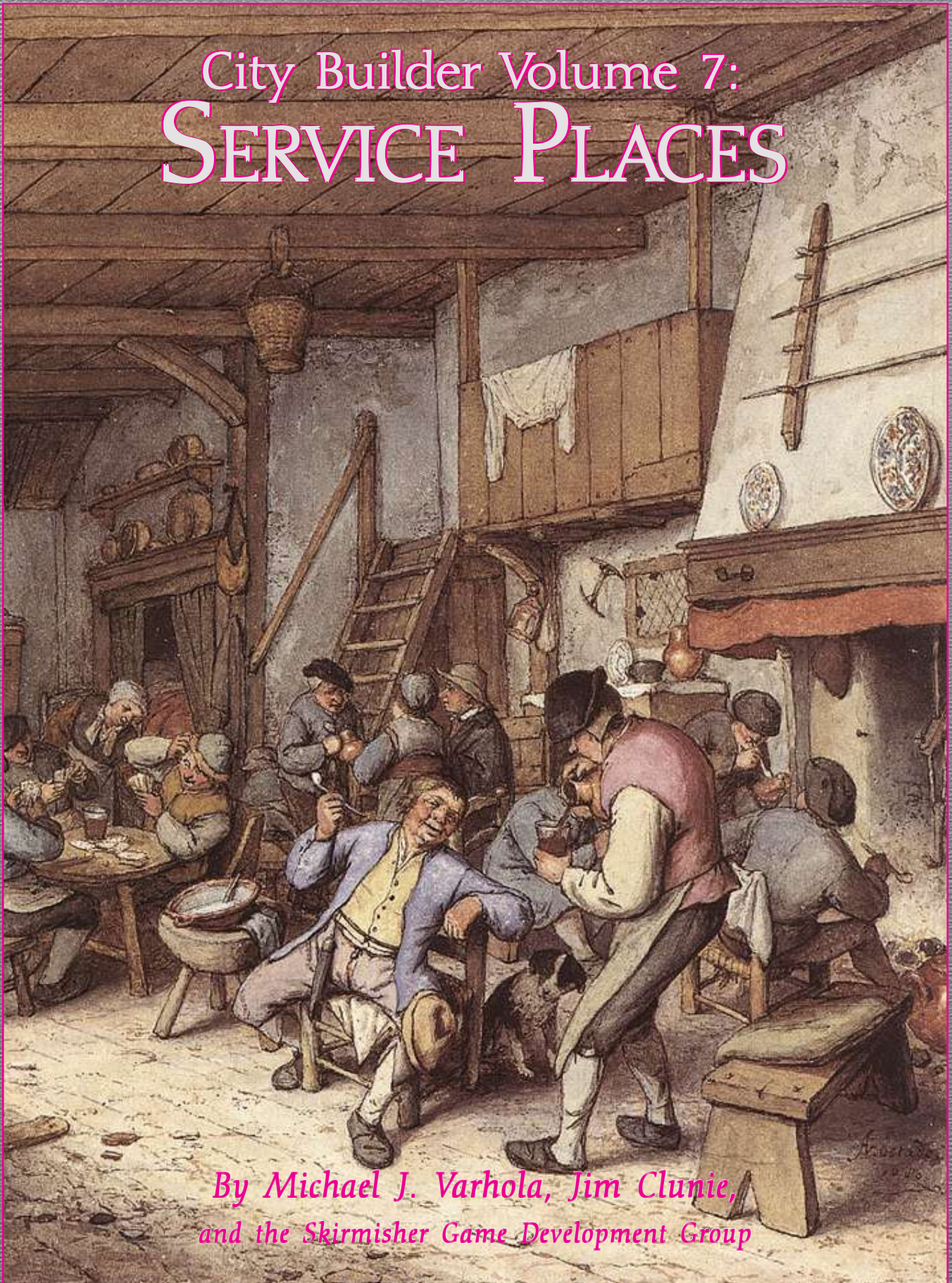


City Builder Volume 7:
SERVICE PLACES



*By Michael J. Varhola, Jim Clunie,
and the Skirmisher Game Development Group*

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Viewing This Book

This book has been designed to be as user-friendly as possible from both the perspectives of printing out for use in hard copy and viewing on a computer screen. It has been laid out like a traditional print book with the idea that each even-numbered page complements the odd-numbered page that it should face (e.g., the image of the bathers on page 9 is intended to face and illustrate the Bathhouse entry on page 8).



With the above in mind, the optimal way to view and enjoy this book would be to print it out and organize it in a binder so that the pages are arranged as described above. This is by no means necessary, however, for using and fully benefiting from *City Builder Volume 7: Service Places* and its contents.

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Feasting Peasants in a Tavern, Adriaen van Ostade (1673)

Introduction

After weeks of marching through wilderness and dank caverns, sloshing and struggling through muck, slime, and blood, and sleeping on flagstones and rock, most adventurers find it either necessary or enjoyable to seek the comforts of civilization. A return to a familiar and welcoming inn or eatery can serve to remind characters and players alike that not all in the world is grim, dangerous, or unpleasant, and that there are simple things worth fighting for.

Service places provide necessities like nourishment, accommodations, and facilities for personal sanitation. Such venues include inns, hostels, and rooming houses, and similar places, where characters can find lodgings; taverns, commercial kitchens, and restaurants, where they can obtain various sorts of food and drink; and barbershops and bathhouses, where they can have their hygiene needs attended to.

Facilities that provide such services cater to those who are away from the comforts of their own homes, among them adventurers, travelers, and itinerants, as well as townsfolk who wish to socialize with each other or periodically indulge in luxuries they cannot afford every day. Such places are prolific in the towns and cities of a typical ancient, medieval, or fantasy milieu, and might also be found to some extent in communities as small as villages. Settlements that have few outside visitors are unlikely to support many places of this sort, however, so in small and isolated communities occasional travelers might have to meet their needs in other ways (e.g., stay overnight at religious institutions or as guests with more affluent locals who have room to spare in their houses).

In rural areas, service places might exist in areas crossed by major transportation routes, especially at crossroads, natural stopping points, or waypoints mandated by the government. In such areas, facilities of this sort are usually established in compounds and provide accommodations, victuals, stabling, and perhaps several other lesser services or workshops within a building or enclosure with defensive features commensurate with the prevailing level of expected threat. Such intra-city facilities are, naturally, more likely to be common in well-administered areas with good roads and a strong government than in perilous Dark Age settings where any sort of travel is extremely hazardous (but to be more heavily fortified in the latter sort of milieu).

Service places of various sorts are typically run by private businessfolk with suitable backgrounds in provisioning and bookkeeping, but might also be established by major religious institutions or the civic government, either at subsidized charges or as acts of char-

ity (often with the practical aims of keeping the indigent from dying inconveniently in the streets or resorting to crime). Former adventurers might also run such institutions, especially in marginal areas with which they might be familiar.

Service facilities can vary widely in size, appearance, and construction, although in a traditional game setting a great many of them are often simply roomier versions of the sorts of structures similar to those described under “Buildings” in *City Builder Volume 1: Communities*. Service facilities with a larger clientele — especially those that cater to the workforce of large institutions — might require purpose-built halls or multi-storey buildings of heavy timbers, brick, or stone or be expanded over time to a complex of interconnected buildings.

Most of the areas within service places are dedicated to the needs of their customers, and might include dining areas, bedrooms, or kitchens, as appropriate. In addition, there might also be storage areas, an office for the proprietor, private living quarters for his family and staff, a secure place for cash or other valuables (for both owners and customers), or small workshops.

Security at such areas is usually limited to vigilant staff and locks or bars on points of entry like doors and windows. Many such places, of course, especially those patronized by adventurers or military personnel, might also have bodies of customers that can discourage or foil attacks against them.

About This Series

This is the seventh volume in a series of 11 books designed not just to provide Game Masters with concrete information about how to create places essential to their own fantasy role-playing campaigns, but also to inspire them to develop ones that are believable, colorful, and exciting for their players’ characters to visit.

City Builder Volume 7: Service Places describes locales that characters can visit to fulfill their needs for things like food, drink, sleep, and personal hygiene and include some of the most quintessential places

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associated with fantasy role-playing games. Places of this sort covered in this volume include Barbershops, Bathhouses, Hostels, Inns, Kitchens, Restaurants, Rooming Houses, and Taverns. This book also contains an appendix with two random generators that can be used separately or in sequence to describe the kinds of inns and taverns found in a settlement.

While it is a generic resource not keyed to a particular system of rules, *City Builder Volume 7: Service Places* has also been written so as to be fully compatible with the various Skirmisher Publishing LLC d20 publications, including *Experts v.3.5*, *Tests of Skill*, and *Warriors*.

Using This Book

Each section in this book contains a description of the place to which it is devoted. It includes such things as the kinds of communities in which the place might be found, the kinds of proprietors and staff associated with it, and the sorts of goods, services, or other things that characters might visit the place to obtain.

Following the description are one or more adventure hooks that are designed to describe interactions beyond the normal operations of the place that might concern player characters and turn any particular one into a venue for adventure.



Barbershop

Barbershops are places that provide services such as haircuts, shaves, and trims for moustaches and beards. In cultures where people of certain social levels wear wigs, many customers might require little more than a simple crop or head-shaving to discourage vermin but still require work on beards or other facial hair in keeping with prevailing fashions or personal style. Most barbershops also sell pomades, lotions, patent medicines and hygiene items of all kinds, brushes, and small sundries. Legendary practitioners of this vocation include Doc Holliday, Sweeney Todd, and Figaro, the Barber of Seville.

As characters entrusted with passing razors over the throats of their customers, the proprietors of many barbershops naturally gravitate toward medical procedures like dressing wounds, lancing boils, bloodletting, pulling teeth, and setting broken or dislocated bones (conceivably, of course, a business could develop in the opposite manner, from medical to personal services). Such services might be widespread even in societies where divine healing exists but is not widely available to the masses or is prohibitively expensive for procedures that can be handled mundanely.

A barbershop often brings together for a brief time people from many different walks of life in a convivial social setting. Any particular place of this sort might be dedicated to serving the needs of men, women, or members of both sexes, those of various races, or those of specific social classes or vocations. Proprietors of such places have reason to cultivate a pleasant, confident, and upstanding manner that inspires trust, and barbers who attend privately on noble or royal clients may prove to be the only members of the tradesman class with whom such personages regularly have the opportunity to speak casually (beyond their own well-trained and obsequious servants, of course).

Features of a typical barbershop include a chair and workplace for each barber that is well-stocked with razors, clippers, towels, brushes, soaps, unguents, clean cold and hot water (the latter often maintained over a small burner). Barbers who also practice rudimentary medicine or dentistry may also have surgical items like lancets, pliers, bandage rolls, bone-saws, and leeches handy for when they are needed.

Other amenities present in a barbershop generally include a comfortable waiting area, a cashbox, several small shelves with appropriate goods for sale, and perhaps various cheap cameos and busts of well-coiffed

notables to suggest styles to customers. Sweeping and mopping up is relatively light and simple work and generally relegated to one or two children or charity cases. A barbershop might also be portable in nature, and run by a barber who carries his essential tools in a leather case or roll, traveling between towns and villages or calling on clients in their homes.

Beyond the regular services of a barbershop, characters might also need to visit such places prior to occasions when they might be required to don courtiers' or nobles' outfits and display a matching level of personal grooming. An especially skilled performance by a barber might even help a recipient of his arts impress certain groups of people, generally those of the same race and of those social classes who set greatest store by appearance (e.g., the middle class and the lowest echelons of the upper class).

Security at a barbershop is usually not excessive and is usually geared toward safeguarding the barber's equipment, which may very well be his most prized possession (and such measures might consist largely of him keeping these items with him even when away from his shop). Establishments with significant inventory, of course, will have sturdy locked doors, barred or shuttered windows, and the like.

Adventure Hooks

* Murder in the barbershop! A customer in a barber's chair places himself in a position of complete trust. If not attacked by the barber himself (as part of a secret career of robbery or body-snatching or as a well-paid assassination), the customer still presents an immobile target to a surprise attack, perhaps by a squad of crossbowmen or a swift sword-thrust, and has great difficulty in defending himself against a coup-de-grace for precious seconds.

* A patent medicine sold in a popular barber's shop, through the malice of an indwelling spirit infused from certain dubious ingredients, might have an unexpected delayed effect on its users and affect a broad range of apparently-unconnected individuals.

* An especially daring barber might wish to join a player character party on their journeys, hoping to see the world, expand his knowledge and skills, and enjoy the protection of trained adventurers in the process.



The Barber, Nicholas Gysis (c. 1880)

Bathhouse

Bathhouses are places where people can go to clean themselves and perform other hygiene functions. In many societies throughout the world, however, public baths have evolved into major institutions that have also served the functions of gyms, spas, barber shops, and social halls. Peoples for whom public baths have been important have included the Turks, the Russians, and the Romans, who built them in every city of their empire (some of which still exist and are used, albeit in a renovated form, to this day). An individual bathhouse also might also be associated with another facility, such as a stronghold, brothel, or temple, and used by its inhabitants and clients.

In cultures where bathing is important but where baths in homes are not universal, public baths of some sort will likely be available to everyone — even slaves, beggars, and the lowest classes of society — for free or a nominal fee. More sumptuous, privately-run commercial baths might also be available for those with adequate funds, of course.

Depending on cultural mores, baths might be wholly or partially accessible to members of one or the other sex, based upon whether men and women bathing together is accepted or frowned upon. Any particular bathhouse might thus be open fully to members of both sexes, open only to members of one gender or the other, or have separate areas for each (with perhaps mixed areas like a main swimming pool).

Proprietors of baths might simply be businessmen but are also quite often people with professions related to the functions of their establishments, such as barbers, masseuses, various sorts of healers, or people af-

filiated with another institution with which a particular bathhouse is connected (e.g., a brothel).

Baths are almost always built near ample sources of fresh water. If possible, they are also built near sources of natural heat, such as hot springs or geothermal vents — also favored for their medicinal properties — and if these are not available then artificial means of providing heat must be built into them. Baths are usually built of stone, brick, or other durable materials and might be entirely underground or have significant subterranean areas (largely because it is easier to direct water downward than upward).

At the least, a bath must include a place where patrons can wash themselves (e.g., a pool through which fresh water flows), and the smallest baths might all be contained within a single building or large chamber. Many baths, however, will include bathing pools with cold, tepid, and hot water; steam rooms and dry saunas; swimming pools of various sizes; and other appropriate areas (e.g., massage rooms, a barber shop). A major bath facility with many or all of these elements might be as large as an entire city block in size.

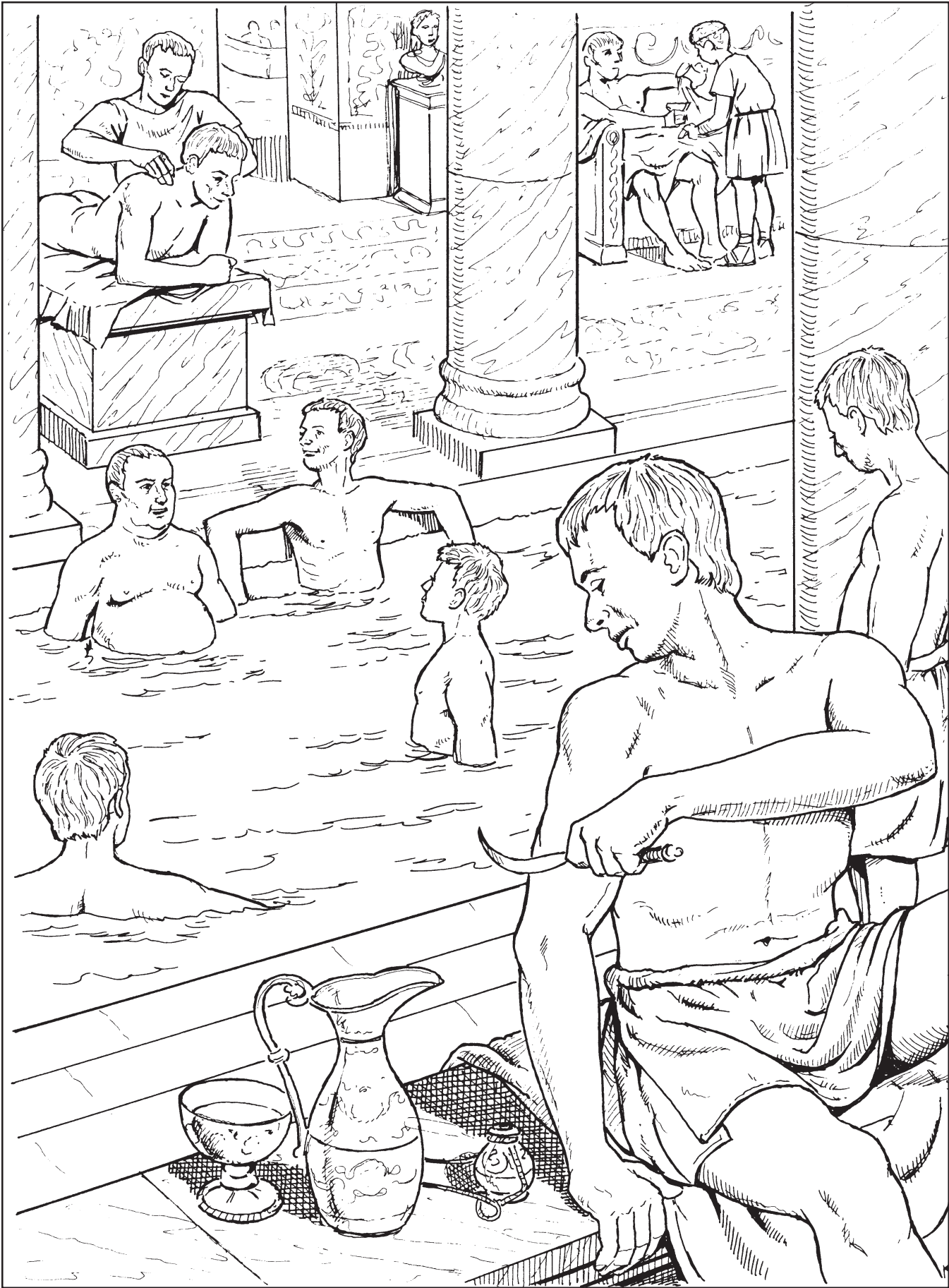
Other than the usual measures used to protect any establishment, security at a bathhouse will likely be designed to help protect patrons and their possessions (e.g., through the use of lockers). Guards might also be present at large municipal baths — as at any public venue — to keep order or at smaller commercial ones to discourage non-paying guests. Such places will also likely have staffs of attendants on hand to help keep an eye on changing rooms, prevent patrons from drowning, and the like.



Adventure Hooks

* In societies where public baths are important, meetings and business are often conducted at them. Player characters might therefore find it advantageous to frequent such institutions in order to obtain assignments or learn information that might be of use to them.

* An inimical creature that requires large amounts of water to grow or possibly to breed in might choose a closed public bath as a suitable place. Player characters who learn of the secret presence of such a being might have to act quickly to forestall a major threat not just to the bath house but possibly to the surrounding community as well.



Hostel

Hostels are accommodations designed to meet the needs of less-affluent travelers. Such places are of two general sorts. Commercial hostels are like cheap hotels that cater to itinerant workers like day-laborers, journeymen, petty hawkers, entertainers, and traveling barbers, as well as occasional parsimonious tourists of the middle class who have somehow learned the location of such an establishment.

Some hostels are intended only for members of certain social groups, races, vocations, or gender, and characters who do not fall into such categories might be denied accommodations or be made to feel unwelcome. One example of such special-purpose hostels are those run by religious groups, which are meant to provide sleeping quarters for pilgrims — many of whom may have renounced wealth — or the very poor, and often ask no more than what a guest is willing or able to freely contribute. Accommodations in all sorts of such places are also often segregated by sex.

Services and surroundings provided by hostels of charitable or religious nature are typically austere, intended to be sufficient to support a healthy existence without encouraging their clients to rely solely on the place for extended periods of time and to serve as many needy people as the available facilities can support. This frugal attitude may devolve into neglect and sordid conditions when laypeople or corrupt officials appointed to manage a hostel abuse their positions out of laziness, greed, or actual animosity towards the guests.

Sleeping accommodations in hostels are usually reminiscent of those in dormitories or barracks. Such facilities are often established in large halls that may be converted from buildings originally designed for other uses (e.g., stables). Individual rooms, available at a premium if at all, typically resemble the cells of monks.

A step down from typical hostels are flophouses, distinguished by their cramped squalor and often by the absence of beds, instead requiring guests to use mats, hammocks, or the like or to sleep on the floor as well as possible in their cloaks. While vermin like lice and bedbugs are likely to be an omnipresent nuisance at any overnight establishments in a typical ancient, medieval, or Renaissance milieu, they will probably be especially bothersome in an establishment of this sort.

Hostels almost never serve more than a light morning repast to guests before they head out on their way, as most prefer their guests to depart early in the morn-

ing. It is usually not difficult for guests to find an evening meal or other services in the immediate area, however, as most hostels are located in clusters of similar visitor-oriented businesses and with a view for direct convenience to major routes of travel.

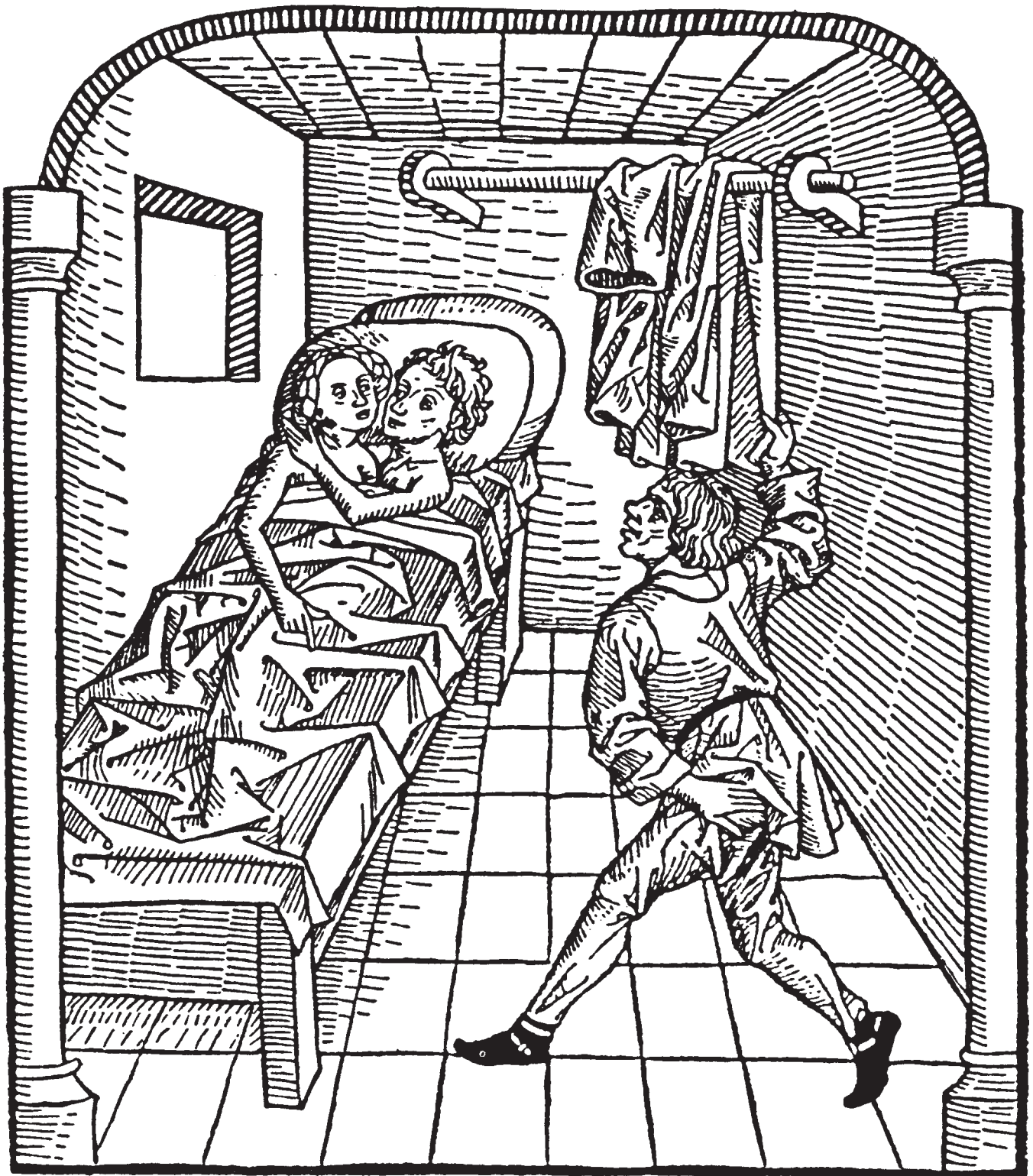
Security at hostels tends to be minimal and guests are generally expected to look out for their own belongings and well being. Doors into the facility and to guest rooms may not even be outfitted with locks, and securing of lockers or cubbies to the extent that it is possible will likely be at the discretion of guests. Staff members will usually be on duty 24 hours a day, however, in order to keep an eye on things and will likely call for the city watch in the event of any problems.

Adventure Hooks

* Hostels having recently acquired an unsavory reputation in some quarters, a group of adventurers might be led to believe — perhaps quite incorrectly — that one at which they are staying is a front for some sort of unsavory activity. Seemingly sinister but ultimately misleading evidence of evil-doing might characters to draw any number of incorrect conclusions and induce to them to undertake misguided actions in response.

* Knowing that many of those who patronize hostels live vulnerable lives, estranged from friends and family and often involved in dealings far beyond their capabilities to handle, the proprietors of a particular flophouse have, indeed, taken to abducting guests for some fell purpose. A player character party might detect evidence of such an event (e.g., ominous messages scrawled on the walls of their room, abandoned possessions of former guests) and attempt to determine the fates of the missing people without falling prey to the same end themselves.

* Leaders of a temple or other religious or charitable organization that runs a hostel might be aware of some sort of unusual threat within their community and, unable to approach anyone within it, might seek out adventurers staying at their hostel to deal with the problem. While such an organization is likely to be cash-poor, it may be able to offer exceptional spiritual or political support (e.g., spellcasting, special items, information not commonly known, access to normally-restricted places where their followers have influence).



Inn

Inns are businesses that supply lodgings for large numbers of travelers to stay overnight or longer, providing more-or-less comfortable places to eat, sleep, bathe, have clothes laundered and boots cleaned, and mounts and carriages tended to. Such places are also often convenient settings from which to arrange excursions into the local area or meet privately with acquaintances or business associates. Inns often include or are affiliated with taverns, restaurants, or gaming rooms where guests — and locals of good standing — can share a drink or a meal and socialize. Many also provide guests with various amenities, such as posting letters, money-changing, and storing valuables.

Inns are common in the merchants' and foreigners' quarters of larger towns and cities that are centers of trade or which attract visitors to worship at their temples or see their widely-reputed wonders. Many well-traveled routes also have inns at regular intervals, to accommodate travelers during each night of their journeys (e.g., along roadsides, in small villages). Innkeepers may also establish lodgings at strategic locations near any sites that attract significant numbers of visitors (e.g., a temple that is a pilgrimage destination, a natural landmark of remarkable beauty).

A number of variations on the inn concept might exist in any particular milieu. Places of this sort on the periphery of wilderness areas that specialize in catering to people who visit them for recreational purposes are often known as resorts. Small country inns that provide accommodations and meals to visitors pursuing particular outdoor activities — such as hunting, fishing or skiing — are often called lodges. In some milieus, higher-end urban inns are often called hotels.

In widely literate societies, travel writers may publish or otherwise make known their good or bad impressions of inns, sometimes singling out one as the best in a locality or even giving a scale of ratings, allowing such establishments to develop reputations far beyond their immediate surroundings. In a fantasy setting, bards might even celebrate particular inns as the best in all the world, the last outposts of civilization on chaotic frontiers, or as reliable starting points for high adventure, lending them an almost mythic significance.

Although few other races travel as widely or as luxuriously as Humans, all of the civilized peoples maintain lodgings of one sort or another for visitors. Among the less-civilized humanoids, Goblinoids periodically run austere, barracks-like inns for those with business

in their communities. Gnolls, too, sometimes maintain caverns, ruins, and the like for use by different bands — under a rough and often-disregarded custom of truce — as hunting lodges, occasionally with groups of subservient beings residing permanently nearby to render services.

Inns need numerous private, semi-private, or common rooms to accommodate large numbers of guests and, if located in villages or smaller settlements, will often be the largest privately-owned buildings there and either include numerous wings or be located in compounds with affiliated structures and businesses. A typical building design consists of two or three double-storey wings partly encircling a courtyard where carriages can pull in to unload guests and luggage, conveyances thereafter being taken to a coach house and draft animals to a stable by attendants. The innkeeper's office and residence are usually next to the main entrance in order to welcome customers when they arrive and to settle their bills when they leave. The inn may have a small postern-gate from which guests can venture out into the surrounding area.

Proprietors of inns might have worked in their younger days in some or all aspects of an inn's operations, depending on its size, and might be skilled at bookkeeping and purchasing and managing stocks of supplies. Inns are very often family businesses with relatives of different ages filling jobs appropriate to their abilities and experience. Retired adventurers also often take up the innkeeping trade.

In temperate countries — where the first desire of guests stumbling in from long winter journeys is to get warm — both common rooms and private chambers of inns are generally built around large fireplaces venting to a number of shared chimneys. Kitchens at such inns also consume a great deal of fuel, as hot meals and mulled wine are much in demand. As a result, collecting and stockpiling of firewood from any available woods is an important task, for which the inn usually pays local peasants.

While some inns provide nothing but accommodations — especially those in areas where a variety of other amenities are available — many also provide hearty meals to restore the spirits and keep up the energy of travelers. Often, aristocratic or wealthy guests are served in a separate dining room, or in their rooms, while their coachmen and other servants eat in the kitchen or taproom, where they can gossip and inter-

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act with the inn's staff and various other working-class visitors (e.g., traveling hawkers, mercenaries, constables, royal messengers). Food served at inns is usually simple, common fare, but if an inn is known for a culinary specialty, it often consists of traditional local recipes that use ingredients such as game meats or wild herbs freshly obtained in the immediate area.

Beyond rest, inns can help fulfill guests' other needs, including preparing for anything from another hard day of travel to attending important business meetings, religious services, or other events. Most inns — at least

those in societies where hygiene is important — will either have small bath houses or provisions for bringing hot water and toiletries to each room. Some will even provide personal services, such as barbering or cleaning and mending of clothing; arrange for tradesmen like clothiers to call on guests; or maintain a storefront near the inn to sell or rent appropriate formal wear (e.g., courtiers' outfits at an inn near a seat of government). And at finer establishments, the innkeeper or a concierge may assist guests with purchases or arrangements they wish to make, drawing upon local contacts



Inn

that outsiders may not otherwise have access to.

Because the essence of an inn's business is to allow guests to rest peacefully and to travel through unfamiliar places without concern for injury to their persons or reputations, the proprietors of inns are known for their distaste for openly rowdy or disreputable behavior, often adding extra charges to a guest's bill to pay for damage caused. What goes on in private rooms, of course, is another matter.

Adventure Hooks

* An innkeeper might present characters who have stayed at his establishment with a long list of charges, totaling to an enormous sum that is more than they can easily pay. The player characters might be inclined to dispute the bill (e.g., on the basis of fraud or intolerably poor service), to skip out without paying, or to take on a side task to pay their debts.

* Private rooms at an inn often host meetings and as-signations of all kinds. In some instances, the participants would much prefer to keep their contacts from public knowledge, while in others the parties at a meeting mistrust each other, even to the point of preparing for deadly violence. Anything that goes wrong in such a fraught situation might erupt into a violent assault, a conflict that spills from the room into chases through the corridors and stairwells of the inn, or an event unseen by others at the time that leaves behind a mysterious aftermath — and perhaps a dead body or three. Player characters might be drawn into such conflicts either as participants in the meeting, as unwittingly incriminating witnesses or targets of stray violence staying in the wrong inn at the wrong time, or by taking on an investigation that requires them to explain the events that took place in an inn chamber, hours, days, or even years before.

The Plough Inn, William Shayer Snr. (1788-1879)



Rooming House

Rooming houses are accommodations intended mainly for members of the lower tier of the middle class and the upper tier of the lower class and serve the needs of travelers who will be staying for a week or more in a particular area. For a reasonable price by the day — or much more cheaply by the week — the traveler can have a bed (often in a shared room) and a modest breakfast and supper. Both meals are typically served only during narrow prescribed times that may be more convenient to the management than to guests (e.g., strictly for a half-hour after dawn for breakfast and for a half-hour commencing on the hour after sunset for the evening meal).

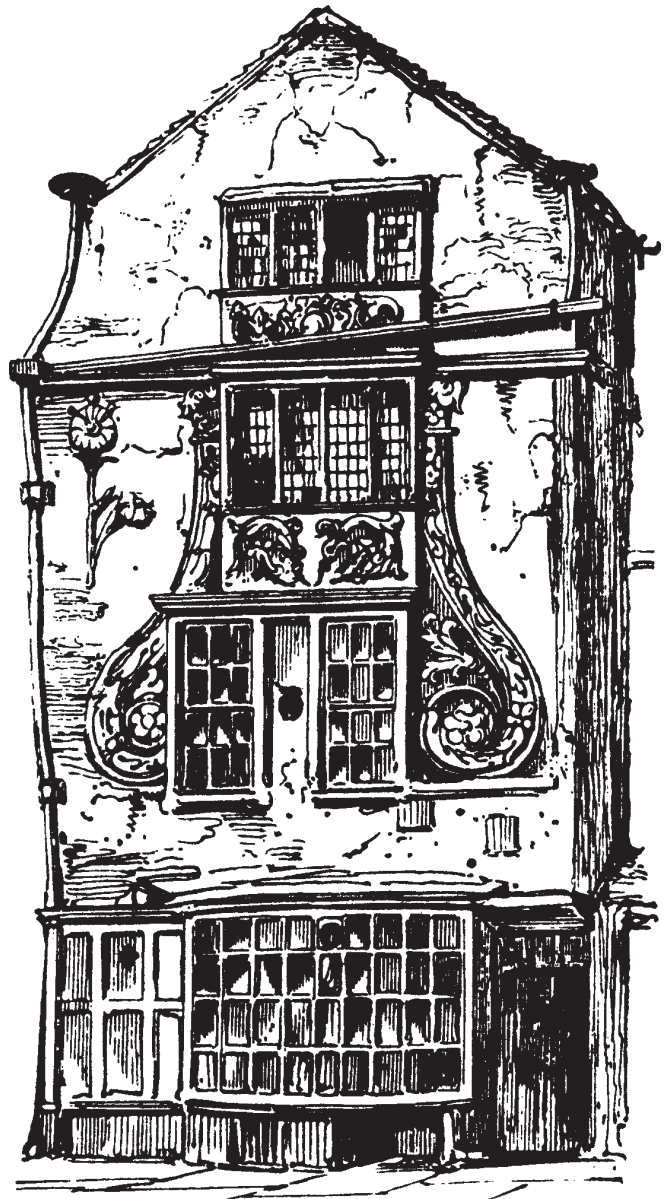
Also frequently known as a boarding house, a rooming house is most often simply a relatively long and large, internally divided house of the sort used by craftsmen or tradesmen and described under “Buildings” in *City Builder Volume 1: Communities*. In those with more than one or two rooms to rent, chambers are often arranged along a common corridor on each floor, but perhaps in a more haphazard way if the premises have grown by successive additions to an original building. A common dining room, kitchen, laundry, and a slightly larger apartment for a live-in manager typically connect close to the street entrance, for convenience of housekeeping in the common areas and in order for the manager to keep an eye on comings and goings.

Single folk who follow a somewhat uncertain course in their professional lives, such as adventurers, are often well served by staying for extended periods in a boarding house. They may also benefit from being able to give the establishment’s address as a point of contact, provided that the management do not object to guests receiving visitors or having messages left. Indeed, many rooming houses are known also for the extensive rules established by the landlord or landlady, to avoid disruption to their lives and reputations by the antics of lodgers of uncertain morals.

Adventure Hooks

* A sage, gemner or other professional who has been recommended to the party as a source of advice might carry out business dealings from his lodgings — where the characters have to brave the suspicious gaze of his landlady as they arrive, especially if any of them are roughly or outlandishly dressed or otherwise seem disreputable.

* A former occupant of a room in a boarding house where a player character has taken up lodgings might have hidden something under the floorboards or in a hidden compartment (e.g., a valuable jewel, an incriminating document, a dead body). Danger follows for the new tenant who discovers the hidden item, or when the former owner or other interested parties return to reclaim it.



Kitchen

Precursors of modern cafeterias, buffets, and fast-food restaurants, commercial kitchens are typical of many urban areas, where they serve simple but hardy fare at affordable prices to the masses. Institutions of this sort could be found in many ancient, medieval, and later cities and generally included provisions for either eating on the premises or carrying away their wares. Unlike taverns, the proprietors of kitchens do not encourage their customers to linger after completion of their meals or to use such places as drinking establishments.

Clientele at commercial urban kitchens are determined more by financial means and the neighborhoods in which they are located than any other common bonds, and a great diversity of people might be found at such establishments. Common laborers, craftsmen, tradesmen, entertainers, and anyone else without more than a few pieces of silver to spend on their main repast are likely to be found elbow-to-elbow with relatively impoverished adventurers.

Cooks' shops might take a wide variety of forms, from carts and wagons where food is prepared for passersby, to townhouses that can seat several dozen people, to great halls that can serve the culinary needs of hundreds at a time. Furniture — chiefly plank benches and tables or upended large barrels where patrons can dine standing — tends to be simple, sturdy, and marked with the grime and knifemarks of innumerable diners.

Fare at commercial kitchens can vary widely, but generally tends toward stewed, roasted, fried, or boiled meats, boiled vegetables, and starches like coarse bread, pasta, and baked tubers. Variety is often limited, however, and daily specials are typical. Cheaper, much simpler meals — such as porridge — might also be available at about half as much as other meals for those on especially tight budgets. Outdoor stalls often sell just one or two items, such as pies, various sorts of meat wrapped in a bun or flatbread, or fried or roasted snacks (e.g., French fries, chestnuts).

In addition to selling food on the premises, cooks' shops might also provide catering services. Commercial kitchens might also be established temporarily only at certain times or for specific reasons. In many Islamic countries, for example, kitchens sponsored by restaurants and other institutions are set up in tents or other temporary structures and used to serve free meals to the faithful during the festival of Ramadan.

One unnamed but fairly typical London eatery is

described by Charles Dickens as “a dirty shop window in a dirty street, which was made almost opaque by the steam of hot meats, vegetables, and puddings. But glimpses were to be caught of a roast leg of pork bursting into tears of sage and onion in a metal reservoir full of gravy, of an unctuous piece of roast beef and blisterous Yorkshire pudding, bubbling hot in a similar receptacle, of a stuffed fillet of veal in rapid cut, of a ham in a perspiration with the pace it was going at, of a shallow tank of baked potatoes glued together by their own richness, of a truss or two of boiled greens, and other substantial delicacies. Within, were a few wooden partitions, behind which such customers as found it more convenient to take away their dinners in stomachs than in their hands, packed their purchases in solitude.”

Security measures are likely to be quite limited at kitchens and to be designed mostly to safeguard cooking implements, revenues, foodstuffs, the dining premises themselves quite possibly having little or nothing of value for miscreants to steal or destroy.

Adventure Hooks

* Soon after dining at a large commercial kitchen, the characters begin to suffer profound burning sensations in the stomach, along with any other symptoms the game master deems reasonable (to these can also be added various spurious saving throws). Accusations of any sort leveled at the proprietor will be met with indignant denials of any wrongdoing. A visit to an apothecary, healer, or other medical professional, however, will likely result in a diagnosis of heartburn, which can be treated with a few inexpensive herbal infusions. Whether this is anything more than a nuisance and a red herring is completely up to the game master ...

* The simple fare of a food vendor can evoke strong memories of pleasant days of the past. A powerful person whom the characters refuse at their peril — such as a ruthless warlord or mighty wizard — demands that the party fetch her a meal from the cart that used to ply the market square in her home town when she was young. This could become complicated if the vendor is no longer trading, possibly requiring the party to employ measures like seeking out a relative who has the appropriate recipes or whose cooking will satisfy their patron's request.



Restaurant

Restaurants are businesses that strive to provide distinctly pleasurable, fine dining experiences to paying customers, serving good-quality meals with individual service in distinctive settings. A restaurant may specialize in providing a particular sort of food or the cuisine of a particular foreign country, though often such restaurants also provide common local selections.

Because they cater mostly to the middle class and to travelers, restaurants are typically found in large towns or cities where there are concentrations of such people. Races who disdain luxury or formal dining manners, such as Dwarves and most of the savage humanoids, seldom have restaurants, but Halflings, known to be gourmands, and Elves, with their refined tastes, support many types of restaurants suitable to their preferences. Goblins have restaurants of a sort, with various disturbing meats, often served alive.

There are various styles of service, but most often a customer may order from a selection of dishes, which are then cooked or otherwise prepared on the premises — sometimes in view of the patrons as an assurance of freshness or a form of entertainment. For large groups that make advance reservations, a restaurant may provide a pre-set menu that includes items not normally served or other special treatment. Restaurants also serve drinks appropriate to their meals, which a cellarer or similar specialist may select personally, and sometimes provide minstrels on particular days (though this role is more typical for a tavern). For special occasions, either the restaurant or the guests' organizer may arrange touches such as place cards, small gifts, or entertainers, brought in specifically for the event, who might wander between tables for close-up performances.

The proprietor of a restaurant is often also the head chef, but might also be purely a business manager. Skilled cooks often move easily through their careers between owning and running their own restaurants, managing restaurants that are part of larger concerns (such as large inns or government centers), and serving as private cooks for wealthy households.

Restaurant kitchens typically contain an array of specialized professional cooking equipment, from knives, bowls, and dishes up to particular types of ovens, arranged as a production line from washing and peeling through to final presentation for the standard dishes served at the establishment. They often use cooking processes that are larger in volume, faster, and some-

times require greater skill than those typically found in common households (although the mansions of wealthy merchants and nobles might have kitchens that are very similar to those of restaurants).

Large quantities of standard ingredients are typically either picked out by skilled restaurant staff or the chef himself at wholesale markets, gathered or hunted fresh from the local countryside, delivered by specialist suppliers known as *providores*, or purchased in large bulk containers sold specifically for the restaurant trade; delivered daily to a back or side entrance; stored in a fashion that the proprietor, if not his customers, considers adequately clean; and brought out ready for the chefs to use. Lesser-skilled kitchen staff must also perform daily tasks like washing numerous dishes, pots, pans, and utensils and dumping large amounts of malodorous garbage.

Screened from all this, the restaurant's customers receive finished dishes served with flair by well-dressed wait staff, on tables that are often provided with ornamental centerpieces and even freshly-laundered covers, and provided with appealing — but sturdy and easily washed — crockery and often-specialized eating utensils appropriate to the foods served.

Adventure Hooks

* A family of nobles, organized criminals, or other powerbrokers who control a small city seldom leave their secure villas to gather together, due to their many enemies. Thus, when a special occasion brings most of the family to a banquet at an exclusive restaurant, the stage is set for a usurper to try to massacre them in a single bold stroke. The player characters might be hired as guards to protect the place during the meal, hired by the family's enemies to assault the restaurant, hired as guards and then paid off by the usurper to let in the assassins, or might just be innocent diners in the wrong place at the wrong time.

* One of the signature dishes of a famous restaurant is served only at special request and great expense because it requires a rare game-beast, herb, fungus, eggs, or some similar ingredient, difficult to find and dangerous to hunt or gather. The restaurant owner hires the player characters to go to the wild location where the ingredient can be found and return quickly with a sufficient amount for an upcoming feast.



Trafalgar Tavern, Greenwich, James Jacques Tissot (1878)

Tavern

Taverns are businesses that sell various sorts of alcoholic beverages and often food like snacks or simple meals, generally for consumption on the premises but quite often also for customers to take with them and consume elsewhere. Such places can be of any size, and include everything from street-side wine carts where patrons can stand and drink, to village longhouses where customers drink small beer in the room where it was brewed, to sprawling, multi-level halls serviced by gangs of sturdy beer maids.

Other places of this sort include pubs and bars of all sorts and places specializing in other kinds of intoxicants or stimulants (e.g., coffee, hashish, hot chocolate, betel-nut), which might be the norm in some societies. Less formal or licit arrangements, variously known as shebeens, keggers, raves, or drinking-cellars, might consist of no more than a suitable gathering-place and a supply of cheap alcohol — possibly brewed on the premises — where participants can pay a flat fee to drink until they stagger out or drop.

Most taverns also cater to a particular group or sort of regular patrons and just as important as the drinks they sell is the ambience they provide and opportunity for customers to relax or enjoy themselves and interact with each other. A tavern also serves as a convenient and anonymous meeting place for many purposes and a useful place to seek or disseminate information like rumors, local news, and offers of employment.

Almost any settlement larger than a self-sufficient manor might support a tavern of some sort, and any typical city has a great number and variety of them. Places where significant numbers of people pass through or congregate, such as waypoints for travelers, holy sites, or industrial areas like large mines, might also have various sorts of “watering holes” associated with them.

Most Human cultures will have taverns of some sort associated with them. Races known for their drinking, such as Dwarves and Orcs, patronize a correspondingly large number of taverns, while sylvan races such as Elves and Satyrs, though they love to drink and revel, tend to favor parties thrown by individuals or held in natural settings. Militaristic societies, such as those of Hobgoblins, might prefer all members of the warrior class to eat and drink together in places more akin to communal kitchens (q.v.) or warlords’ feasthalls. In any event, taverns catering to specific demographic groups might be inhospitable toward would-be patrons who

are not members of such groups, or who are disliked by them (e.g., Orcs in a bar frequented by Dwarves).

Many taverns provide minstrels and other entertainers or host popular forms of gambling, games of skill (some of them dangerous), animal-fighting, and attractions like Goblin-tossing and prize-fighting. Some also provide conveniences to help inebriated guests find their way home (e.g., hire carriages, the sale of torches) or the opportunity to pass out under tables. Those that provide separate accommodations usually do so as a sideline, with a few small rooms on an upper floor above the bar, where noise passes up from below and guests can expect only slow — if any — service during business hours. Those catering to travelers, however, might place more emphasis on meals and amenities like rooms and stables for mounts and less on varieties of entertainment.

Disturbances or full-scale brawls can easily break out in taverns, particularly if the customers are from groups accustomed to violence or their aggression is heightened by intoxicants, stressful circumstances, ethnic tensions, or disagreements over the results of a tavern’s games. Depending on the likelihood of such problems, the publican often employs one or more bouncers to prevent them by removing customers who are on the verge of assaulting each other.

Other security measures at taverns are usually for purposes of keeping an establishment from being robbed of its inventory or vandalized by miscreants during hours when it is closed.

Adventure Hooks

* Of all the places patronized by adventurers, the tavern is certainly the most quintessentially classic venue for characters to hire on for expeditions, hear rumors or learn information pertinent to their activities, and recruit comrades, mercenaries, or hirelings. This makes perfect sense and, in the absence of a more specific place for conducting any such activities, game masters are encouraged to continue with this venerable tradition.

* Characters drinking in a rough tavern might be approached by an individual who offers to show them to a lucrative gambling game. The game could be fair, rigged, unpleasant in nature, or simply a ruse to lure drinkers outside to be set upon by robbers or a press gang.



Appendix: Inn and Tavern Generation

This section provides a series of random generators that may be used separately, or in sequence, to determine the kinds of inns and taverns found in a particular community, whether individually or overall, and can be used to quickly determine their general characteristics.

Part 1: Number of Inns and Taverns Per 1,000 Inhabitants

First generate from Table 1-A the number of inns, taverns, and other establishments in the community that cater to travelers, then add from Table 1-B the number of taverns that serve mainly local customers. This gives a total number of hospitality establishments, for which specific types can be generated from Table 2 or 3 (assuming that inns, taverns, hostels, and so on, actually overlap in function to a large degree after being more fully defined).

The status of trade and travel may be obvious from the game master's notes, or otherwise can be randomized on the third or fourth column of Table 1-A by rolling a d8 and adding applicable modifiers as follows:

Stagnant: The area has no regular contact with the outside world. The inhabitants subsist only on what is produced in the area. Any tools or ornaments that are not locally made are decades or generations old.

Isolated: The community sees traders, outside governmental officials, and occasional passers-by as much as one to three times per season on average.

Provincial: The area sees a fair number of out-of-

Table 1-A: Inns by Trade and Travel	Number of Inns and Taverns per 1,000 Inhabitants	Random Trade/Travel (Medieval) (d8)	Random Trade/Travel (Ancient/Renaissance) (d8)
<i>Stagnant</i>	d3-1	1	1
<i>Isolated (Typical thorp or hamlet)</i>	d4	2-3	2
<i>Provincial (typical village)</i>	2d4	4	3
<i>Healthy (Typical town)</i>	4d4	5-6	4-5
<i>Flourishing</i>	7d4	7-8	6-8
Each adjacent nation of Humans, Elves, Dwarves, Gnomes, or Halflings (unless at war with them)	—		+1
Royal road, minor river, mountain pass, or lake	—		+1
Major river, seaport, or royal capital	—		+2
Mines, middle to high noble, famous industry, fortress	—		+1
Natural hazard	—		-2
Monster infestation	—		-1
Each adjacent nation of Orcs, Goblinoids, or Giants (unless allied)	—		-1

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town merchants and other visitors each month, especially in certain seasons, though it still struggles to draw the committed interest of city-folk.

Healthy: The community's markets thrive, with buyers and sellers from many nearby regions seeking different goods and services.

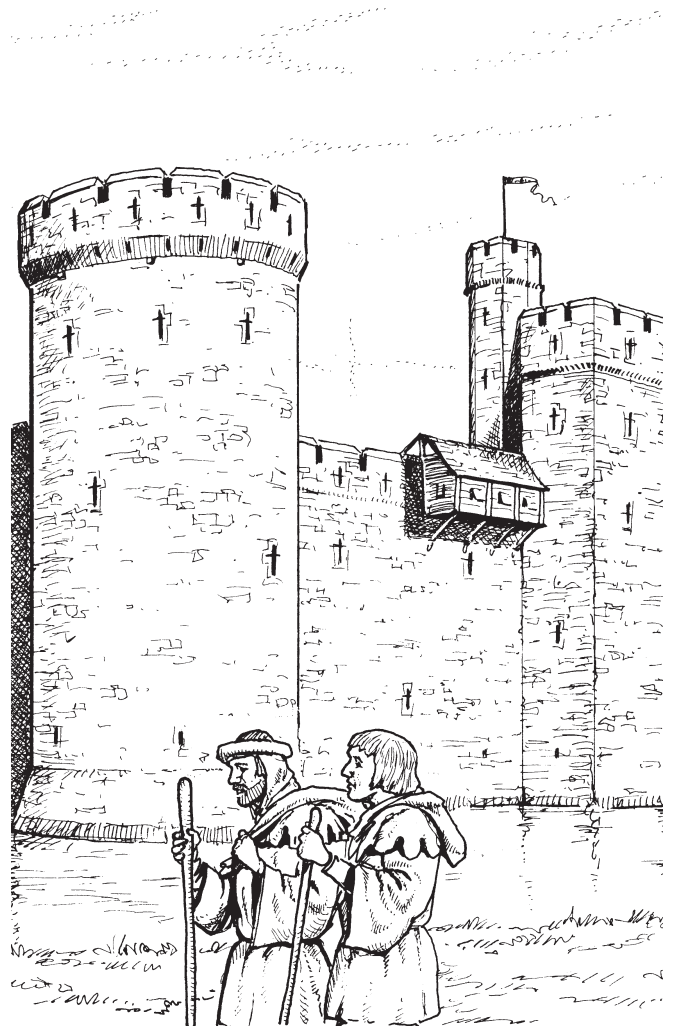
Flourishing: The place is a center of trade, with constantly arriving traders and transients from other cities and lands.

Add a number of taverns patronized by locals from Table 1-B, depending on the game master's understanding of the local drinking customs or by random generation from the third column. The local equivalent of a tavern need not serve alcoholic drinks, and any beverage or stimulant enjoyed socially at the place where it is sold — such as tea, coffee, tobacco, or betel nut — can generate establishments comparable to taverns. If providers of more than one stimulant are popular in local custom (e.g., coffee houses) a GM might add an additional 50% of the number of local taverns to the grand total of drinking establishments, then after determining the nature of each tavern in Table 2, roll an additional die at a percentage the GM chooses (anywhere from 50%/50% to 80%/20% chance) to decide what beverage the place prefers to serve.

Paranoid: The inhabitants actively dislike associating with each other and have few traditions of social gatherings. Any taverns that exist in such a place cater only to travelers, troublemakers, and those who are forced by circumstances to take a meal outside of their homes.

Abstemious: Due to a strictly enforced religious decree or civil ordinance, public serving of drinks is prohibited and locals visit taverns for meals only. Note that rules that are unpopular and widely flouted have no such influence on the number of taverns, though they may alter the procedures of each place and the ease with which a stranger might find such an establishment.

Sociable: In the typical community, local inhabit-



ants like to gather in their free time to share a beverage and discuss their daily lives and the state of the world, supporting many local taverns.

Dissolute: Members of the local population have much to forget and give over as much of their free time as possible to drinking.

Table 1-B: Taverns by Social Habit	Number of Taverns Per 1,000 Inhabitants	Random Social Habit (d8)
Paranoid	1	—
Abstemious	5	1-2
Sociable	10	3-6
Dissolute	20	7-8

Appendix: Inn and Tavern Generation

Part 2:

Type and Patronage of Inns and Taverns

Most purposes for which player characters might visit an inn or tavern depend largely for their results on the kinds of people who patronize the place and the range of services provided there.

Table 2 can be used to provide a brief description for a number of inns or taverns in a community (in the fairly common event that players call for a list of places to visit) or for a single establishment that the characters visit, at random or from lack of choice. Table 2 assumes that player characters can choose to visit either a cheap-seeming establishment or one that looks more expensive, though the reality might be otherwise. To generate a comprehensive list, assume that 70% of the inns and taverns in a community are of the cheap sort.

After generating the type of establishment, the GM may roll for a *special purpose* to decide whether the inn, tavern, etc., caters to a particular occupation, ethnicity, or other subgroup of the class of people listed, or offers a special type of accommodation and service (for example, a sanatorium for those of the social class indicated who have a particular disease).



Table 2: Random Inns and Taverns	Random Inn or Tavern Type (Cheap) (d20)	Random Inn or Tavern Type (Expensive) (d20)	Chance of Slovenliness, Horse Thievery, or Dishonest Bill
Criminals' dive	1–2	—	30%
Laborers' tavern	3–6	—	15%
Laborers' hostel	7	—	20%
Artisans' tavern	8–10	—	15%
Artisans' hostel	11–12	—	15%
Merchants' inn	13–14	1–2	10%
Merchants' tavern	15	3	10%
Nobles' inn	—	4–5	5%
Nobles' club	—	6	5%
Tourists' inn	—	7–12	15%
Rakes' club	—	13–15	5%
Students' or apprentices' tavern	16–17	16–17	15%
Laborers' brothel	18–19	—	30%
Expensive brothel	20	18–20	30%
<i>Special purpose</i>	20%	20%	–5%

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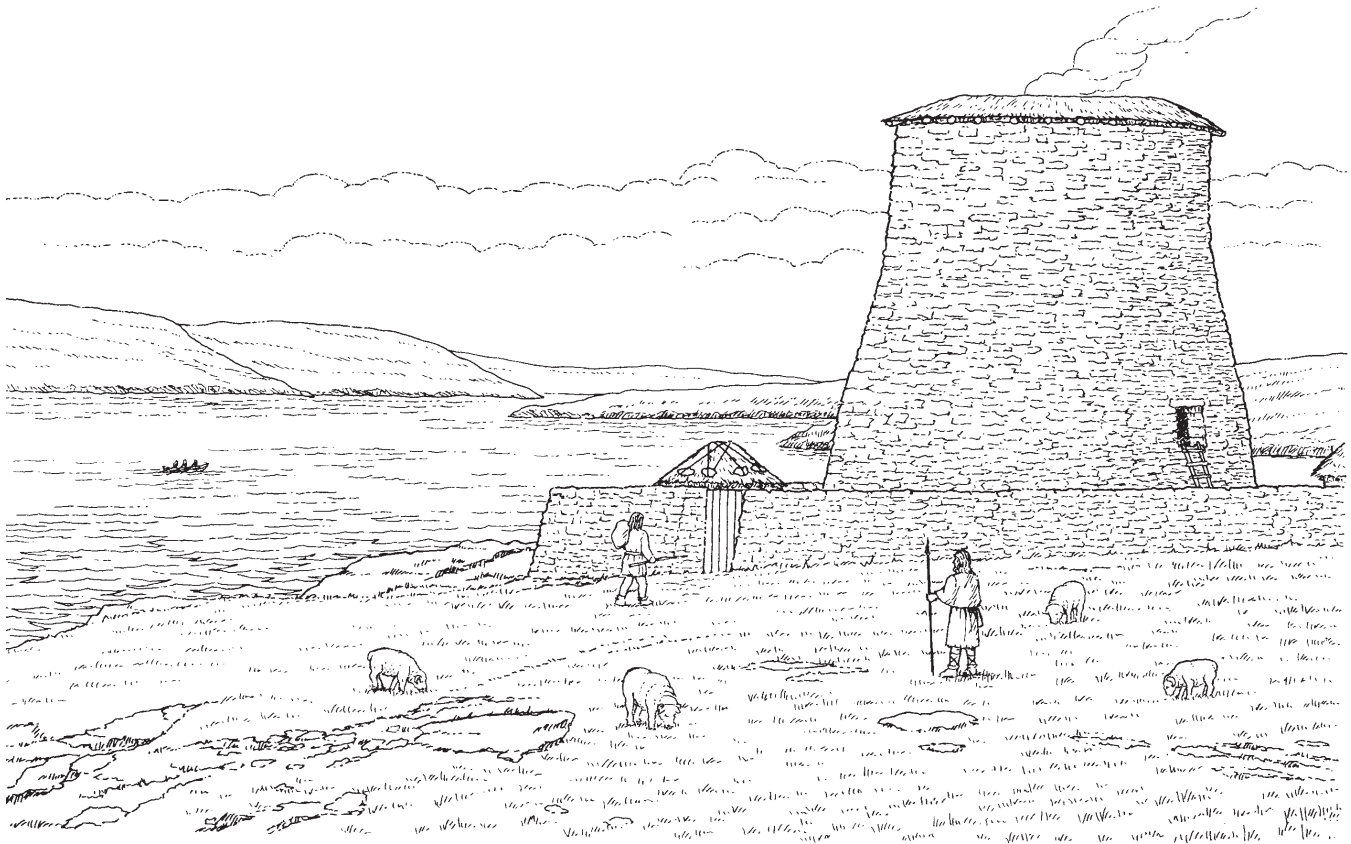
Part 3: Hospitality in Barbarian Lands

In countries where currency or the concept of private commerce are recent innovations — or, indeed, considered foreign peculiarities — the necessary functions of sheltering travelers and providing communal feasting and drinking devolve, by habit and eventually by recognized custom, to those householders who have

the room and means to accommodate guests.

As each local notable entertains those who he knows well and finds to be pleasant company, the guesting-houses in a settlement each build up a regular attendance and reputation with certain groups of people, not unlike the customary patrons of taverns and in comparable numbers of establishments.

Table 3: Barbarian Guesthouse Type	Random Guesthouse Type (d20)	Chance of Violence or Dishonesty
Outlaws	1–2	40%
Small farmers	3–7	25%
Artisans/tradesmen	8–11	10%
Warriors	12–13	10%
Nobles	14–15	10%
Foreigners	16–17	15%
Local brothel	18–19	30%
Foreign-owned brothel	20	



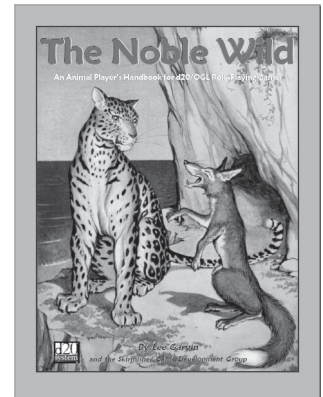
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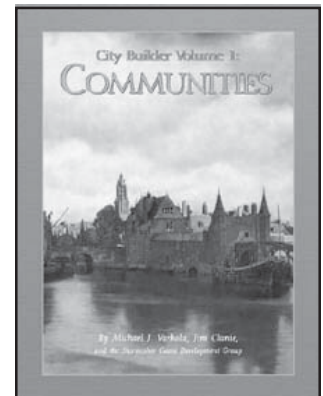
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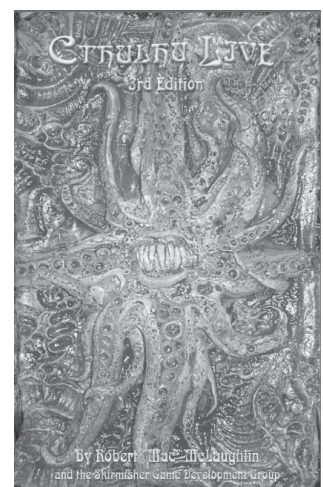


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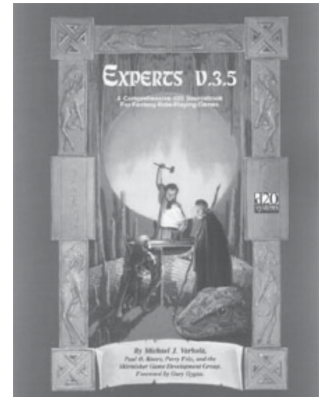
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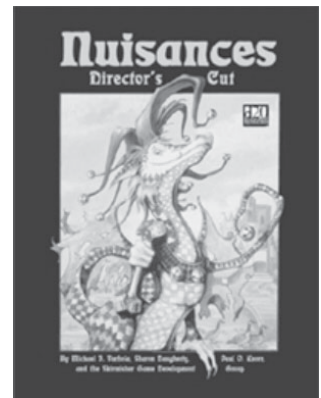


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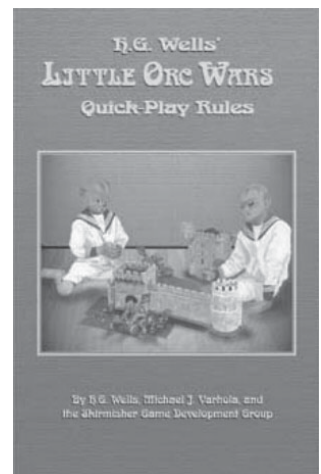
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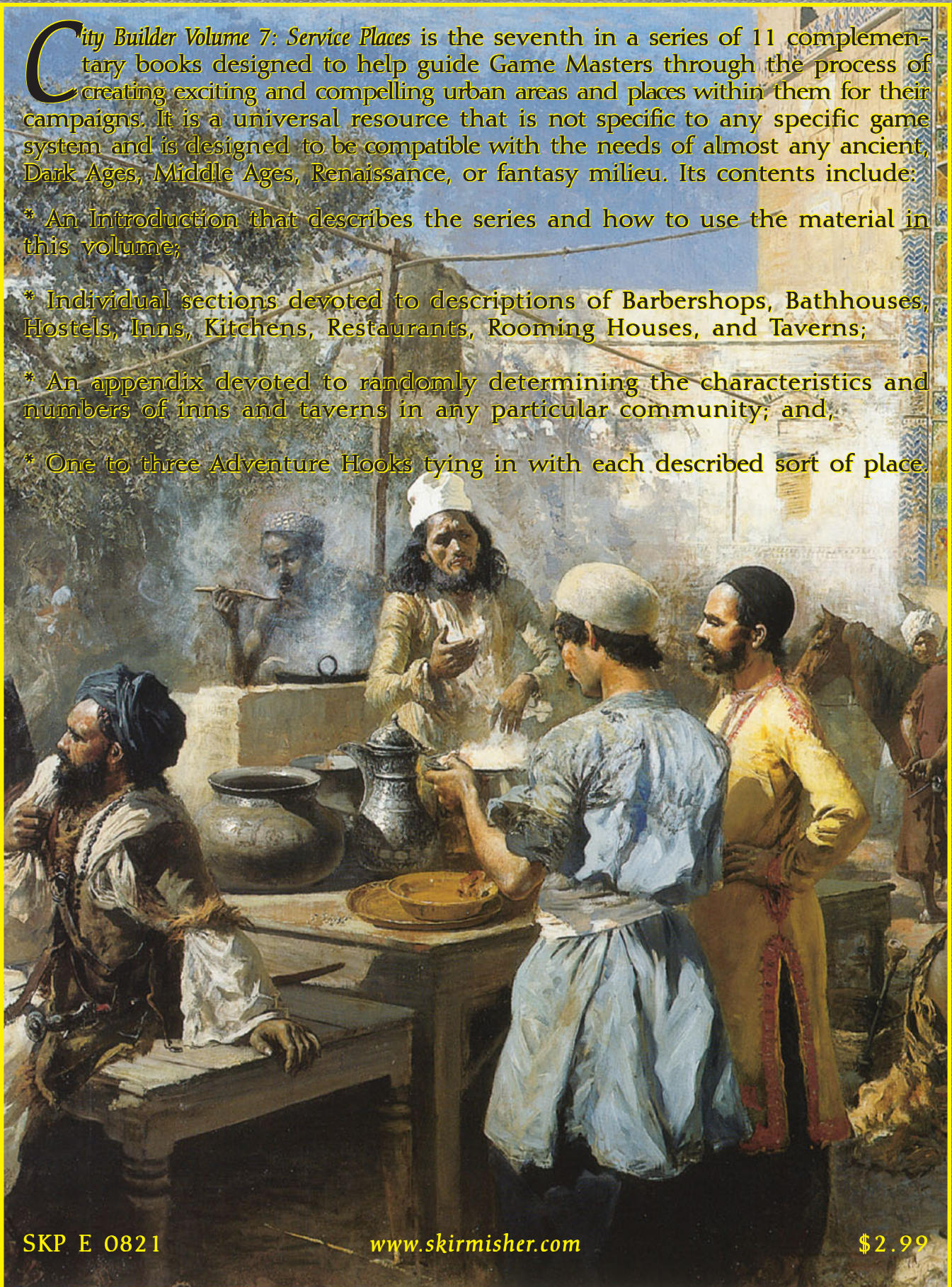
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