consumption is so toxic to their system that if forced to do so they must save vs. poison in order to prevent themselves from exploding inwardly. For sustenance they must consume one flask of lamp oil every third day and are fond of snacking on gravel and small bits of rusted metal.

Robo-dwarves have a deep set and perhaps unwholesome attachment to metal armor, especially that with outlandishly fluted and raised flourishes. They are banned from wearing leather or other armor composed mostly of organic matter and will prefer to go buck naked (they have no naughties) if they can not find and use metal armor. Though they greatly prefer helmets with large protruding spikes, they will make do with unadorned helms in a pinch.

Robo-dwarves share the same special abilities and disadvantages as their full-fleshed counterparts. Their Robotronic eyes grant infravision out to 60 feet, and they have a 2 in 6 chance of noticing weak spots in stone work, detecting traps, false walls, hidden construction, or noticing subtle slopes. The Robo-dwarf must lay their hands on stonework in the general vicinity and use their special stonepathy mental powers to “commune with the rock” for this to happen.

Robo-Dwarf Level Progression

Experience	Level	Hit Dice (1d8)
-	1	1
2,251	2	2
4,501	3	3
90,001	4	4
18,001	5	5
36,001	6	6
80,001	7	7
160,001	8	8
310,001	9	9
450,001	10	+3 hp only*
600,001	11	+6 hp only*
750,001	12	+9 hp only*

APPENDIX D: COMMON NPC NAMES AND NICKNAMES

COMMON NAMES

Female Names

1	Adela
2	Alžbeta
3	Bohuslava
4	Danika
5	Darja
6	Dobravka
7	Dušana
8	Eliška
9	Hedvika
10	Irenka
11	Jarka
12	Jarmila
13	Jitka
14	Kaja
15	Koška
16	Lonka
17	Mila
18	Magda
19	Maja
20	Marika
21	Matka
22	Miloslava
23	Radka
24	Rusina
25	Slavina
26	Svetlana
27	Uldegind
28	Zara
29	Zuzaka
30	Zuzu

Male Names

1	Aleš
2	Alos
3	Adalfuns
4	Bedrich
5	Blažoj
6	Bohdon
7	Bohumil
8	Bohimir
9	Casimir
10	Cenik
11	Dagmar
12	Dalibor
13	Dalimil
14	Dobromil
15	František
16	Hinek
17	Janoš
18	Jarek
19	Krk
20	Libor
21	Luboš
22	Ludek
23	Mirek
24	Miroslav
25	Ondrej
26	Pavol
27	Radko
28	Radomil
29	Radoš
30	Vilem
31	Zikmund

NICKNAMES

Hill Cantoners are inordinately fond of nicknames. Indeed Second Naming Day, a holiday in which compatriots and frenemies are invited to attribute an ironic, satirical or obtuse nickname to the unfortunate citizen is a large coming-of-age ritual in the region. Though some attributed nicknames can be quite cruel, Cantons etiquette forbids making light of a person's unflattering physical characteristics (there will never be a "the Fat" for instance).

Common Nicknames

1d8 Nickname Type

- 1 A primary color ("the Red", "the Blue")
 - 2 An off-shade ("Cerulean Cetek" or "the Teal")
 - 3 An archaic adjective ("the Equipollent")
 - 4 A common but perhaps random seeming descriptor ("the Scarce", "the Willing")
 - 5 An archaic profession not practiced by the target ("the Nagsmen", the "Scrimshriver")
 - 6 An ironic nickname ("Little Pavol" for a large man)
 - 7 A character flaw ("the Underwhelming")
 - 8 Two nicknames used by differing sets of associates (roll twice).
-

APPENDIX E: PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

As a Texan the author respects the right to ignore, mangle and change any pronunciations in this here city adventure. For the curious or steadfast here are how letters and names are pronounced in the local language, Pahr (reflecting some psychic reverberations from our Earth, Pahr is highly similar to the Western Slavic family of languages).

c	ts
č	ch, as in “church”
ch	kh, lightly guttural, as in Earth German “Bach”
Ď	dy, e.g. dábel = dyah-bel
ě	ye
g	g, always hard, as in “get”
j	y, as in Earth German “Johann”
š	sh
w	v
ž	zh, like the s in “treasure”

EXAMPLES:

František, FRAN-ti-shek

Vatek, VAH-tek

Jiri, YI-ri

Jarek, YAR-ek

Szara, SUZ-ara

“Old Slinky” Panc, Pan-TS

Habeka “the Celestial Lady”, HA-be-ka

Včelar, vu-CHE-lar

Obchodník, Ob-khod-NIK

Svině, Su-vin-EY

Soudce, SOU-duts-ey

Fraža, fra-ZHA

Hurloj Kladio, HUR-loy KLA-dee-vo

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