

The Lost City of Jershon



YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS THIS
RuneQuest
CLASSIC ADVENTURE

THE LOST CITY OF JERSHON

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INTRODUCTION

Long ago, a treasure hunter named Joktan Heth, (who had been presumed dead), suddenly showed up in the small river town of Talara with tales that simply couldn't be believed. He claimed to have found an ancient subterranean city hidden underneath one of the many mountains in the uncharted lands to the north. He had nothing to show for his journey, and what was left of his clothes were tattered and torn. Many thought he had simply lost his mind, while just a handful thought he made up the story to account for his miserable failure as a treasure hunter.

Close to ten years later, another story came up about a city hidden under a mountain. The pair of elves who discovered the way into the city had a much more stately grace about them, and people listened to their story with a little less skepticism. They mentioned a magic stone that let them reach the underground river, they claimed their clothes contained unique threads in them; they talked about racing lizards and mentioned a legend about an angry god. The only proof they had was a large dead bug that seemed to have almost burned up in the sunlight. These two elves finally gave the city a name: Jershon.

Once the city had a name, it seemed to make it real for those adventurers who sought it out. The elves could not (or would not) give directions, but claimed they could feel the city calling them and without warning, the two left one morning and were never heard from again.

The first wave of adventurers tried to follow their path, and many later groups tried to follow those first groups. Most returned empty handed. They couldn't find the elves, they couldn't find the city, and they weren't able to find the treasures they had hoped to find. Some never came back. Since Talara was a river town, tales of the legendary city went up and down the river, plus along the few roads in the area. More and more people became aware of Jershon, and with each retelling, the legend of the underground city became more and more fantastic. Some thought



Jershon was the domain of gods and that no mortal should ever enter, others thought it was an ancient store of magic the world had ever seen, while others thought it was a paradise on Earth. Then again, many thought it was just a myth, and some even thought it was a story created by the city of Talara to lure gullible adventurers and tourists into their city.

Talara did boom during that time, doubling in size and taking control of most of the river in that area. Of course, over the generations, the rumors died down. The tales became stories sung by bards or told late at night over campfires. Soon no one was left who believed the city was ever a reality, and some often would use it as a humorous term for a person who had gone mad (as in "Looks like he went to Jershon."). The tales became sparse; the city of Talara dwindled and lost much of the power it once held. Jershon was a story for mothers to tell their children and no one believed a word of it....

Welcome to the *Lost City of Jershon* supplement for use with the new edition of RuneQuest. This book contains a few notes about the declining river town of Talara, as well as a guide to Jershon, the mysterious city of legend. Game Masters may feel free to insert this city anywhere into their own campaign world, taking any portion of the material that they like, and tweaking elements of this material to better fit their own campaign. Additionally, there are also descriptions of certain characters, monsters and items that are discussed with this supplement.

DRAWING THE PLAYERS IN

There are many ways of introducing this supplement into your campaign. What is listed in this section are some suggestions that you might want to consider for drawing the players in. The best way to start is to introduce legends of Jershon early on so players become aware that such a location exists long before they become involved with any adventure that takes place in the city in the first place. If you're just running a one shot or starting off a campaign with this supplement, then you may want to start off the adventure by talking about the legends before starting play.

METHOD 1: THE CRUSTY TREASURE-HUNTER.

The players are doing whatever they would normally be doing when they hear a groaning sound. A quick investigation will result in the players discovering a man who is three steps away from starvation. He has no money, no items and he doesn't even have a weapon. His clothes and skin are

torn and caked with filth. He lacks the strength to stand and yet, he continues to drag himself forward. At this time, the man has only the capacity to moan in pain and will do little more unless the party can help him out. (If your party is not the sort to help people out, you can give the man a crude map or a notebook of his travels so after he dies, the players can find out that he was searching for Jershon, but was never able to find the waterfall that he knew was the entrance to the city. You can even add many things into the journal to make for interesting adventure hooks that aren't even connected to Jershon! The journal begins with his journey from Talara.)

If the players help him, he will return to reasonable health depending on what the players did to help him (obviously using healing spells or potions would make him instantly able to talk!) He will introduce himself as Coriantor, and mention he is a treasure hunter. A year ago he set out from Talara in search of the legendary city of Jershon. He can tell the party of many adventures he had trying to find the waterfall, which is the entrance to the city, but that he had never found it. (These adventures are completely up to the Game

Master to fabricate). He knows the waterfall was called "The Leviathan's Teeth" because it was rumored that the falls were of such power that the shear force of the water would crush any man who was caught in its wake. If the players ask him why he was looking for Jershon (or what Jershon even is) he will tell them that he has heard the legends of the ancient and mysterious city under the mountains and how it is filled with indescribable treasures. He knows many men have searched for Jershon, and those who came back were empty handed (but that most never came back). Coriantor is convinced he has what it takes to find the city and he wished only to be remembered as the man who found Jershon. If the players want to travel with Coriantor, his stats are listed below. Coriantor will take the party to Talara if they ask, but once there, he will do what he can to look for Jershon again. He will not work with the party on any other adventure they may want to do, as he is obsessed with finding the city. If the party goes with

CORIANTOR

Characteristics

STR 13, CON 12, DEX 16, SIZ 14, INT 10, POW 12, CHA 14

Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Leg	0/6
4-6	Left Leg	0/6
7-9	Abdomen	4/7
10-12	Chest	4/8
13-15	Right Arm	4/5
16-18	Left Arm	4/5
19-20	Head	0/6

Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP
1H Sword	64%	1d10 +1d2	5
1H Sword	64%	1d8 +1d2	5
1H Axe	39%	1d8 +1d2	3
Dagger	39%	1d4+1 +1d2	4

Special Rules

Combat Actions: 3

Strike Rank: +13

Movement: 4m

Traits: N/A

Skills: Athletics 44%, Dodge 22%, Language (Common) 20%, Language (Elven) 60%, Lore (Jershon) 50%, Lore (Plant) 30%, Lore (Regional) 20%, Lore (World) 15%, Perception 27%, Persistence 32%, Resilience 29%, Survival 32%, Tracking 10%

Armor: Scalemail Shirt (4 AP Chest, Abdomen, Arms) -16



Coriantor to Talara, he will be an excellent source of information about the city. (Talara is fully described later on in the book.)

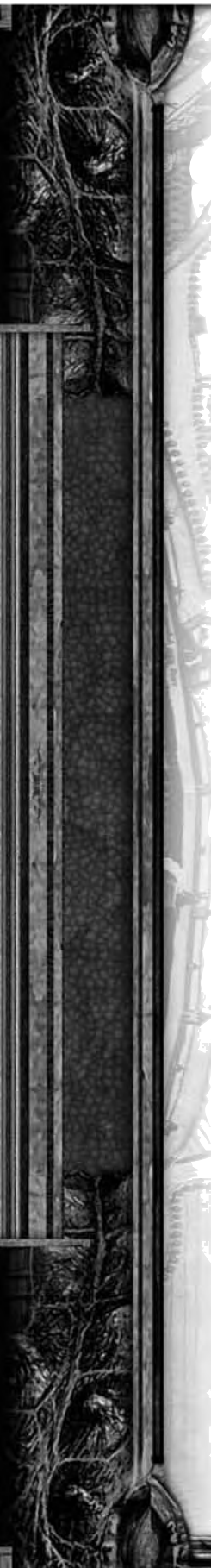
METHOD 2: THE CITY OF TALARA

If the party is told legends of Jershon, it is likely you have already told them about Talara. The party may simply look for this city as a starting point for their adventures in seeking out the fabled city. This is a rather simple method and you can design whatever adventures you want (if any) for the party as they travel to this

boatmen and people of the river will be able to tell the party many stories about Talara and Jershon. Boatmen will tell how most of the trade along the river used to be controlled by Talara, but most of what they had crumbled and now most boatmen are independent contractors. Farmers might mention how busy things used to be long ago when so many people were coming to Talara. Shops were opened; families moved to the cities, there was a boom in the area. They will recall them as busy, chaotic, but happier times. Nothing is really bad about the area, but things have dwindled and many have moved away again. Some people will talk about Jershon being nothing but a myth the people of Talara invented to lure such gullible adventurers into their city. They will mention the boom as the successful results of a self-made myth. Anyone in the area could tell you with great ease how to get to Talara.

METHOD 3: STRANGE TREASURE

The party comes across a corpse. There will be no evidence of foul play, but the person looks like he was literally scared to




death. He has strange blue clothing (which is made with “moon-threads” that will be described in the Jershon section of this book) and he will still have a few items on him. He has a wooden staff that has a steel sphere on the end. If taken as a weapon, this staff will do 1D6+1 damage. (The staff is a weapon common among the priests in the city of Jershon). While the staff is merely odd, that’s nothing compared to the necklace the man wears. It is an ornate necklace with a gold disk hanging off the chain. On the gold disk is a blue stone held in place by gold tendrils that are shaped to look like modified water runes. The necklace will sell for about 1,400 sp in any location that does not recognize the power this item has. The jewel is actually a Shield Stone (which is discussed again in the Jershon section on page XXX) capable of shielding against water-based attacks. Anything that is water (not ice) that is specifically designed to inflict damage (so boiling water wouldn’t count even though it can be damaging) will do no damage at all to someone wearing the necklace (or who otherwise had the jewel on their person). The corpse also has a journal. It will describe that he was a priest of a unknown god named

Shule and that he “looked upon the forever cursed statue” and knew he had to flee Jershon so others would not share his fate. The journal reveals he has traveled due south since he passed the defensive waterfall. It will also mention that for the week he traveled, a vengeful spirit would appear before him each night... each night it would be that much closer to his camp. He knew it would kill him (and clearly it did!). The players should be able to use his journal to get to the waterfall where Jershon is hidden.

Of course, you can use all these ideas together... have them meet poor Coriantor, use Coriantor to get them to Talara and then have them come across the body.

THE RIVER TOWN OF TALARA

History: It was the Talara family that first settled the section of the river where the city that bears their name would grow. They were boat people, but they had wanted to find a place to settle. The settlers of the area were all farmers and fishermen, but the Talara family knew the ways of the river better than anyone. They had the best fish, the best boats and were quick to establish trade with other settlements up and down the river. Aaron Talara was the best ship builder the family ever knew and he was the final factor that made the family the wealthiest along the river. He sold his boats to other towns and to travelers. He was contracted by feudal lords to



build ships for their navies. He never allied himself with any one faction and he brought business to the settlement. Business brought more families, more farmers and more status. Talara became a major town in Aaron's lifetime.

As time passed, the town maintained itself well, but didn't grow much more for a long time. The Talaras continued to exert their influence on the politics of the town, as well as over the trade along the river. Most of the members of the family were decent enough people who put their time and effort into the community. Like any family, there were some darker elements, and the Talaras did their best to control their own. The worst was when Emer Talara began to enforce sanctions up and down the river that only served to line his own pocket and those of his men. Without the knowledge of his family, he set up raids on families that didn't pay for protection, looting their boats or burning their warehouses. He was working on further schemes that would allow him to take over the various businesses in the city, preparing to seize control of the whole town, when his cousin Amgid caught wind of what was going on. The two fought a fierce duel up and down one of the main streets of the city. People cheered when Amgid slew Emer there in the middle of the street, and helped carry the body of the villain to the river, where it was quickly disposed of. The local constables ignored the event completely, but the people later renamed the two streets as follows: The street where the duel was fought is now called Honest Gid's Way and the road that leads down to the docks is called "The Virtuous Walk." These two streets still bear these names today.

When the explorer (and later the two elves) came to Talara, Kish was the head of the household. He had gotten involved with politics and people were pleased with the way he ran the city. Kish was not one for rumors, but he was also aware that others would come to Talara in search of a legendary city. He decided to use these rumors to help build Talara to a larger scale than any would have imagined. Kish began preparations to accommodate the many who were certain to come and his plans were well founded. The hordes of explorers, prospectors (and all the con men, swindlers and villains who like to prey on such people) all came streaming into the town. Shops of all sorts popped up, casinos became a common site and there were twice as many taverns. Business was booming, profits were high and Kish tried to use the money to better the town. Unfortunately, there was a down side to all the expansion.

The people of Talara were soon to learn that the largest change with the expansion of the town into a city would be skyrocketing crime. Violence broke out every night, the constables became better armed and much more ready to solve problems with force. People locked their doors and were much more tight-lipped

than they had once been. There was a sense of danger hanging over everyone and it soured most of the city. The greatest tragedy is that “Honest Gid’s Way” had become the worst street in the city, featuring brothels, pawnshops and the sleazier gambling houses. It was certainly common to find at least one man sleeping on the side of the road (or better yet, dead on the side of the road). Kish was the last of the Talara family to be directly involved in the politics of the city. The family became darker and colder as they watched the fair town become a filthy city, all the time knowing that in a way they were responsible for it and that they were helpless to do anything about it. The city would continue to grow out of control for the next fifty years.

Kish’s children decided to at least maintain the family fortune and used their skills to dominate the river. They expanded their influence in other towns, driving other boatmen out of business. Trade on the river was handled by the Talaras or not at all. Even transports and ferries grew to be part of the Talara river empire. Shops and markets built by the Talaras appeared in towns up and down the river and so did the Talaras for that matter. Only the older members of the family stayed in the town that shared their name, but the younger Talaras moved away for better places, fresh challenges and new adventures. Many of those who left also found new trades aside from the river and some of them succeeded in these professions as their ancestors did in the past.

GM Note: The Talaras are a strong-hearted people. Feel free to have the players meet Talaras in other places in your campaign. The Talaras



are very proud of their name and their heritage and if they swear something on their family name, they WILL do it or die trying. Some of the family do turn out for the worst however and they will often apply their minds to cons and swindles or major organized crime. Money is always a keyword for the Talara family, and they have just been very good at making it as well as keeping it. If you are using this supplement for your campaign, occasional references to the Talara family will help keep the continuity of the campaign world you're running.

TALARA TODAY

Talara has been dwindling as much as the rumors of Jerston. It has shrunk back to the size of a town, but the gritty remains of the city it once was litter the area. It is not a happy town; rather it's a run down collection of broken dreams. The original townspeople once dreamed of Talara being the shining star of the river, but it became a city of criminals and a symbol of uncontrolled greed. The people who came to Talara looking for Jerston and its treasures became poor and incapable of leaving their newly adopted home. All in all, the town is bleak and miserable and the players will certainly notice it once they get there. The buildings yearn for collapse and the people look tired and worn. Crime is the major trade of the town and most people just don't care anymore. The Talara family who stayed are feared, hated and mocked by the people who often use them as scapegoats. Of course, everyone still tries to kiss up to any of the Talaras in hopes that some of the family's wealth will rub off on to them.

IMPORTANT PEOPLE

Below is a list of individuals or groups that are of some significance in Talara. They are useful characters you can use to create subplots in the city or simply as dressing for the town. Feel free to pick and choose what would be most useful to your story and it certainly goes without saying that anything here can be adjusted to better suit your campaign needs. No stats are given for most of these people, just use default stats from the rulebooks if needed.

THE TALARAS

The Talaras are much more "to themselves" than they have been in the past. They have little interest in the town anymore, and even less interest in transients. Still, most people know what influence the Talaras had in the past and still respect the power of the Talara name (and the fortunes it controls). Some of the old timers blame the Talaras for destroying the town and others are jealous of them (and have been for generations). The newer families in the town simply know the Talaras as old money and symbolic of the past, while some find them anti-social old bastards. Here are some of the significant Talaras of the current day.

GILEAL TALARA

Gileal is the oldest member of the Talara family and he is a very unhappy man. He has watched his hometown crumble before him as he has aged, his wife has already passed on and most of the Talaras who live in the area are wondering how he will divide the family fortune. He spends most of his time peering out his bedroom window and gazing at the sea. He often takes walks in the better parts of town to keep in some sort of health, but he tries not to talk to anyone (or even look at them). He will often be muttering about his late wife, Sariah. Often he will say things like, "Sariah, thank the heavens you didn't live long enough to see what the city will become," or "I hope to be with you again soon, Sariah." He has little interest in strangers and often thinks the worst of people.

EDWARD TALARA

Edward is the eldest son of Gileal and is in control of the docks. If you want to trade along the river, or even purchase passage along the river, you're going to deal with Edward. Edward knows the rules of his business and is quite inflexible on many of its issues. He is a good enough man and his fairness is only slightly hindered

by his stubbornness. He will be happy to give advice on where money can be exchanged, where goods can be bought and sold, and other important areas of the city. He is not interested in idle chitchat while on the job. Edward is not as concerned about Gileal's plans for the family fortune, because he has looked well after his wife and sons.

EMILY TALARA

Emily is Edward's wife and the only Talara still interested in the town. She often shows up to the town hall meetings and speaks on behalf of the Talara Family (since no one else from the family will show). She has tried to start small projects in the town to help renovate it. The criminal organizations are smart enough to leave Emily and her projects alone, because attacking her or her works might be the only thing that would rally the community against them. Often these criminals will even aid Emily in her projects (even though they are ruining the city in other places). No one is sure if Emily is aware that some of her helpers are part of these gangs, or if she is simply happy for the help no matter where it comes from. Emily also does her best to care for Gileal and will sometimes be seen at his side on his walks.

ORIHAN TALARA

Orihan is Edward's oldest son. He is a man of the sea and is the captain of "The River Runner", which is a fine transport ship that ferries people and goods up and down the river. Orihan is a jolly sort, but his upbringing keeps him from becoming rowdy. He holds himself well and is certainly the most eligible bachelor in town.

COHOR TALARA

Characteristics

STR 17, CON 14, DEX 12, SIZ 14, INT 13, POW 10, CHA 15

Hit Locations

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Leg	1/6
4-6	Left Leg	1/6
7-9	Abdomen	5/7
10-12	Chest	5/8
13-15	Right Arm	5/5
16-18	Left Arm	5/5
19-20	Head	5/6

Weapons

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP
1H Swd	64%	1d8 +1d4	4
Kite Shield	54%	1d6 +1d4	10
Longbow	42%	2d8	2
Unarmed	34%	1d3	-

Special Rules

Combat Actions: 2

Strike Rank: +12

Movement: 4m

Traits: N/A

Skills: Boating 33%, Dodge 38%, Influence 35%, Language (Common) 63%, Language (Elven) 23%, Lore (Regional) 13%, Lore (Talara) 28%, Persistence 30%, Shiphandling 47%, Resilience 29%

Armor: Chainmail Shirt (5 AP Chest, Abdomen, Arms) -20%, Helmet (5 AP Head) -4%, Leather Trews (1 AP Legs) -2%.

COHOR TALARA

Cohor is Edward's younger son and he wants to get out of this city and see the world. He is anxious for adventure, but has no idea what adventuring is really like. His parents have done their best to keep him from running off, or hiding on his brother's boat. Cohor can be easily swayed by the party to come with them on their adventures, but if he does sneak off with them, the party will have the Talaras doing all they can to get Cohor back.

SARAH TALARA-DEVON

Sarah is Gileal's daughter and Edward's sister. She is a manipulative and mischief filled woman

who will live well no matter what it takes. She is constantly arguing with both her elder and younger brother Jashua for the way they make use of the family monies. While her arguments against her younger brother are obvious, she often goes after Edward on the matter of his wife. She feels that Emily is being nice to Gileal just so she can get her hands on a larger share of the inheritance. She's also unhappy with Emily's projects as they are partially funded by family money. Sarah is constantly pointing her finger at everyone for fear someone might point a finger back at her. Sarah is married, but has no children.

JAMAL DEVON

Jamal is a self-important, egotistical lout. He feels his vast wealth is a sign of his actual worth, ignoring the fact that he didn't work for any of that money. Jamal is the sort of man who laughs loudly at his own jokes, praises himself for his own knowledge, and expects respect from all those around him. Anyone who is the center of attention is a threat to this weasel of a man and he will do all he can to belittle such people, allowing him to become the center of attention himself. He despises anyone who is smarter

than he is, funnier or (most importantly) those who have actual skills. Jamal knows how to play the social game, however, and can often make someone look badly by using their own words against them with a simple twist of their original meaning and getting the argument off of the real point and making it seem like it is another point all together. (Example - if someone complains about Jamal being a man who inherited his wealth rather than earning it outright, he'll argue back the person is clearly jealous of his wealth, and of wealthy people in general.) Jamal is hoping that by having marryird Sarah, he will gain even more when Gileal passes on.

JOSHUA TALARA

Joshua is the youngest of Gileal's children. People who know Joshua either love him or hate him. He is all about spending his family's money on himself. He always has the newest clothes, the biggest parties and he makes sure to spread the wealth among his friends and hangers on. He is always found gambling, or at a brothel or at a party. He takes nothing seriously, and is often involved in one scandal or another. He has so many lovers one would think he was trying to repopulate the town himself (and some rumor he has male lovers as

well). He is most hated by his sister Sarah, but hasn't let that bother him. Joshua might befriend the party just to annoy his father.

IMPORTANT PEOPLE OF THE TOWN

The following list is a collection of people who can easily be found about the town. They are officials and employees who may be of use to the characters. Most of these people are trying to make good in this decaying town, hoping they can revitalize it in some way.

"SMILING" SHIBLOM BRADFORD

Shiblom was the first mayor of Talara who wasn't of the Talara family. He is one of the only people, aside from Emily Talara, who has any optimism about the future of the town. He has succeeded in forcing town hall meetings on a regular basis and is well liked by many. Some people think he is a naïve fool who smiles all the time because he has nothing better to do, but some are quite sure that Shiblom does all he can to be optimistic because it is too easy to let the misery of the town drag out all your ambitions. Shiblom will keep doing all he can to build up the town. If he meets with the players, he will try to convince them to settle down in Talara, buy some property and help rebuild this city to its future greatness.

ISABEL BRADFORD

Isabel is the Mayor's wife and she is just as active in politics as he is. The way this couple

functions is a thing to behold. Isabel does all she can to “mingle” and she uses her keen mind to figure out what needs to be done that would get the people involved. Once she works it out, she turns to her husband who knows how to get what needs to be done accomplished. Despite her almost frightening skills in perception, Isabel loves the simple things as well. She often will invite people over to the house and cook them up some tasty dish. If she thinks the party can help her accomplish some goals for the town, you can bet they will be over for a home cooked meal that can't be beat.

LINDIHAH KIT

Lindahah has a shelter for children who have nowhere else to turn. She takes care of orphans, runaways and any other child who needs help. She often shows up at political events to try to bring about projects that can help the children, teach them skills, and make them better members of the community. She and Emily Talara often are seen together discussing possible projects and plans. Lindisah can almost always be seen with her pet cat, which she has named Rascal Fatling. If the party talks to her, she may have the players say hello to Rascal. It should be noted that Rascal is a fat cat and that he is larger than a cat really ought to be... both in size and in weight. As Lindisah will often say, “he is not a wee cat.”

GIDONI LIAZAR

Gidoni is the head of the garrison. The garrison once was a true garrison of soldiers with an impressive training area and a dangerous collection of weapons. Today, the area is simply

used as a training ground where adventurers can come and pay a small fee to improve their skills. Gidoni knows what a rotten state the town is in and always is trying to recruit honest men to aide in trying to bring about some law and order into the town. Most refuse, but he has developed a big enough watch that some areas of the town are very safe indeed. Gidoni is a skilled fighter, but one man is no match for all the crime in the city. Gidoni keeps a watchful eye on all that happens in the town. He will not harass players as they come into town, but he will probably ask them simple questions (like why they're here and how long they plan to stay.) He will let people know that he is the law in the town. Gidoni cannot be bought and will not turn a blind eye for anyone, but he's not without compassion. (Example - if he found a young boy stealing some bread, instead of arresting him, he would probably turn him over to the “custody” of Lindisah Kit's shelter.) Gidoni does have one soft spot, though. He is in love with the moneychanger Anne, but most don't know this. Gidoni also has a strange fondness for candles and his home is decorated with a wide variety of them.

ANNE COMIHAH

Anne is a rather quiet sort. In fact, she's a little too quiet. The only time her shyness does not dominate her character is when she is dealing with work. Anne is the local moneychanger and she's very good at her job. She is the person you want to talk to if you need to convert a precious stone, find out the value of a piece of equipment, or just need to exchange one kind of currency for another. Anne is very accurate in her pricing, but people who are rude to her or bad natured might not get exactly what they should. Anne will not be able to price magic items with any accuracy nor would she be able to quote values of items from Jershon, though in some cases she can make good guesses. Anne is in love with Gidoni Liazar, but she is too shy to admit her feelings.

JONATHAN RIPKISH

Jonathan is a wandering minstrel who has remarkable musical talents. He has many songs, dances and tales at his command and he is willing to take work with anyone who needs his musical skills. He often plays music for religious events for those faiths that require musical talent. Jonathan is a playful sort and likes to challenge people in conversation, trying to add to his wealth of

knowledge. Jonathan has a pet pigeon that he sometimes will carry about in a cage slung on his back. He has no name for the bird. He will be friendly with people who seem gifted with communication skills.

MADAME ZIMM

Madame Zimm has a hut on the outskirts of town. She carried a collection of bizarre magical baubles. She can sometimes work out what a magical item is or how to work it. She doesn't like to help people and she cannot be bribed. No one knows why she will assist some people and totally ignore others. She frequently talks about speaking with trees and the age of rocks. Some people think she is insane and that you can't trust anything she says. Others think she is much more powerful than she lets on. She seldom involves herself with town events and on the rare occasion she does, people worry about it. Her shop is detailed among the important locations in town.

JAROM

No one knows Jarom's last name. He never tells, and no one ever asks. Jarom is the manager of the most reputable tavern in town. His bar, "The Red Dragon Inn", has been in operation for over 20 years. Jarom has maintained it quite well. As the name implies, there are rooms to rent on the second floor, but not many. Jarom is always willing to listen to his clients, always happy to offer advice and always respectful of those in town who are trying to keep things together.



THE CRIMINAL ELEMENT

While crime is indeed rampant in this town and there seems to be at least one major crime each week – be it murder, arson or worse, there are some more significant names over in the darker side of the world. The players may have uses for these people, or the Game Master may want to add some extra problems to the players' lives by having these people find uses for the players.

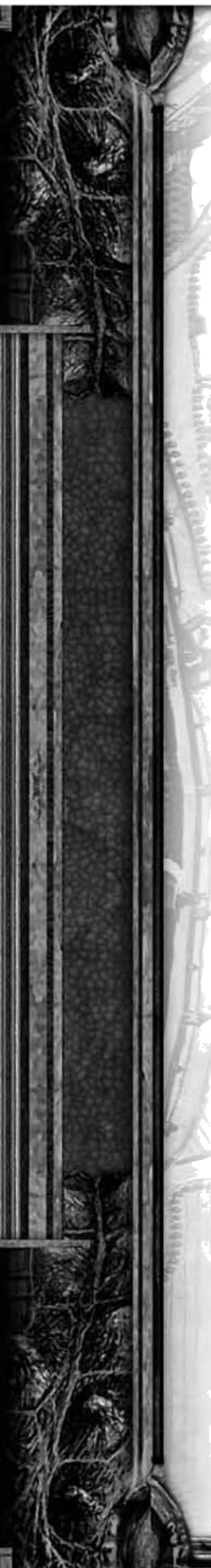
ZORAM HORNE

Zoram is a major problem for the Talara family and to anyone who deals in a trade along the river. A long time ago, Emer Talara assembled a team of ruffians to carry out terrible crimes to those people who didn't pay his fees along the river (as mentioned in the history of Talara). Though Emer was brought down, his legacy

lives on in the team of surly pirates and cutthroat types that now follow Zoram's lead. Zoram is a scoundrel and a backstabber who finds no trust in anyone he deals with. Anyone who tries to be associated with Zoram may find themselves on the wrong side of the sword later on. He wouldn't think twice to kill anyone if his own survival was in jeopardy, and his word is as empty as his heart.

JUSTINAH

More commonly known as "Miss Justinah", Justinah is the madam of madams. She has a network of brothels, as well as connections to most of the "pleasure industry" in town. Justinah herself, is a



worn out bitter hag of a woman, who no longer has any beauty, grace, or passion. Everything to her has boiled down to cash and manipulation. She knows the power she has, and she knows who she has to be friendly with, and who she can push around. Justinah is a stern taskmaster when it comes to her girls, but she is twice as bad to any who may mistreat them.

NEHOR

Nehor is one of Justinah's only male employees. He is a bouncer of sorts at her main brothel and he is rumored to be her little "boy toy" as well. Nehor tries to act like he has any power at all, but almost everyone knows the real score.

BENJAMIN SHAMALAH

Ben is not really part of the crime scene in Talara. He is just a wandering accident that is constantly happening. Ben roams the streets like a drunk man, but his real issue is his damaged mind. He seldom seems to be aware of his surrounding and will frequently babble some sort of nonsense. The problem is, he seems to be a living personification of Murphy's Law... he seems to leave a trail of disaster where ever he might roam, but is never directly responsible for any of it.

SIMON LIMHER

Simon is a dangerous confidence man. He often will trick people into traps or just toy with them for a price. Simon is a ladies man and a very convincing liar. Simon is very good at keeping the blame off of himself through his intricate web of lies, which is why he hasn't been run out of town. Simon has also gotten a lot of profit to the gangs in the darker area of the city and those gangs he works with are quick to protect him if needed.

GANGS

There are a few major gangs who roam the streets of Talara. The Game Master is more than welcome to add more gangs, or use original gangs in the place of those listed. It is certainly within reason to suggest that a thief in the party could have started out as a member of one of these gangs (assuming the PC would like to set up an origin in Talara).

THE DOCKWORKERS

As the name implies, this gang works around the docks, and nearby shops and establishments closest to the docks. The Dockworkers are a very strong group and a constant danger to merchants, traders, and other men of the sea. Some simply pay for protection of their vessels or goods (some pay a portion of their cargo) while others hire armed guards to protect their property from danger. Edward Talara is constantly at odds with this group, and holds the upper hand as far as control over the docks. Edward's policing of the grounds is keeping this gang from dominating the area.

The Dockworkers will accept most people into their gang, but prefer people with some nautical experience.

SICK BOYZ

The Sick Boyz hang about the slums of Talara and seem to have no real agenda. They just like to cause trouble, bring chaos to order and otherwise be a nuisance to all they meet. The group is very much like the common cold of gangs, making them the hardest to deal with. What little there is in the way of law enforcement will seldom get involved in incidents involving the Sick Boyz, because they know that no matter what they do, it will have little impact on the gang's activities. Getting into the Sick Boyz is fairly easy, but they won't let anyone over 20 into the gang. (Nor will they keep a member once they hit their early 20's. The oldest member of the gang is 22.)

THE HIGH HATS

The High Hats are the least threatening gang of the ones listed here. The bad boys of the rich community formed this group to carouse the more expensive establishments. They are more into displays of their own decadence than a real gang of criminals. Despite this, they can be a true annoyance on occasion and sometimes (rarely) can be dangerous. The High Hats seem to like going after the other rich people in town or the very poor. The only way to become a member of the High Hats is to be a native of Talara, to be under 30, and to have a large sum of cash as well as a certain quality of taste. It is a very exclusive group.

THE ORDER

The Order is the smallest, but most feared gang in the city. The Order is a strange, almost religious group who carry out strange rituals that mostly involve killing something and making use of their blood in unsettling ways. The Order is responsible for an average of eight murders a month. The members wear robes and full masks during their "death rituals", but do not identify themselves at other times. The Order is even hated by other gangs who are more eager to kill them off than the locals. (The Order's activities bring investigation and thus hinder the other gangs.) No one knows how people get into The Order, nor why those who join actually do so. Who is, and who isn't a member of The Order is left up to the GM.

PLACES TO GO

While Game Masters are openly invited to add their own locations to this setting (and who knows, players may want to live here and make it a base of operations for future adventuring) these are the important locations in Talara.

The Talara Mansion

This building is in the heart of the richest section of town. It overlooks the river and it is the oldest surviving structure in the city. People who come to town by river will notice this marvel right away. It looms over the whole riverside. The mansion is well guarded and certainly the last place the players want to cause trouble. Getting on the bad side of the Talara Family means getting out of town. The Mansion has lovely grounds, but is besieged on all sides by smaller estates of the other wealthy families in the town. Some of the estates are abandoned.

The Boat House

This is a large structure where all dealings connected with the boats that come in and out of town are handled. This is the home away from home for Edward Talara, who oversees all that happens on the docks. The Boat House is a large structure that serves multiple functions. There is a room to



weigh the fish brought in by fishing vessels and another room for investigating the cargo of a tradesman. Rooms containing decades worth of files are maintained by the small staff

Edward has assembled. There is a well run (if not all together clean) dining hall for travelers to make use of while forms are filled and papers are checked. Travelers will sometimes be detained in the Boat House before they are allowed into the rest of the town.

The Moneychanger's

This is where ANNE COMIHAH conducts her business. If you read her description, you'll get an idea of how she runs her shop. She has a vault in the floor for more priceless items she may receive from adventurers. The shop is close to the docks for obvious reasons..

Town Hall

This is where all the offices of the various government branches for the town would be found. If characters have a need to speak to the mayor, or if they are interested in getting involved with politics then this is where they need to come.

The Garrison

The disorganized forces of the town are housed and trained here. The jails are part of the structures in this area as well. They are always looking for some good, strong men.

The Red Dragon Inn

A good place to go if you're a visiting adventurer. The Red Dragon Inn is the most expensive Inn in the town, but it is well worth every silver. Located in the least crime-ridden area of town, the Red Dragon seems to be the heart of most events that are going on. It certainly is where all the rumors can be found.

Madame Zimm's Hovel

Madame Zimm is not always in, and she doesn't always want to talk to people, especially if she thinks those people are going to use her items for bad purposes. Madame Zimm does have some magical items of true value (most in the forms of rings, rods, and pendants. She never has weapons or armor and does not like to deal with that sort of thing.) Most of the items she has up front are odd and she likes to drive away impatient people with her odder items. As the Game Master, you can determine what prices she will sell things for. A sample of some of the magic items she has are as follows. She only has 1d3 of each item:

Magic Twig: She won't say what it does. She'll just keep saying how you would really want a magic twig. However, anyone who has the twig on their person will reduce any non-magical damage by 1D4. If the twig is ever broken, the spell is gone.

Rock: If asked what the rock does, Madame Zimm will say, "You throw it at your enemy! What do you think you do with it?" followed by mutters that are surely against the person who asked her the question. If thrown, the rock counts as a magic attack, it hits automatically and does 1D10 damage. If you put it

in a sling, or try to propel it using any other means than throwing it, it will function as a normal rock, with no magical properties.

Moss Cookies: The cookies are just disks of thick moss. They require a Resistance roll (Normal) to eat the damn things and not spit them back up. However, if successful, the eater will not be hungry for a day.

Rod of Roaches: It's a rod that looks like a broken section of branch. When used by someone with an attunement to the Beast or Darkness rune, it will summon d100 cockroaches that will scatter about on the ground and do the sorts of thing you expect cockroaches to do. If someone asks what good such an item is, Madame Zimm will either glare at the person or simply point out that it's was a magic item and no one was forcing the person to buy it.

Torch of the Ancients: This is a really just an old torch. It's not magic, just old. It was carved by a master torch maker named Artemis who spent one week on each torch he would create, covering it with intricate carvings and images. The torch is worth a lot of money (unless someone uses it as a torch). If it is used as a torch, it has twice the life of a normal torch.

Lindihah Kit's Shelter

This location is surrounded by cats, many in good health. Lindihah takes very good care of anyone under her care. Lindihah's shelter is poor, but she is more concerned about having food and medicine than furniture. Lindihah is friendly to strangers, but protective of her charges.

Miss Justinah's

There are many brothels controlled by Miss Justinah, but this is the main base of operations. Located in a good section of town, this building is certainly a lavish and decadent location. None of the other brothels in town can rival this "palace" and the prices will reflect this.

JERSHON

Getting to Jershon is completely up to the Game Master and there can be many adventures between Talara and Jershon itself. There is no reason why you couldn't have the players undergo numerous adventures in and around Talara before ever coming to Jershon. This section contains all the information about the hidden city itself.

HISTORY

Jershon is an ancient and magical city hidden underneath Mount Cumor, located far north of Talara. Cumor was one of the gods worshiped by a persecuted nomadic tribe who sought a place they could call home. The members of this tribe were all magically gifted, and very

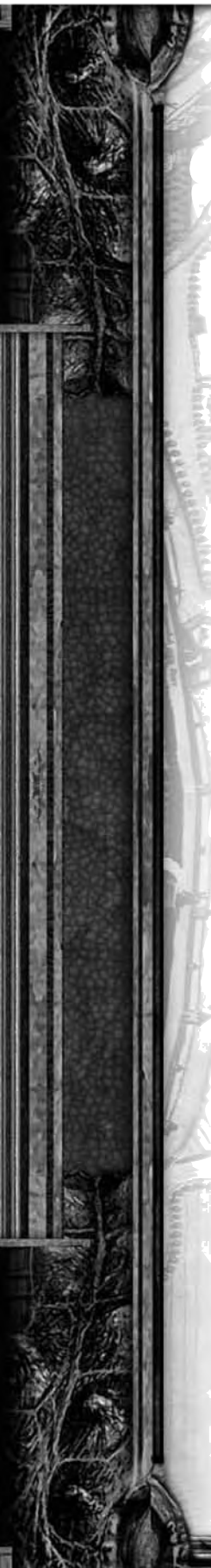
devoted to their deities. While traveling through a mountain range, they discovered a vast series of caves. It was decided that this spot was a gift to them from Cumor. It took several decades, but through the use of powerful spells and hard labor, the ancient people had made their city and they named it Jershon (after another one of their gods). The people moved in from the daylight, and sealed the caves so others could not threaten the home they made. The only way in and out of Jershon at that point was through a cave that opened upon a mighty waterfall. They have carved their own aqueducts from that waterfall and the river it fed to make their own internal, subterranean waterways. Then spells were placed on the waterfall so that it would destroy anything that tried to pass through it (special shield stones allowed their own kind to resist the ward).

Magic was not only the defense of the city, it was used everywhere. Magic was the main tool for constructing the buildings, it was used to light the streets, and was used to keep the internal rivers and waterways flowing. Magic was essential to all that they did. Their magic was provided to them by the will of their gods, and they would certainly never forget that fact. The people of Jershon erected a massive tower in the name of all of their gods. Topping this monument was a great crystal that provided the main illumination for the city. The crystal would switch colors to represent each of the gods. As it changed colors, so did the will of the appropriate god. The people of Jershon would forever be reminded who they owed their lives and their future to.

Jershon has managed to avoid wars, monster invasions, and other forms of disaster over the countless ages. They have made true advancements over the other peoples of the world (and the Game Master can reflect this based on the technology level of the adventure being run). More importantly, the people of Jershon have such organization and structure, that they have little to be worried about. Though there are some terrible things that could happen in Jershon they find it easy to be friendly and are quick to laughter and joy.

THE GODS OF JERSHON

It is important to know the deities the people of Jershon worship. The gods are respected and obeyed by all the people of Jershon without question. They have always served their deities, and they see no reason to live any other way. It is extremely unlikely that any outsider could convert a citizen to a faith (even threats of death would be fairly meaningless). The list of gods will also include information connected with the monument and the glowing crystal. When a god's influence is in effect over the city, the crystal will glow the appropriate color and



people will behave in a certain way when that color shines. This will be very important when running Jershon. It is completely up to the Game Master how often the crystal changes color, but it really shouldn't change too often in one day.

Jershon

Jershon, whom the city is named after, is the god of the home and of the family. The city, being the most profound statement of this aspect, could have no other name. Jershon is a merciful and sympathetic god. When the crystal is white, like it is most of the time, people live their lives and act as they would normally in the service of their homeland. The runes associated with Jershon are Harmony, Earth, and Mastery.

Cumor

Cumor is the god of fortitude and protection. Sometimes called upon to help the sick, Cumor is a powerful god. He is a kind god, but his nature hides most of his emotions, since he is a protector over all other things. When the crystal is a yellow-orange, people will devote themselves to some form of exercise, no matter what they were doing before. The Cumor color never appears more than once a day and seldom for a longer time period than an hour.

The runes associated with Cumor are Man, Mastery, and Law.

Shero

Shero is the goddess of knowledge and learning. She is the founder of magic and the teacher of all things. She is a strict goddess, but certainly a fair one. She always appears as a few years older than those she appears before. (Thus some know her as a young girl and others as an elderly woman). When the crystal becomes forest green, people devote themselves to some form of study. They will devote themselves to activities that engage the mind. Some will study magic, some will read books (even fiction), some will engage in philosophical conversation with neighbors and co-workers and so on. The green will seldom shine more than once a day, but the amount of time can be anywhere from a few minutes to hours. The runes associated with Shero are Magic, Truth, and Harmony.

Teankum

Teankum is the god of death. Teankum has no gender and is a dark and terrible god. Like death itself, Teankum is not evil, but is merciless. The red crystal is the most dangerous of times. When the red crystal shines, coloring the whole city in hues of blood, the priests who tend Teankum's temple go forth on their holy duty of slaughter. A servant of Teankum always has a pendant with the god's symbol on it and only those with the pendant are allowed to act when the red light shines. Their duty is to slay anyone they encounter (except each other) while the red crystal shines. The other citizens will do

what they can to hide, but some simply carry out their daily activities, knowing that if they are selected to die, they must not resist the will of their god. The important thing to note is that the servants of Teankum are not wild maniacs with bloodlust on their mind. They carry out their duty in an almost somber manner, they move quietly, and they kill with no emotion. They are the fingers of death in the mortal world. As soon as the red light changes, the weapons are instantly put away and the killing stops. The red light seldom shines more than once a month. The length of time does vary. The runes associated with Teankum are Death, Spirit, and Fate.

Lib

Lib is a god of entertainment. He is a god of the arts, he is a god of amusement and a god of folly. He changes gender at will and sometimes appears as a fat man or an attractive woman. Lib has no temples as he doesn't want people worshiping him. He is only interested in amusement and joy. When the crystal becomes a light violet, it's time to celebrate. People stop whatever they are doing and gamble, dance, sing, or seek out members of the opposite sex. The purple light is a random thing, sometimes shining more than once a day and sometimes lasting a whole day. Sometimes weeks go by before the violet light is seen. The runes associated with Lib are Disorder, Luck, and Illusion.

Ashika

The goddess of the water. Ashika is also sometimes known as the goddess of life. She is a motherly goddess and sometimes prayed to during childbirth. River festivals are often held for her and she certainly is called upon during weddings. Her influence is in effect when the crystal turns blue. Blue is the strangest color in Jershon life, because there are so many things associated with Ashika. Some people celebrate the water, others celebrate the children, while others celebrate being alive. The one thing that is certain, people are kinder and friendlier when the blue light shines. It is not like the wild partying mentality of Lib, but a kinder, softer attitude. The blue light is certain to shine at the change of each season out in the real world, but like Lib's light, it shines at random times. The runes associated with Ashika are Water, Fertility, and Harmony.

Vir

Vir is the god of war. He wields a spear in one hand and a spell in the other. He is a representation of war in the flesh and can silence many with just a glare. He dims out the crystal only when Jershon is in actual danger. When Vir is

invoked by the crystal, it is never random, it is a call to battle! A call to defend the city. Strangers to Jershon who are considered friends, (we hope the party falls into this category) will be escorted to safe locations so they are not confused with the enemy. The lights will stay dim until the threat is gone. The runes associated with Vir are Death, Mastery, and Magic.

Orianton

Orianton is, for lack of a better term, the god of the gods. He is the embodiment of worship. Orianton refuses to be described, he refuses to have images made of him. A long time ago, a priest carved a wooden statue of Orianton for the temple. Orianton cursed it and from that day forth, any who look at the statue are doomed to die. The statue is now locked away in an ancient tomb so that none can see it. When the crystal turns yellow, everyone must stop their activities and pray, or otherwise give respect to the gods of the city. This color never comes up more than once a day. Orianton has all, or none of the runes associated with him.

Your players might think about stealing the crystal. First off, it is illuminating the place more

than any other lights in the area. This makes it very hard to sneak up on. Furthermore, while the crystal is worth millions of silver, taking it will incur the wrath of many gods and a whole city filled with people who are mostly gifted with magical ability! Good luck! Of course, if your players are this foolish, it seems more than likely they would be dead long before they found this place.

I'm sure some players might find question with the religious beliefs of the people, but they will simply tell you how wonderful their lives are. If players persist, they will probably be ignored by the citizens, who will feel the players are a fine example of why the outside is a place they would not want to be. Young citizens might be encouraged to leave, but you have to remember that if the party does convince a rebellious teen to leave, that teen is going to be horribly confused in the real world. He will not have a crystal telling him the wills of his gods. Imagine such a person's confusion when the sun sets through a variety of colors... or how he will react when there is no light after the sun sets!

ARRIVING AT JERSHON

No matter how the players get to the waterfall, there is still only one way through. The players must have a shield stone, otherwise the waterfall will smash and destroy anything that tries to pass through it. (passing through the waterfall without a stone cases 5d10 points of damage to all locations.) There's no way around the waterfall and no way of seeing through it. Magic detection will indicate that something

about the falls is magical (and dangerous). If the players have a shield stone, they can either swim past the waterfall, or attach the stone to a small boat and then used the boat to carry a number of people into the hidden river. Once they are past the falls, the river goes a few hundred yards before it opens up into the vast chambers where the city is located. The first part of the river is not lit, but as the players get closer to the main cavern, they will see a variety of lights shining along the water. The players will encounter moon-bugs as soon as they are under the mountain. Moon-bugs are like fire flies, but their lights change color without warning or any real reason. They are all over the place and will be obvious right from the start.

Once the players enter the cavern, they will see the lit streets of the city and they will certainly pick out the giant crystal atop the monument. The whole area will sparkle with street lights, the crystal light and the light from the moon-bugs, and all these lights will be reflected in the water. It should be a rather breathtaking vision. Other boats will be in motion in the main chamber and they are most likely to be the first to notice the strange new arrivals. Some of the people will simply gawk at the newcomers while others will head to the docks so they can mention this strange visitation. Since the crystal has not gone dim with the arrival of the players, the people of Jershon will not view the players as a real danger, but more a curiosity.

Depending on how long it takes the players to get to the docks, the Great Seer of Jershon (the ruler of the city) will attempt to meet

the players on the docks to bid them proper welcome. Otherwise he will meet them en route. The Great Seer will do what he can to be diplomatic and accomidating (within reason) and will try to show some interest in information the players might reveal about the outside world. Once the Great Seer feels he has gotten enough information about the player's purposes (and he will be tactful in seeking this information out), he will assign them a guide by the name of Pakum Nivel. Pakum will be happy to guide the players anywhere they might want to go. Pakum is filled with energy and will be nothing but friendly, provided the players don't treat him badly.

PLACES TO GO

Again, the Game Master has free reign to add other locations, but here are some places of interest.

The Trading Post

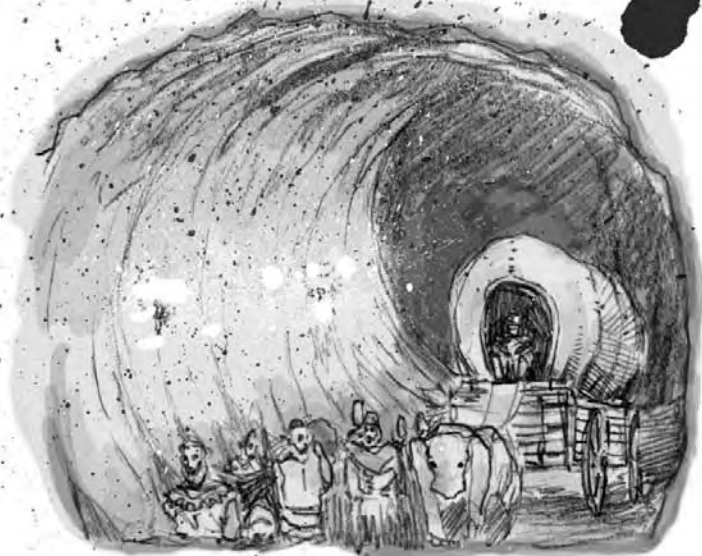
The Trading Post is a place for people of Jershon to exchange items. The owner of the place, Oro, will be very interested in the strange items the players have brought with them from the outside world. The money in Jershon takes the form of colored, spherical marbles, which are called

“drogs”. Players are going to need to get some drogs if they hope to purchase anything in Jershon. Oro will give 10 drogs for each coin the players have. Oro’s shop simply has what it has and cannot be relied on to have large stocks of anything in particular. (Something there one day might not be there the next.) It will be up to the Game Master to figure out what Oro will offer for items the players want to sell.

The Seer’s Circle

The Seer’s Circle is where the leaders of the city gather. If the players show up into this area, they will note that the Seers spend most of their time interpreting the meanings of various signs and try to work out the will of the gods. They are very serious men and they will not tolerate disrespect of the gods. They will have some patience with the outsiders’ ignorance of how things work in Jershon, but they will certainly expect the players to be respectful of their ways. The Seers will be fairly accommodating

in all ways with the exception of the gods. If the players respect the gods of Jershon (or at least the practices of the people) then they will be able to work well with the officials. Likewise, the more they antagonize the Seers, the more likely they will find themselves in some serious trouble.



The Tomb

There is a fairly large building just outside the governmental block of the city. The building stands out among the other structures and has a rather threatening appearance. This is called The Tomb (or the Tomb of Orianton), but it is really an ancient dungeon where the people of Jershon hid the cursed wooden statue of Orianton. Players will be warned about the place and told never to enter. If Pakum is with the party, he will explain why the statue is cursed and how anyone who looks at it is certain to die within the week. (If a player sees the statue, roll a d10 secretly and that is how many days the Player has left to live. Normally, there will be no coming back, since this death is willed by a fairly powerful god. However, the removal of the curse could be an adventure itself. The cursed Player will keep seeing Orianton standing a set distance away staring at the player. Each time he sees Orianton, the image will be closer and closer, but will not be moving... just standing and staring. The vision of Orianton will be within arms reach in the last hour...just standing there. The player can not touch the vision and no one else will see it, even if they are also cursed with their own approaching vision. Orianton will then kill the player in question. There is no explanation of what happens to the player...since that knowledge is taken with him into the afterlife.)

The Funeral Sluice

As you read earlier, there are times when the priests of Teankum will be killing others in the streets. For these victims (and for most who die in Jershon) they are taken to this structure which is close to the bay. Priests of Ashika will prepare

the bodies through intricate rites. Then the body will be completely prepared to be taken by Ashika. The body is lowered into a track of flowing water that slides it into the bay itself. The track is laced with bells and chimes, so as it slides down, there will be ringing sounds augmenting the chanting of the Ashika priests. This may seem a peculiar sight to some outsiders, but the people of Jershon find the ritual to be a source of solace.

The Moon Thread Shop

Brianni runs a clothing store in the commercial district of the city. She has the patience to work with moon-threads. The silk strands that come from the husks of moon-bug egg sacks have a very interesting property: they illuminate when exposed to the lights of moon-bugs. Simply put, if moon-threads are inserted in clothing, those threads will sparkle when in close proximity to moon-bugs. Since the lights of moon-bugs themselves change color, so do the threads in the clothing. There are three kinds of moon-thread outfits that Brianni offers. The first would simply be outfits that contain moon-threads weaved into the clothing (shirts, pants, hats, whatever...). The second would be moon-threads woven into a picture.

These are rather expensive, given the work needed, but the effect can be stunning, especially when multiple bugs are near a rather large picture, like one sewn onto the back of a shirt. The last is the most difficult and most expensive kind of moon-thread clothing where the image is animated. The way Brianni makes these is she treats the threads so they only react to certain moon-bug lights then sews multiple pictures in a laired fashion with the treated threads. The image will animate as certain threads shine and certain ones do not. The effect can be lost if there are too many bugs, since all the images are likely to be shining at the same time.

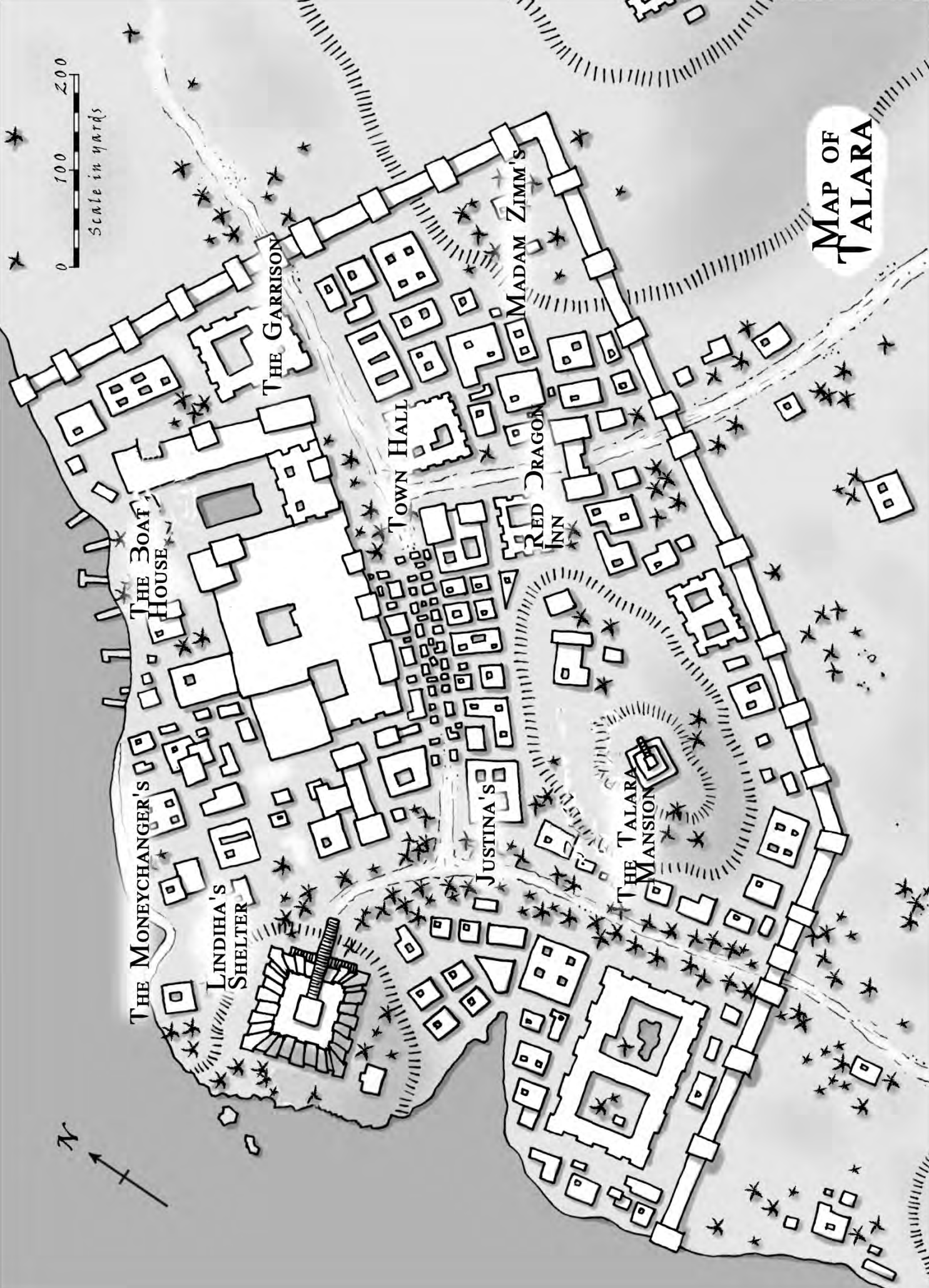
Lizard Races

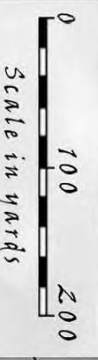
Jershon has an entertainment district that will surely impress most who come across it. There are theatres, gambling houses, dance halls, and a number of other entertaining locations, but the largest of all the structures is the immense racetrack that makes up the entire southwest section of the town. This is a beautiful race track, but as you can guess, there are no horses in Jershon. Instead, the racing is done on these short, squat, two-legged lizards that are almost comical in their appearance. They move fairly fast, but not nearly as fast as a human. Races are held almost every day.



MAP OF TALARIA

0 100 200
Scale in yards





TEMPLE OF
JERSHON

THE FUNERAL
SLUICE

THE MOON
THREAD SHOP

THE TRADING POST

THE CRYSTAL

TEMPLE OF
ASHIKA

TEMPLE OF
SHERO

THE LIZARD
RACES

TEMPLE OF
ORANTON

THE SEEKER'S
CIRCLE

THE TOMB

TEMPLE OF
VIR

TEMPLE OF
BANKUM

MAP OF
JERSHON

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The Lost City of Jershon

Long ago, a treasure hunter long thought dead suddenly showed up in the small river town of Talara with tales that astounded everyone. He claimed to have found an ancient subterranean city hidden underneath one of the many mountains in the uncharted lands to the north. He had nothing to show for his journey, and what was left of his clothing was tattered and torn. Many thought he had simply lost his mind, while just a handful thought he had invented the story to account for his miserable failure as a treasure hunter. Regardless, the rumors of the lost city of Jershon have persisted to this day, bringing fortune and fame to the river town of Talara.

Welcome to the *Lost City of Jershon* supplement for RuneQuest! This book contains information about the once thriving river city of Talara, as well as a guide to Jershon, the mysterious city of legend. Game Masters can easily insert this city anywhere into their own campaign world, taking any portion of the material that they like, and tweaking elements of this material to better fit their own campaign.

Additionally, there are also descriptions of townsfolk, monsters and items that are associated with Jershon.

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