

A DAY OUT
— AT THE —
EXECUTIONS

A RAGING SWAN PRESS EVENTURE



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A DAY OUT AT THE EXECUTIONS

Every month, the normal business of the Low Market is put aside. On this day, Languard executes those guilty of a wide range of crimes. Justice is brutal and final in Ashlar. The populace view execution day as a public holiday and hundreds converge on Low Market to witness the prisoners' final moments—pedlars sell their wares, beggars beg for coin and almost carnival-like atmosphere fills the air.

This eventure is suitable for any level PCs and can be used with any size group. While set in Languard, capital of the Duchy of Ashlar, it has also been designed to be easily adapted to virtually any GM's campaign.

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WHAT'S AN EVENTURE?

An eventure is akin to a normal adventure, but does not (normally) feature violence or physical challenges. Instead, an eventure focuses on the use of social skills and role-play to resolve the challenges, or events, therein. Most eventures take places in a settlement or on the road. Few occur in traditional adventure locales such as dungeons, ruined castles and so on.

Eventures are an excellent change of pace and can be used as filler between adventures or as situations in which PCs who have invested in social skills can shine. They are also perfect for players who enjoy role-playing.



THE EVENTURE BEGINS

This eventure presents NPCs, events and flavour to aid the GM in portraying the PCs' visit to Languard's popular (for spectators) monthly executions. For many, the executions are an excuse to stop work and to relax with friends and family. For others—relatives and friends of the condemned—they are a day of sorrow.

HOOKS

At first glance, a day at the monthly executions is not the first choice for heroes resting after a danger-filled foray into Gloamhold and its environs. However, adventurers could (willingly or unwillingly) attend the executions for any number of reasons. Such reasons include:

- **Curiosity:** Perhaps the most basic of reasons. The adventurers are bored, or curious, and decide to watch the executions. It's free entertainment, after all.
- **Meeting Someone:** The adventurers have been trying to meet someone. This person could be a potential patron, a buyer for one of the PCs' treasures looted on their last adventure and so on. The person is hard to track down, but is known to enjoy a good burning. Thus, chances are high they'll be in Low Market for the executions.
- **Invested in the Execution:** Perhaps the PCs know someone scheduled to be executed. The doomed individual could be a friend or even a criminal they helped to catch. (Note a rescue attempt is beyond the scope of this eventure, but a GM could use the notes herein to design an exciting urban adventure including feats of daring-do, desperate chases and so on).
- **Good Place to Hear Rumours:** Many rumours and much news swirls throughout the crowd on execution day and such a gathering is as good a place as any to get up to date on events in the duchy. Refer to the Whispers & Rumours sidebar for a dozen such rumours.

JUSTICE IN ASHLAR

Justice in Ashlar is often brutal and death is a sentence levied for a wide range of offences. Prison terms in Ashlar are rare; criminals are either fined, forced to endure physical punishments—public embarrassment, branding or mutilation—or are executed. The manner of one's execution is dependant on the crime. The more serious the crime, the more painful and drawn-out the execution. Common forms of execution in Ashlar include:

- **Boiling Alive:** Reserved for poisoners, counterfeiters, swindlers and coin forgers. The condemned is lowered into a large water-filled cauldron which is then boiled. Sometimes oil or tar is substituted for water.
- **Burning:** Those guilty of blasphemy, heretics, necromancers and those caught worshipping "unorthodox" powers are burned at the stake. The bigger the fire, the quicker the death. In a big fire, the victim dies of asphyxia; a small fire results in death by heatstroke or loss of blood.

- **Decapitation:** The quickest, most merciful, form of execution is normally reserved for nobles or other influential persons. Sometimes wealthy folk condemned to death can pay to have their sentence commuted to decapitation.
- **Hanged, Drawn & Quartered:** This brutal, drawn-out method of execution is reserved for traitors to the crown. Offenders are drawn behind horses from Castle Languard, hung until nearly dead before being emasculated and their intestines removed and burnt while they are still alive. Their body is then dismembered and decapitated before the remains are displayed on Traitor's Gate.
- **Hanging:** The most common form of punishment used for a wide variety of crimes. The victim can be hung by rope (around their neck), hook (rammed up under the ribcage) or cage (which results in the slowest, most drawn out death over three or more days). In all cases, the body is left to rot in plain sight as a warning to others.
- **Sawing:** This tremendously painful and bloody method of execution is used on those guilty of witchery (using magical powers to control others), adultery, murder, blasphemy and—sometimes—theft. The victim is tied in an inverted X position and then sawn in half, starting at their crotch. Normally, the sawing finishes when the executioner reaches midway into the victim's intestines (who is then left to die). A merciful version of this punishment involves the condemned instead being sawn in half from hip to hip. This results in almost immediate, although painful, death.
- **The Breaking Wheel:** Reserved for particularly hated criminals, murderers and bandits the breaking wheel brings death over the course of a long, pain-filled day (or two if the victim survives to die of dehydration). The condemned is tied to an oversized wagon wheel before having their legs and arms broken with a hammer. They are then hoisted onto a tall pole and left to die. Sometimes, birds feed on the still-living

TRAITOR'S GATE: WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Traitor's Gate is named for a singularly reviled figure in Ashlar's history—Crown Prince Ilasual Nenonen (or the so-called Bloodstained Prince). Almost 400 years ago, Arndul Nenonen died and the crown passed to his eldest daughter, Aelliah Nenonen.

Avarice and jealous consumed her young brother, Ilasual, and a decade later he tried to seize the throne. This led to the Time of the Two Crowns.

After a short war, Ilasual's forces were defeated and he disappeared. Traitor's Gate is named for the Bloodstained Prince because of the horrible death that yet awaits him if he were to fall into his family's clutches. Given the many years since the Time of the Two Crowns, and the likelihood he died unknown in the fighting anyway, it is extremely unlikely he will ever face justice. If he is still alive he is an old man (and likely far away).

condemned but often shock and blood loss kills the criminal. If bribed by friends of the condemned, the executioner shows mercy and breaks the victim's neck before beginning the rest of the punishment.

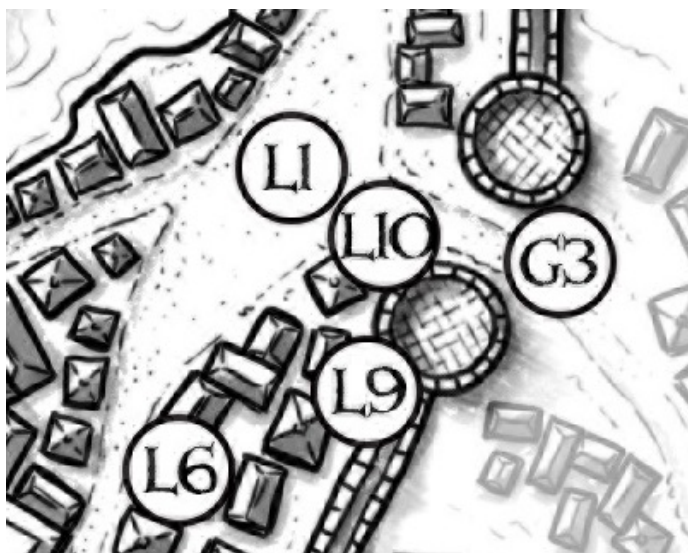
LOW MARKETS AND ITS NOTABLE SURROUNDS

For more information about Low Market refer to *City Backdrop: Languard*. For more about L6 The Orc's Head and L9 Hannu's House of Healing refer to *Languard Locations: Low City*. The tagged locations on the map below comprise:

- **G3 Traitor's Gate:** "Decorated" with the remains of traitors to the crown, Traitor's Gate is well named.
- **L1 Low Market:** A bustling market fills this muddy space.
- **L6 The Orc's Head:** Cut from a chunk of local limestone and set above the tavern's front door, the luridly carved face of an orc identifies this place as the infamous Orc's Head.
- **L9 Hannu's House of Healing:** Location trumps reputation, particularly when most clients are from out of town. Hannu's House of Healing is one of the first buildings inside the Traitor's Gate, and it advertises well.
- **L10 The Last Chance:** In sight of the corpses swinging from the Traitor's Gate crouches a tavern with a deep, shadowy porch furnished with scarred tables and a sign bearing a grinning skull with a die between its teeth.

On execution days, the Last Chance tavern does a roaring trade from early in the morning until late at night. Regulars arrive early to secure good seats on the tavern's shadowy porch. Competition for the best tables is fierce.

Other buildings around the Low Market mostly comprise business on their ground floor and family living quarters on the upper levels. Some buildings house multiple tenants. Those lucky enough to have a good view of the executions often hire out their rooms for the day to wealthy spectators who wish to avoid the crush of the crowd.



L10: THE LAST CHANCE

In sight of the corpses swinging from the Traitor's Gate crouches a tavern with a deep, shadowy porch furnished with scarred tables and a sign bearing a grinning skull with a die between its teeth. The owner is Jry, a thrifty businessman who cultivates the tavern's grim atmosphere. He starts macabre wagers about executions, discusses bounties with his regulars and supplies human knucklebones for games.

The interior is a single-room floor lit only with flickering candles and the hearth fire behind the bar. Patrons cluster around these points of light, forming insular groups that laugh at private jokes and make bets as the staff offer odds on all aspects of upcoming executions and punishments. No one sits at the bar at the tavern's far end as its counter is reserved for food preparation. Behind the bar, a hatch leads to the basement, where Jry stores food, racks his alcohol and has his personal room.

TARIFF

- **Drink:** fermented milk (flagon) 6 cp, mead (flagon) 1 sp.
- **Food:** cabbage rolls with mashed turnips 1 sp, blood dumpling soup with fried mushrooms 3 sp.

NOTABLE FOLK

Bounty hunters and off-duty watchmen are common among the patrons, making the Last Chance a surprisingly honest establishment.

- **Impi Jyrentytär** (N female half-elf thief 1) Last Chance's gloomy barmaid dresses all in black and entertains customers with her dry wit. A former street urchin who got her job out of pity, she has a good eye for trouble and a steady work ethic.
- **Jry Mustonen** (N middle-aged male human) Jry was once a brewer of middling skill but has a knack for business that earned him enough money to establish the Last Chance. He still brews but focuses more on management these days.
- **Ruska Isotalo** (LN female human ranger 3) Bald, towering and covered in tattoos, Ruska is a bounty hunter infamous for brutal methods that carefully toe the line of the law. The Last Chance is her second home, and her tendency to help staff and buy rounds has earned her goodwill. She loves her work and laughs loud at the grim jokes.

HOOKS

- A list of wanted criminals and their bounties is kept behind the bar for Jry's wagers. Impi points out a bounty to the PCs, hoping they'll collect quickly to win her a bet.
- **Execution Day Hook:** If the PCs arrive early, and snag a table with a particularly good view of the executions they could anger the tavern's regulars. While a fight is unlikely to break out—although the GM could run a brawl if desired—the regulars won't forget the PCs and could frustrate any future attempts they make at bounty hunting and the like.

FOLK

Hundreds of people turn out for the executions; most come with friends and family and make a day of it. A bustling throng of jostling folk fills Low Market. Families come for a day out, apprentices come to escape work and beggars and street vendors come to earn coin. Along with the many normal folk comprising the crowd, use the notes below to add depth and flavour to the people the PCs may meet.

BEGGARS

Beggars are drawn to the great mass of people like a swarm of flies to offal. Scores of such folk—many horribly deformed or diseased—beg for food and coin. A few such folk include:

- **Iisakki Hopea** (N middle-aged male human fighter 2) is missing his left leg. A mercenary, he lost it in a woodland skirmish a few years ago. Cast out by his company and with no resources or friends he eventually ended up in Languard. Skinny, aged beyond his years and dressed in voluminous layered rags he is a pitiful sight.
- **Ilta Keiho** (CN old female human fighter 1) is mad. She has lived on the streets for decades but constantly rambles on about her early life. If indulged, she tells a story of blood and war. In her youth, she served with Valentin Ironwolf in the south at his fortress—the now so-called Shadowed Keep on the Borderlands. She was there that fateful night when the castle fell to the Blood Moon goblins and Severed Hand orcs and fled when all seemed lost. Her cowardice haunts her yet and her regrets have slowly driven her mad. She is missing her left hand. She vaguely remembers some basic details about the castle. (See the *Shadowed Keep on the Borderlands* by Raging Swan Press for more details.)
- **Heikki Arpia** (NE male human thief 2) is a liar and a charlatan. Disguised to appear as if he has leprosy, Heikki is an aggressive, bullying beggar who picks on those who look weak and easy to dupe. Initially, he begs for coin, but if he is denied he threatens to touch his mark and infect them with leprosy—a fate worse than death. He does not relent until physically threatened or the coin is his.
- **Lempo Jurva** (N male human thief 3) isn't a beggar at all; he is Kivutar Mielo's (See "The Condemned") partner in crime. He hasn't been able to get a message to his lover and so has disguised himself to move more easily through the crowd. He intends to tell Kivutar he, and a small group of friends, will rescue her tonight. Perceptive PCs might notice Lempo appears well fed and his clothes less ragged and worn than other beggars. If confronted, he denies any wrongdoing (of course) but gets away from the PCs as quickly as possible on the off-chance they could be agents of the duke.

STREET VENDORS

Scores of street vendors, carrying bags and small boxes or pushing wheelbarrows piled high with goods work the crowd. Most sell food and drink, although a few offer macabre souvenirs including lengths of hangman's rope, bone fragments from the dead and scraps of clothing worn by the condemned as they were executed for sale. Some items are genuine; others are less so. Example street vendors include:

- **Ilta Raita** (N middle-aged female human) sells meat pies and bread from her handcart. Her young son, Tahvo (NG young male human) helps her while keeping one eager eye on the executions. He particularly likes hangings.
- **Unto Susi** (CN male human) pushes a handcart holding a water barrel; several wooden cups attached by strings clatter against the barrel. Unto sells weak ale to thirsty spectators for 5 cp a cup. He's a veteran street seller and has many friends in the Low City; consequently, he knows much of note. Patrons paying 1 sp or more for a drink automatically receive one rumour from the Whispers & Rumours table.
- **Isto Ora** (NE male human thief 2) ostensibly sells souvenirs from a small handcart. He has lengths of hangman's rope, bone fragments from murderers and the ashes from the last burning available for purchase. He does brisk business, but his real purpose is to act as a decoy for two accomplices who pick the pockets of those distracted by Isto's tall tales. All three are members of the Shadow Masks. Shockingly, some of his souvenirs are less than genuine.
- **Ukko Seppo** (LN male middle-aged human) carries a small keg of brandy on his back and tends to linger where the richer spectators gather. His young daughter, Kaija, carries a small satchel containing pewter cups which she keeps as clean as possible with several lengths of well-used rag. Ukko is desperate to acquire a wealthy patron and is obsequious in his dealings with customers—particularly those of obvious wealth and standing. A small cup of brandy costs 2 sp.

STREET ENTERTAINERS

Hundreds of people descend on Low Market for the executions, and with them come street entertainers, bards and storytellers eager to earn coin. A few such folk include:

- **Tiera Vesi** (NG male human) wanders the crowd singing songs and telling jokes. He targets children because he knows their parents will likely give them a coin to give him. He is a gregarious fellow who enjoys a drink (or four).
- **Vilutar Tapavaino** (N female human thief 2) is a juggler. She has amazing reflexes and can keep six knives in the air at any one time. She requires space to demonstrate her craft, though, which means she is often forced to the fringes of the crowd; thus, her take is not as high as it should be. She is also perceptive and sees much of what goes on in the crush.

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

Many whispers and rumours swirl about the crowd watching the executions. A PC can use diplomacy to gather information. This takes 1d4x10 minutes and requires the expenditure of 1d6 sp in drinks, bribes and so on. Encourage the player to role-play and perhaps introduce some of the NPCs listed on these pages to add spice and flavour.

Use the table below, to determine what news the PC hears:

1. Ilja Laso is innocent of the crime of poisoning. He was having an affair with his master's daughter. His master is a cruel, man protective of his family and didn't like his daughter consorting with a mere servant. (True).
2. Many bandit gangs operate in the hills to the east of the city. The duke is considering several ways of dealing with them. He might send a punitive expedition to crush them or encourage groups of adventurers to hunt them down through the offer of a bounty on captured bandits.
3. Aatami Hirvi is a poor, wretched pawn of some yet hidden foul necromancer who controlled him using the blackest magics. He is innocent.
4. During the nights following the executions, someone's been stealing the remains from where they are displayed over the gate. Whole corpses have gone missing while in other cases bits of bodies have disappeared. Guards have been increased and the disappearances seem to have stopped or at least lessened.
5. The duke himself is coming to witness these executions!
6. Kivutar Mielo the notorious thief, is to be executed today. Strangely, her death is by the cage. This potentially results in a long, drawn-out death, but also provides convenient opportunities for escape. Kivutar is popular with the common folk and has many friends. A rescue attempt is not out of the question.
7. Beggars are a scourge on common, decent folk. The duke should do something about them. If he doesn't other people will take the law into their own hands. It's happened before and it will happen again!
8. Some of the people condemned to die today are innocent. The judges at The Father's Hall don't care, though, as long as justice is seen to be done. (True, Ilia Laso is innocent of the charge of poisoning).
9. It's going to rain today. I hope that won't stop the burnings!
10. Crime is on the rise and the Watch has lost control of the Shambles like they lost control of the Wrecks.
11. Ruska Isotalo (a renown bounty hunter who drinks at the Last Chance) is responsible for catching the bandits who are to be executed today.
12. The takolen of the Wrecks are horribly people; some of them should be executed—they all worship demons!

Note, the GM should determine the veracity of the rumours listed here to better suit the campaign.

Viliutar is not a member of the Shadow Masks and thus does not ply the less legal aspects of her training in Languard.

- **Pietari Koveri** (NE middle-aged male human) is a charlatan and prankster skilled in the art of sleight of hand and misdirection. He has no actual magic abilities but has a talent for spotting gullible folk and only performs for people he thinks will pay. He is cantankerous and quick to anger.

TOWNSFOLK

Hundreds of people descend on Low Market for the executions. Use the notes here to portray peasants the PCs encounter.

- **Prusi Saarelainen** (CN young male human) has lost his parents in the crush and is beginning to get upset—tears are imminent and almost anyone can tell he needs help. PCs helping him find his parents (Suni and Vappu) find two very relieved and grateful townfolk.
- **Knut Ora** (N male human) has come to the executions so he can have a day off from working at his master's forge. Knut is a burly fellow and is slightly drunk. He is in a good mood and can't wait for the entertainment to start. He talks up his master—Maunu Toiva—a silversmith to the PCs, in the hopes of drumming up trade, making a few coins and getting into his master's good books.
- **Ilsha Hutharnen** (N male half-elf fighter 2) believes the executions are barbaric—an example of the fallibility and cruelty of humans. However, he can't bring himself not to attend; deep down he loves the roar of the crowd and the desperate pleas of the condemned. When the PCs encounter Ilsha, he is in the process of elbowing his way to the front for a better view.
- **Ahti Niera** (NE male human fighter 2) loves throwing stuff at the condemned and has brought a bag of dry(ish) manure with him. He's concealed the bag under his voluminous cloak—and so might look suspicious. Although slight of build, Ahti is a strong fellow and doesn't take lightly to meddlers ruining his fun.

THE EXECUTIONER AND HIS ASSISTANTS

The High Executioner oversees the day's proceedings. This is a prestigious and well-paid job, albeit one with a terrible down side. In the past, when a High Executioner has failed to do his job he has ended up taking the place of one of his charges.

The High Executioner's identity is a secret. He wears a cowed black set of robes that almost completely covers his face.

Additionally, the proceedings are watched over by at least two score men-at-arms from Castle Languard. While the Watch is in charge of crowd control, it is the soldiers' duty to oversee the prisoners; some have escaped, or been rescued, in the past and the duke does not want a repeat of such affronts to his authority.

THE COURSE OF THE DAY

The monthly executions held at Traitor's Gate are a popular affair. Many folk down tools for the day and view it as a bit of a holiday. Low Market fills up early, and the traders do a roaring trade selling food, drink and souvenirs to the mob.

The day reaches its climax when the actual executions begin, and once the the last of the condemned has been put to death many of the spectators drift away to their homes. Others continue their revelling in the many nearby inns and taverns.

Execution day starts early and ends late.

DAWN

Workers—and a few bored soldiers—enter Low Market to clear away any stalls or traders who have “forgotten” about the executions and who do not have the appropriate permit to maintain their position. (Such written permissions are much sought after as execution day is always busy and much money can be made pandering to the mob.)

EARLY MORNING

The workers erect several sets of wooden viewing platforms (seats thereon costs 1 sp each) and traders arrive with their wares or take over from nightwatchmen hired to watch over their stalls. Street vendors—barrowmen selling snacks and drinks—also begin to arrive to claim the best spots.

MID-MORNING

Around mid-morning, particularly keen spectators begin to arrive to claim the best vantage points. Around now, the spectator stands begin to fill rapidly as do the taverns (which open early) around Low Market.

LATE MORNING

Wealthy spectators who have hired the balconies or upper floors of buildings overlooking Low Market arrive to take their places.

NOON

By noon, Low Market is packed. The condemned, brought forth from Castle Languard's dungeons, now arrive in a procession of heavily guarded caged carts. Their arrival always excites the crowd—particularly if a notably popular or infamous individual is among the condemned. This day, eight criminals have been condemned to die. They are:

- **Osma Tapani** (CN male human thief 1) is a freelance thief who has been working in Low City without the blessing of the Shadow Masks. This is a decision he now bitterly regrets as he suspects (rightly) they tipped the watch off to his nefarious activities. Osma is to be hanged. His hysterical daughter—Dorotea (CN young female human expert 1)—soon to be an orphan watches from the crowd.

- **Kivutar Mielo** (NE female human thief 3) is a notorious thief and con-artist responsible for a slew of high profile thefts from Languard's wealthy folk. She is beautiful and beloved by the poor folk for the travails she puts their “betters” through. She has been condemned to death by hanging by cage. Kivutar is—perhaps—the most likely to be rescued, although such an attempt would not take place until the dead of night.
- **Jegor Miemo** (CN male human thief 1) has been convicted of banditry along with Urpu Ilma (NE male human fighter 1) and Tyni Panu (NE male human fighter 1). They will die on the breaking wheel. Unlike his fellows, though, Jegor has provided valuable information to the crown regards other bandit groups operating in the hills to the east of the city. His neck will be broken before the rest of the punishment is meted out.
- **Ilja Laso** (N middle-aged male human) is a servant condemned to death for attempting to poison his master's teenage daughter. While he vigorously denies his wrongdoing, the courts have spoken and so he must die. Ilja is to be boiled alive and he is terrified.
- **Aatami Hirvi** (NE male human) is a poor, half-mad wretch accused of the blackest necromancy and other foul arts. One look at him, though, suggests he could not possibly have carried out the unspeakable acts of which he is accused. No matter, he is guilty and will be burnt to death. He doesn't understand what is happening.
- **Tuure Paaso** (CE male human cleric [Dagon] 1) will be burnt to death for the crime of worshipping a fell power. He was discovered in possession of certain items which could only have a terrible, sinister purpose. While the nature of the items has not been revealed, speculation is rampant. In any event, Tuure is unrepentant and the crowd loves a good burning.

EARLY AFTERNOON

Once the prisoners have arrived, the executions begins. Each of the condemned is given a chance to address the crowd. Some use the time to confess and to ask for forgiveness in the hopes of mercy from the executioner while other ramble for as long as they can in a desperate attempt to slow the execution in the hopes of a pardon arriving. A few rant at the crowd; such speeches are often met with heckling, laughter and derision.

Death by hanging and the Break Wheel are carried atop Traitar's Gate, Ilia's boiling alive is meted out in the shadow of Traitor's Gate itself while Aatami and Tuure are burnt alive on a wood pile in the centre of the marketplace.

The executions take place in the following order of increasing pain and brutality. Those fated for the worst deaths, must wait the longest.

- **The Hangings:** The first to be dealt with are Osma Tapani and Kivutar Mielo. First, Kivutar Meilo is led to her cage hanging from a gantry overlooking Traitor's Gate. She gives a jaunty speech, which the crowd loves. Next is Osma Tapani. He begs

MINOR EVENTS

Use the minor events below to add spice and details to the PCs' day at the executions.

1. A commotion in the crowd—shouts and pushing and shoving—mark where a pick pocket has been caught plying his trade.
2. Ukko Seppo (see "Street Vendors") approaches the PCs with his keg of brandy. He hopes the PCs are wealthy and will sample his wares. If they buy from him, he circles back later in the day. He is desperate to curry favour. If the PCs buy from him, he impart one of the pieces of news in "Whispers & Rumours".
3. Light rain begins to fall. It rains for a half-hour or so before petering out. Luckily, it does not dampen the crowd's lust for blood.
4. A pair of monstrosly large seagulls swoop low over the crowd and land atop the burning pyre (if it is not lit) or one of the gantries hanging over Traitor's Gate. Perceptive PCs notice the birds appear to be observing the condemned, and in particular Tuure Paaso. In return, he regards them and some kind of unspoken exchange seems to occur before they fly away.
5. Isto Ora (see "Street Vendors") moves through the crowd loudly shouting a list of the macabre souvenirs he has for sale. He gets quite close to the PCs, before suddenly changing direction and heading back into the crowd. (He doesn't want his accomplices getting caught trying to pick the PCs' pockets—they seem too risky a proposition).
6. Someone in the crowd throws rotten fruit at one of the condemned. It hits Tuure in the face, who is incensed. The demon-worshipper hurls back a series of blasphemous curses that guarantee his assailant's horrible death.
7. One of the bandits condemned to die—Urpu Ilma—tries to make a break for freedom. He gets about six feet before the butt of a guard's spear in his belly drops him to the ground. Other guards shackle the desperate bandit's feet so he cannot make another attempt.
8. Several latecomers arrive and try to push their way through the crowd to the front. Their progress through the throng is met with swearing, cursing and some pushing and shoving.
9. A married couple start arguing. As the argument increases in intensity so do the volume of their voices. It ends with the husband stomping off. (The argument is unrelated to the executions).
10. Ilta Raita (see "Street Vendors") works the crowd, selling her pies. If the PCs buy from her and they seem like obvious adventurers, her son—Tahvo—is awestruck by their presence.
11. The crowd loudly heckles whoever is about to die; several bravos make lewd and off-colour jokes.
12. A sergeant-at-arms shoulders his way through the crowd with an urgent message for the High Executioner. Perhaps one of the condemns is to be pardoned.

for mercy and promises to mend his way. His daughter forces her way to the front of the crowd and calls out to her father. The guards and executioner look on impassively. Shortly thereafter, Osma is swinging from a gibbet set atop Traitor's Gate. The initial drop does not break his neck and he "dances" for several minutes before finally dying.

- **The Breaking:** Next, it is the turn of the three bandits Jegor Miemo, Urpu Ilma and Tyni Panu. Jegor is passive and resigned to his (merciful) fate while his two companions kick, scream and try to get away as they are strapped to the wheels. They have to be beaten by the guards. Jegor is first to die, his neck being broken with a single hammer blow. His companions are forced to watch as the executioner then shatters his arms and legs before Jegor's broken corpse is displayed on the wheel atop a high pole atop Traitor's Gate. Urpu's and Tyni's ordeals are far from over. Each is strapped to a wheel and their limbs are shattered by hammer blows. Their two wheels are then hoisted up into position next to Jegor's.
- **The Boiling:** While the Breaking is taking place, the executioner's assistants have lit a fire beneath a large cast iron cauldron standing in the shadow of Traitor's Gate. Ilja Laso—screaming—is slowly lowered into the cauldron in an iron cage. His pitiful shrieks reach horrifying levels as the water boils around him.
- **The Burning:** The highpoint of many spectator's day, burnings are reserved for those guilty of particularly heinous crimes—crimes that deserve long, lingering painful deaths. Aatami Hirvi doesn't understand what is happening to him and seems confused and bemused when led to the pyre. Tuure Paaso on the other hand is angry and struggles with the guards. When tied to his pole he rants at the crowd and calls down all manner of dire curses upon those present. He continues to curse the crowd—and the clerics who sentenced him to death—even as the flames lick at the souls of his feet.

LATE AFTERNOON

By late afternoon most of the executions have been performed; only those prisoners (Kivutar Meilo, Urdu Ilma and Tyni Panu) whose execution includes a lingering death yet remain alive. The pyre upon which Aatami Hirvi and Tuure Paaso died continues to burn brightly.

Around now, spectators starts to drift away either to their homes or a nearby inn or tavern, although some folk stay until dusk falls. The bodies of the condemned are strung up from Traitor's Gate as a warning to others.

DUSK

Now, Low Market is mostly empty and workers come to remove the various viewing stands, the wooden platform and the large cauldron used for boilings. Shortly, thereafter Low Market returns to normal and the various stallholders return to set up their booths for the next day's trading.

FUTURE ADVENTURES

The PCs' connection with the executions and the NPCs they meet do not necessarily have to finish when they leave Low Market. They might have made contacts at the Last Chance tavern or could be intrigued by the "Wanted" notices displayed therein. Alternatively, good-aligned PCs may—or may not—be morally conflicted about the fate of any bandits and thieves they apprehend as surely a quick death in battle is preferable to a slow, public death.

Additionally, several folk in the crowd could become reoccurring NPCs. Before introducing such folk to the party, consider exactly how the campaign could develop if the PCs find the individual intriguing. Such folk include:

- **Dorotea Tapani**, daughter of Osma Tapani is now an orphan, and has nowhere to turn. Mindhearted PCs who witnessed her hysterics might offer her assistance or a safe place to stay. Such kindness will not go unrewarded and Dorotea could become a useful pair of ears and eyes in the city for them.
- **Itka Keiho** (see "Beggars") could provide useful information about the Shadowed Keep on the Borderlands to the PCs. If given enough coin (typically 3 gp a week) along with food and lodgings she might act as a guide for the party if they should decide to explore that tumbled borderland ruin.
- **Isto Ora** (see "Street Vendors") has a nose for wizards and the like. He can tell when someone is interested in his wares for "alternative" reasons. While he knows little about the specifics of spellcasting, he knows that fell necromancers often use foul components in their magics. If a spellcaster PC buys such "trinkets" from Isto, he is happy to sell them. If the PC becomes a repeat customer, Isto bides his time before attempting to blackmail the PC. After all, what are a few extra coin set against the horrible fate of being burnt to death?
- **Ruska Isotalo**, bounty hunter and regular at the Last Chance (see "The Last Chance"), makes her living capturing bandits, outlaws and the like. If the PCs start to hunt bandits in the lands around the city at first she doesn't care. If they are successful, though, and start taking coin from her purse she could become a reoccurring rival to the party.
- **Last Chance Regulars** will remember the PCs if they "stole" a good table at The Last Chance. The regulars might in the future go out of the way to frustrate and stymie the PCs. Such harassment—at least at the start—would be low-grade and not end in violence (although perhaps things could slowly escalate with time).

Finally, the GM can use *A Day Out at the Executions* as the basis for subsequent execution days. The same pedlars, beggars and so on can all attend future events—the only thing requiring design by the GM are the details of the unfortunates scheduled for execution (and any special events such as an escape or rescue attempt).



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