



# BETRAYAL AT SIRADORN



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## *Rumours & Hooks:*

Messenger ravens have stopped arriving from *Siradorn*, an important iron ore outpost in the barbarous *Great Plains*. Merchants in the walled city of *Port Brax* want someone to investigate before they send out the next caravan in a few months.

Siradorn is a fortified outpost located in the Great Plains, amidst several hostile barbarian and beastmen territories. Founded on an iron mine, its grey smoke plumes can be seen for miles, constantly curling upwards from the fort's smelting furnaces.

Periodically, wagons of refined ore depart for Port Brax care of heavily armed caravans, before returning some months later for the next shipment. Guarding the wagons in either direction is dangerous but lucrative work, and for those planning to explore the plains more fully, Siradorn serves as a relatively safe stopover.

## **Danger Within**

In this instance however, the outpost is under attack from within. *Mistress Kendra*, a saboteur and agent for the ruthless merchants of *House Tergoza*, has infiltrated the camp and is slowly poisoning its inhabitants. Disguised as a candlemaker, Kendra employs the rare alchemical concoction known as *Shennog's Veil*, a clear fluid with a slightly metallic odour that poisons the brain, slowly turning the victim mad (affects humans only).

Kendra's candles and lantern wicks (which she supplies to almost all residents) spread the toxin by scent, requiring some weeks of exposure before taking hold. Kendra has been poisoning the outlanders since the last ore shipment several months ago, and 85% of the population are now under its influence. Kendra herself carries an antidote that she imbibes daily to protect her against the effects.

*Kendra, Boss Monster*, AC 13 (leathers), HD 6 (49 hp), Knife 1d4+4 + poison, 19: As weapon, S9 D15 C10 I15 P13 W10 Ch10, L8, Mv 30 ft. Kendra may choose from the following Rogue Tricks & Techniques (up to twice per combat): *Choking Dust, Hidden Blade, Quick Reflexes, Smoke Bomb*. She may apply poison to her weapon as part of her attack action, and is never without 2d4 poison doses of poison (half *Fireblood*, half *Ghoulsheer*; LFG p.33). She wears a poisoner's ring with a dose of *Whisperfog* (LFG p.33, 34).



Additionally, Kendra carries a cache of trigger vials of a highly potent catalyst. A trigger vial may be thrown up to 50 ft and bursts in a clear 30 ft cloud that persists for 2d6 rounds. Any poisoned NPCs exposed to the cloud are instantly overcome by homicidal urges (no save) that last 2d6 hours, attacking or manoeuvring to ambush anyone nearby who is not similarly affected (they "smell" others who have "triggered", and do not target them). Against those unaffected by *Shennog's Veil* (eg the PCs), the target rolls on the Madness table on p.5 instead (*Luck* (Will)

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save resists, immediate effect, lasts 2d6 hours). Kendra's unique alchemical perfume (smells like citrus and mortar) protects her in a 5 ft radius, causing homicidal NPCs to pause dazedly before seeking out a different target on their next turn.

The PCs might become involved in this adventure by (i) being hired by Port Brax merchants to find out why messenger ravens have stopped arriving, or (ii) wander into Siradorn whilst exploring the plains for unrelated reasons.

### Great Plains

The fortified outpost is located at least five days trek into the Great Plains, an expanse of verdant grasses that grow three to four feet high. Adjacent land has been cleared as fields and the outskirts are patrolled, but beyond this rudimentary taming, the plains run unchecked. Trees are sparse, but occasional copses of oaks, willows and thorny shrub can be found.

The xenophobic horse lords of the barbarian clans ride the plains, taking advantage of their mobility to avoid the beastmen horde that controls the region. Animal life is abundant, including horses, bison, wolves and the ferocious western panther. Particularly unfortunate travellers might encounter more monstrous foes, including the last of the territorial centaurs or belligerent ogre clans. Outsiders are not welcome here, and men venture into the plains as part of heavily armed caravans, or not at all.

There is a 30% chance of a random encounter every 12 hours whilst travelling to Siradorn. If an encounter occurs, roll 1d8:

1. 2d4 *Giant Wasps* are buzzing low across the grasslands, searching for some humanoid sized prey. If they manage to paralyze a target, they will withdraw, carrying the unfortunate back to their hive (for eating and/or egg implantation).
2. A warband of 2d8 *Ogres* (LFG p.120) are clashing with 2d10 mounted *barbarians* (50%, as *Berserker* LFG

p.114) or *Beastmen* (50%, LFG p.100). If either side notices the party, they attack them too.

3. In the distance a lone barbarian wearing an animal skull mask can be seen, raising her arms and voice to the sky (Shaman, Magic User 3). Moments later, a peal of thunder echoes overhead.



4. A *Western Panther* (70%) or mated pair (30%, possibly with cubs) are hunting in the long grass, stealthily tracking the last member of the party.

*Western Panther*, AC 14, HD 6, Bite 2d6 and 2 Claws 1d6, 19: the victim has a random limb torn off (*Luck* (Con) save resists), S19 D16 C16 I3 P12 W15 Ch6, L5, Mv 60 ft.

These enormous, dark grey or black panthers are 4½ ft at the shoulder, 12 ft long and weigh more than a Siberian tiger. They are solitary hunters except during mating season when they might be found in pairs with cubs. Infamous for their vicious nature, the panthers employ a unique

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dismembering technique to toy with and disable their prey. Western panthers prefer to hunt at night, and are common in the Great Plains, where they eat horses, bison, beastmen and barbarians. They can climb trees strong enough to hold their weight.

5. 3d10 *Beastmen* hunters are loping through the grasses here, on the trail for fresh meat. There is a 50% chance they are upwind of the party and hiding in ambush.
6. A *wild fire* erupts in nearby grassland, sweeping through nearby plains, filling the sky with smoke and embers. There is a 50% chance the winds blow the fire towards the party. If so, a group *Luck* check is required to avoid being caught in the flames and suffocating smoke, causing 4d6 damage and requiring a roll on the *Injuries & Setbacks* table. Taking appropriate precautions grants advantage on the check (wearing a facemask, taking shelter in trench, rock formation or pool, etc).
7. A band of 5d10 xenophobic barbarian riders (as *Berserker* LFG p.114) appear in the distance. The travellers might be able to hide from them, negotiate passage, or neutralize the encounter in some other way.
8. 5d4 *Giant Rats* (70%) or 3d4 *Dire Rats* (30%) are scavenging from a dead bison carcass. They might take their chances against a PC however, particularly if they can isolate a small or obviously wounded target.

### Siradorn

Siradorn exists solely for the iron ore veins located beneath Area 20. Some 200-300 outlanders live and work here, mining, refining and preparing the ore for shipment to Port Brax every few months. A number of relevant businesses have sprung up within the fort, catering to the needs of the miners, guards and so on.

The wooden walls and parapets protect the outpost from beastmen, barbarians and on occasion more monstrous threats. At any one time there are 1d3+1 men in each of the nine towers or walking nearby palisades, keeping an eye out for gathering foes.

Each of the towers has a heavy duty ballistae on a rotating platform (range 500 ft, 4d6 damage or vs humanoids requires a *Luck* (Dex) save or reduced to zero hp, reload as crossbow). Outside the walls, 5 ft wooden stakes form a perimeter against barbarian riders, excepting the northern mound, which has sheer, 30 ft granite walls instead.

*Guards*, AC 16 (heavy chain and shield), HD 1, Spear 1d6+2 (two handed), Sword 1d8+1, Longbow 1d8+1, or Heavy Crossbow 2d8+1, 19: as weapon, S13 D10 C11 I10 P12 W10 Ch10, L4, Mv 30 ft.

The fields outside the walls supplement the outposts salted meat, hard tack and other shipped consumables. Six of the fields are lying fallow and another three were recently burnt by beastmen raiders. The remaining six are being harvested for wheat, beans and oats.

### Kendra's Plan

The poisoner is under strict instructions to disrupt the mine operations as much as possible, or if need be shut it down completely. By sending most of the camp mad, Kendra has largely achieved her primary goal; ore harvesting has halved and communications with Port Brax have stalled. Very soon, the most paranoid or deluded outlanders will start killing each other, further reducing morale and productivity. For the most part Kendra is happy to keep things ticking along, waiting for her scheduled escort back to Port Brax.

When the PCs arrive, Kendra suspects they are agents of rival merchants, and will keep an eye on them. If she thinks they are getting too close to uncovering her plot, she accelerates plans, personally setting off trigger vials in crowded spaces (the Alehouse, Concora's, the barracks, mine, etc) or sending her dogs out, their collars

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soaked in the trigger chemical and setting off people on the streets.

If Kendra must flee the outpost, she first attempts to clear out her locked cupboard, then steals two horses from the stables. She drops trigger vials at the gate in an effort to delay any pursuit.

### Uncovering the Poison

The poison is a clear fluid and invisible gas, but exhibits a faint metallic tang and scent. In the outpost however the fumes from torches, oil lanterns and the smelting furnace generally disguise the odour.

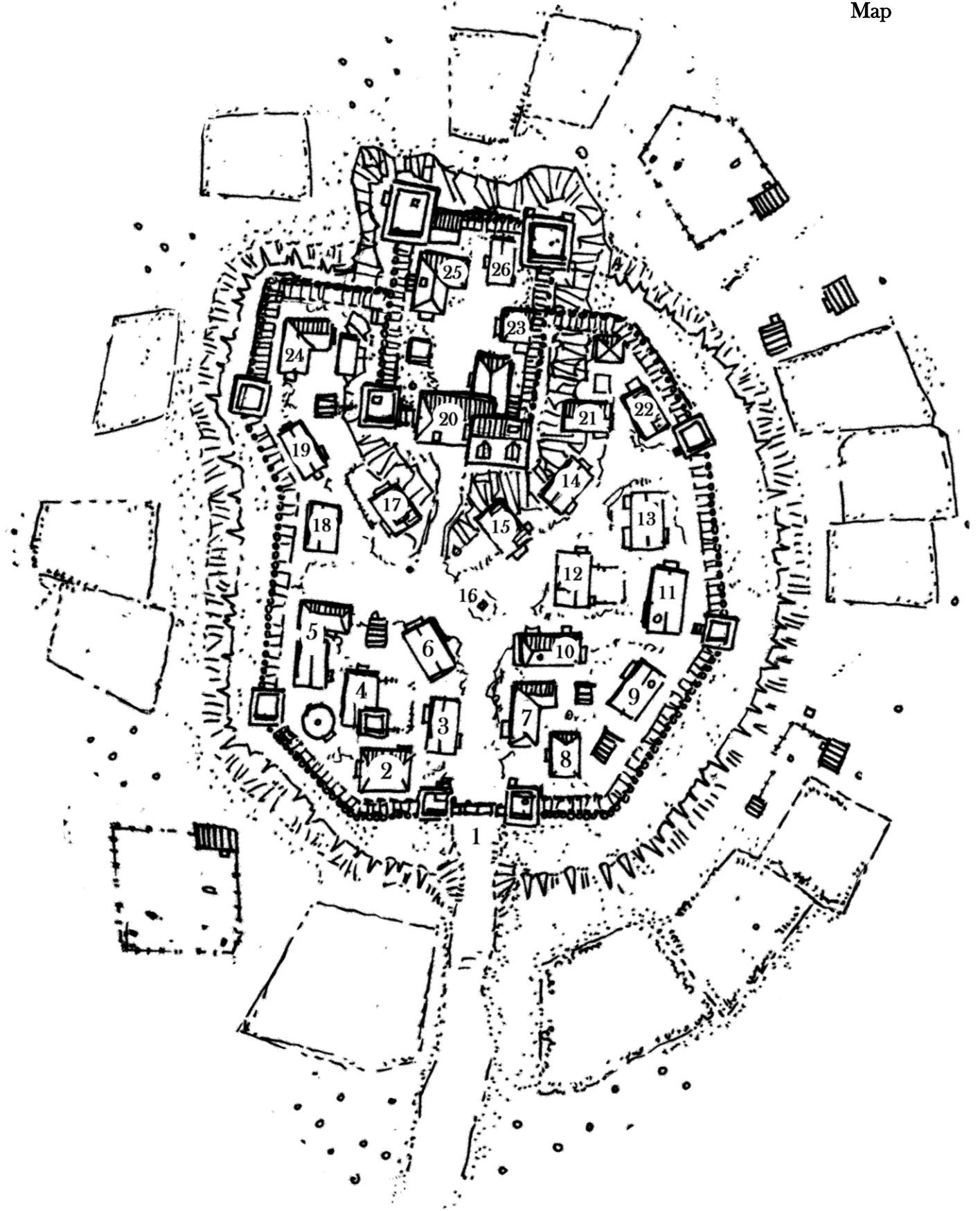


A blood or saliva sample from any of the mad may be analysed with the right reagents/herbs (which a PC skilled in apothecary might already have, or otherwise be obtained from Area 26). An Apothecary check at a -2 penalty identifies the poison. The antidote however requires very specific, very rare ingredients, the only local source of which is Kendra's locked safe in Area 22. Testing the local water or food comes up negative. Testing the air near a poisoned candle etc, or the mouth/nostrils/lungs of a victim, may reveal the vector. If the party investigates Kendra's home, they may discover the store of poison in her locked cupboard.

### Madness afoot

As noted earlier, most of the complex is labouring under the effects of Shennog's Veil, twisting their thoughts with insanity. When the PCs engage with any NPC, there is a 75% chance the character is affected, colouring everything they do. Some example madness traits appear below (roll 1d10):

1. *"The Blood God demands a sacrifice, or Siradorn will surely fall to the beastmen horde. I must take one life to save all our lives."*
2. *"Have a care what you say in this place, brother. Trust no one, not even your closest ally. They are among us, always watching, ever scheming."*
3. *"Vile witch! You may have fooled the others, but I know the demon in your heart. Mob or no mob, I will burn the darkness out of you."*
4. *"Silence! Your sycophantic fawning and mewling bootlicking sickens me. Be gone from my sight, lest I do something I regret."*
5. *Hello! My name is [insert name]. You killed my father. Prepare to die."*
6. *"The stench of your sickness is overwhelming; just standing by you I feel sullied by it. Leave this place, before you infect us all."*
7. *Surely you see him? By the side of smithy, the man with no face? Why does he follow me? Make him leave, I beg you."*
8. *It's the flames, you see. The fire. It warms us, cooks for us, gives us light. But it calls to them, the unnatural things, drawing them from beyond. Extinguish the flames wherever you find them, my friend. It's the only way to be safe."*



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9. *There are cultists here; this place is infested with them. It's the wilds, you see, it turns men's hearts. Silas knows, yet does nothing. I've seen him slithering about, whispering in dark corners. Aye, I must take action if no-one else will.*

10. *It's the Alehouse, don't you see? They're poisoning us with their food, turning us against one another. But why, and to what end? I'll wring the answers from Gudvarr's treacherous neck!*



### Street Encounters post trigger

Once Kendra sets off her trigger chemicals, if the party traverses the streets, there is a 50% chance of an encounter each trip. Roll 1d10:

1. 2d6 *Guards* come charging down the street, bellowing war cries and slashing at anyone they can catch. There is a 50% chance *Captain Ruby* (Area 2) is with them.
2. Mill workers *Edric* and his wife *Sara* (Area 7) are moving slowly through the street, eyes bulging, wringing their hands and making awful swallowing noises. They mean to snatch someone, drag them into an alley, and wring their neck.
3. The smith *Mord* and his apprentice *Sharn* (Area 24) are breaking into a nearby house with their hammers, smashing through the door. Their faces are locked in grim, froth covered rictus'.
4. 2d6 *Hunters* (Area 4) swarm the street, firing their bows at anyone within range. They sound their hunting horns in short, frenzied blasts as they go. Some have bite wounds on them (they slaughtered their hounds in their kennels). There is a 50% chance *Damir* is with them.
5. 3d6 miners (as *Outlander*) are lurching down the street, soot and blood stained. They attempt to swarm a target, pinning them to the ground before puncturing them with picks or smashing them with hammers. Their purple neck and forehead veins throb horribly. There is a 50% chance *Furnace Master Rogirus* (Area 20) is with them.
6. 2d4 *Outlanders* with barstools and broken glasses or steel mugs are breathing heavily, bashing or stabbing an already mangled corpse in the middle of the street. There is a 50% chance *Gudvarr* and his two cooks are with them (Area 5).
7. 3d4 scantily dressed brothel workers (as *Outlander*) and *Concora* (Area 17) appear at the end of the street, gripping knives. Silently, they move forward purposefully, breathing in a disturbing, hyperventilating manner.
8. 1d3 *Guards* on duty in a nearby tower (see earlier) fire a ballista at the party, hooting and crowing as they do so.
9. The weavers *Carillo*, his wife *Meri* and children *Arlo* and *Cidia* (Area 10), are hiding in a nearby alley, gripping braided cords in both hands. They intend to sneak up on and garrote the next passerby.
10. The Overseer, *Silas* (Area 25) emerges from a nearby building covered in blood. His jaw is clenched with such force that the grinding of his teeth can be heard. Raising his battle axe in a white knuckled grip, he surges towards the party making primal grunting noises.

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## Outpost Locations

### Area 1 - Entry Gates

Large wooden entry gates are set into 12 ft log walls, barred with two sturdy beams. 2d4 guards are on duty at the front wall at all times. Humans are generally admitted with minimal questioning, subject to any madness complications.

### Areas 2 & 7 - Barracks

These moderately sized barracks contain up to 3d6 men, most sleeping in bunks or hammocks. Up to 50% of them have access to heavy crossbows and shields. They are otherwise armed similar to the tower guards and police the streets if not on wall duty or field patrol. The guard captain is *Ruby*, a fearless red head with twin shortswords (with spring loaded spike pommels) and uncanny speed (Fighter 3, Dex 17, advantage on initiative checks). The deeply insane falconer, *Henmok* (see Area 21) is shackled here in the watch house cells.

### Area 3, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 19, 21 - Domiciles

3d6 outlanders live in each of these dwellings, on small bunks or hammocks, most miners or labourers. All have access to basic weapons, leather armour and 50% have short bows.

*Outlander*, AC 11 (leathers), HD 1, Hammer/Axe 1d6 or Short bow 1d6, 19: as weapon, S12 D10 C12 I10 P10 W10 Ch10, L4, Mv 30 ft.

### Area 4 - Hunter's Hall & Kennels

3d4 hunters armed with short bows, knives and short bows sleep on bedrolls or hammocks in this small hall. The western kennels house 3d4 loyal and ferocious hounds. The best tracker is *Damir* (Ranger 3), a short but agile Midlander with a battered cloak, mighty beard and loyal falcon friend, *Wix*.

*Hunter*, AC 12 (leathers), HD 1, Knife 1d4+1 or bow 1d6+1, 19: as weapon, S11 D13 C10 I10 P13 W10 Ch10, L4, Mv 30 ft.

*Hound*, AC 12, HD 1+2, Bite 1d4+1, 19: knocked prone, S13 D14 C15 I2 P12 W10 Ch6,

L4, Mv 60 ft. Advantage when tracking or flanking.

### Area 5 - The Alehouse (Tavern)

The *Alehouse* is an "L" shaped wooden tavern, single storey, with a large common area and handful of tiny rooms. The walls are roughly cut and two hounds sit by a hearth fire. The food is cheap and hearty, the ale brown and bitey (house favourite is *Bloodgut Stout*, see Area 18). A few bottles of wine might be found out back for the right price. The proprietor is a blonde haired hulk with a handlebar moustache named *Gudvarr*, a hard but brave soul "making his fortune" in the wilds while his family remains in Port Brax. He is assisted by two cooks, *Illa* and *Karsen*. 3d4 patrons are typically present, along with 1d3 of Concora's escorts (Area 17).



### Area 7 - Mill & Potter

The small mill and pottery is operated by a slim, middle aged man named *Edric* and his depressed wife *Sara*. Their children died of disease two years ago, after which they decided they could live in the port city no longer, and are now making a life for themselves as outlanders. Their



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handcrafted pots are somewhat amateurish, but they get better each season.

#### Area 10 - Weaver

A Karok family of weavers make their home here, spinning thread, sewing and mending garments for the outpost. Like all Karoks, *Carillo*, his wife *Meri* and children *Arlo* and *Cidia* are all albinos. They wear the best clothes in the outpost, highly functional and excellent quality, with hints of the latest city stylings.

#### Area 12 - Stable

This small residence and stable house 1d4+1 horses at any one time, usually messenger steeds. The stablemaster is *Leighton* (40s, athletic, bald but likes wearing brightly coloured skull caps), assisted by his young son *Yarwin* (17 yrs, already taller than his father, excellent rider and horseback archer, Ranger 1).

#### Area 15 - Borglemont's (General Store)

This general store supplies food provisions, ropes, blankets, basic tools, etc. The owner *Borglemont* (Rogue 3) is a short, dark skinned Nydissian with a wheezing laugh, and thievery brands on the left side of his neck. His house guard, a pale 6 ft Varnori named *Amgotha* (Barbarian 3, hates Karoks), is always on duty here.



#### Area 16 - Well

The outpost well is clean with a deep water reservoir. With the madness of recent weeks, a guard (usually *Darreth*, young Midlander who enjoys pipeweed) is always stationed here to ensure no-one messes with the water supply.

#### Area 17 - Concora's (Brothel)

3d4 dancers and prostitutes operate here under the watchful eye of *Concora*, a 6 ft dark skinned Nydissian ex-bouncer (Fighter 4) who brooks no violence against her workers. She broke the wrist of the last man who injured one of her male courtesans (a surly labourer, *Jax*, who still holds a fierce grudge). One of the brothel workers, *Sedira*, is an accomplished pilferer (Rogue 1, advantage on sleight of hand tests). She is growing weary of her lot in Siradorn, and might make a good hireling or henchmen, if her 200 gp debt to Concora can be resolved.

#### Area 18 - Harbrin's Brewery

The brewer's cottage is owned by *Harbrin*, 50s, a squat, round bellied fellow, with wild salt and pepper locks. The entire outpost is in awe of Harbin's various brews, in particular *Bloodgut Stout*, *Old Smashface*, *Moontime Mirth* and *Slackjaw Scrumpy*. The brewer is respected as much (if not more) than the overseer himself. Inhabitants have long treated the brewery as "neutral ground", a safe place where no man may draw arms or engage in fisticuffs. The captain enforces the neutral ground policy studiously, sometimes using to resolve quarrels peacefully, and imprisoning those who break with custom for 7 days (no questions asked, and no appeal to the Overseer).

#### Area 19 - Three Shrines

This dwelling has the shield and star motif of Argona (goddess of health, wealth, happiness and protection) carved into the top of the door lintel. The resident priestess, *Yora*, early 20s, is a natural beauty despite her scarred chin, and well liked by all. Her ministrations usually keep the fort in good spirits. Yora's healing skills are mediocre at best however, and she remains oblivious to Kendra's poisons (in fact, Kendra has cultivated a close friendship with Yora as part of her plot). The shrine includes a central altar to Argona, with secondary prayer rooms containing

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shrines to *Graxus* (battle, struggle) and *Fennir* (Luck, skill).

### Area 20 - Iron Mine

These three connected, double storey buildings are on a small hill overlooking the rest of the outpost. The iron mine entrance is here, with numerous shafts and passages dug from the earth below. 6d10 miners are working here at any one time, swapping day and night shifts. Miners who are not working are generally spending their time elsewhere in the outpost or sleeping upstairs. A second building includes the furnace for smelting and detritus, and the third building stores of refined ore (worth approximately 1 x 5 HD Lair Treasure, LFG p.140).

*Furnace Master Rogirus* (Nydissian, 40s, towering, bald and slim, branded with the skull & eel icon of the infamous *Longdusk* pirate ship on his left forearm) controls the entire operation and is normally ruthless about meeting schedule deadlines. The miners are armed with picks, hammer and similar tools, but wear minimal clothing (the physical work and furnace heat are taxing).

The mining shafts have recently connected with some unexpected natural passageways, but the workers have not been game to explore them as the iron veins don't go in that direction. They have boarded up the junction instead.

### Area 21 - Aviary

The falcon mews and raven messenger aviary is relatively large and intact, but all of the birds inside are dead, seemingly hacked to pieces with a bloody hatchet, still on the ground. The owner, *Henmok*, a lanky barbarian with red chops, is imprisoned in the barracks in Area 2. He is quite mad, mumbling incessantly about the "Devil Bird" that is slowly but surely circling inwards, coming to devour his soul.

### Area 22 - Candlemaker (Kendra's home)

Kendra lives in this reasonably sized wooden home, crafting the candles and wicks that she doses with Shennog's Veil. A small locked cupboard in a back room secures 3 doses of Shennog's Veil, 2 x Valuables (LFG p.147) and an assortment of illegal alchemicals/rare

ingredients (worth 1d6 x 100gp to the right buyer). Additionally, small vials contain 1d2 doses of *Whisperfog*, *Giant Centipede venom* and *Fireblood* (LFG p.33). A Dex (Traps & Locks) check at -3 penalty opens the lock. Three loyal hounds guard the home.

### Area 23 - Provisions Lockup

This secured building is used to store the overseer and guards' official food requisitions, including grain, ale barrels and salted meat. Some spare swords, breastplates and shields are also stored here, as well as 1d6 fire pots. A Dex (Traps & Locks) check allows entry through the front door (no windows or back door).

### Area 24 - Smithy

The smithy, responsible for making and maintaining most of the outpost's tools, weapons and armour, is run by *Mord*, a stocky and very quiet man who rarely strings two words together. He enjoys birdwatching in his downtime, and often sketches them in his precious notebook. His apprentice, *Sharn*, 19 yrs, is a broad shouldered powerhouse with great endurance (Str 15, Con 15) and a naive longing for adventure. He has been training with hammer and shield for years, and is eager to go fortune hunting in the wilds. The right party member might find him a useful hireling or henchmen, provided he/she can obtain Mord's blessing first.



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### Area 25 - Overseer's Residence

The Overseer Silas' residence is relatively large, with quality furniture but the same roughshod timber walls as the rest of the fort. A safe containing 1 x 5 HD Lair Treasure is bolted into the basement (Dex (Traps & Locks) check at disadvantage to open). There is a 50% chance Silas is conducting business with 1d6 outlanders or guards if visited here.

Silas is an ex-soldier, missing one eye care of an early battle with some *Red Tusks* barbarians when he was young. He has since adapted to his injury, but sometimes feigns vulnerability on his right side, baiting his foe before viciously counterattacking.

*Silas Redback, Boss Monster, AC 16 (partial plate, shield), HD 5 (45 hp), Battle Axe 1d8+2 or Throwing Axe (1d6+1), 19: As weapon plus 1d4 Guards come to Silas' aid, S15 D13 C15 I13 P9 W14 Ch13, L8, Mv 30 ft. Silas is a **Boss Monster** with the usual benefits (LFG p.95). He has the Fighter Adaptable ability, with the Charger style. He may change styles twice per combat. Silas breaks the usual NPC rules and may perform a single Major Exploit once per battle (does not reduce his *Luck* score, PCs may make a *Luck* save to resist).*

### Area 26 - Apothecary

The apothecary's home has been locked up tight (Dex (Traps & Locks) check to open) since *Tundle* was secretly poisoned by Kendra when she first arrived (he almost certainly would have ruined her plans). The outpost believes he died of stroke. Various healing herbs, bandages and other useful healers gear may be found here.

### Aftermath

If the plot is uncovered and the outpost saved, the PCs become local legends and are paid a sizable reward by the iron merchants back in Port Brax. A PC displaying special leadership might even be invited to take over as overseer or watch captain. Further work may be forthcoming for paid patrols of the nearby wilderness. In any event, the PCs might be able to use Siradorn as a base or secure stepping point to other more distant outlands. House Tergoza likely holds a grudge, and may seek revenge later.

If Kendra's plans prevail, the fort falls into ruin within a few months, most of the miners abandoning it as cursed. Shortly thereafter, the mine is acquired by House Tergoza, who ships their own workers out to manage the site. Within a year, the mine is fully operational again, strengthening Tergoza's position as the largest supplier of iron in the region.



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## CREDITS

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