

DUNSTONE

TOWN ON THE BORDERLANDS



OSR

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OUR QUEST

WE BELIEVE games set in a richly detailed, immersive world are better than games that are not. **WE PUBLISH** richly detailed, easy-to-use material designed to help you, the busy GM, prepare quicker and prepare better. **WE HELP** you have more fun with your friends.

VOCAB FOR YOUR GAME

- | | |
|--|--|
| 01 Knell: to ring slowly and solemnly, especially for a funeral; toll | 11 Inexorable: impossible to stop, alter, or resist; inevitable |
| 02 Laud: give praise to | 12 Hirsute: covered with hair; hairy |
| 03 Ague: a chill or fit of shivering; an acute fever | 13 Elan: inspired by passion or enthusiasm |
| 04 Duffer: an incompetent or dull-witted person | 14 Dodder: move in a feeble or unsteady way |
| 05 Glower: to look or stare angrily or sullenly | 15 Dragoman: an interpreter or guide |
| 06 Leman: sweetheart, lover or mistress | 16 Necrosis: injury causing the premature death of cells |
| 07 Piteous: demanding or arousing pity | 17 Wean: to accustom to something from an early age |
| 08 Zenith: the point of culmination; the peak | 18 Sepulture: a burial chamber |
| 09 Sinuous: many curves or turns; supple and lithe movements | 19 Venerable: respect through age, dignity, character or position |
| 10 Pock: a pustule caused by smallpox or other eruptive disease | 20 Zounds: used to express anger, surprise or indignation |
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HAMLETS FOR YOUR GAME

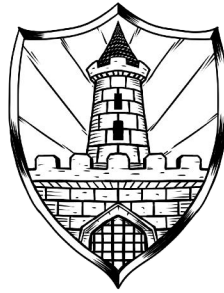
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|---|--|
| 01 Hope's Nose: two miles east of Wolverton, a gaggle of wind-blasted rude fisherfolk huts surround an isolated watchtower; no one visits Hope's Nose voluntarily | 07 Manorglade: a dozen peasant huts surround a fortified manor house set in a bucolic forest glade; this is a hunting lodge only rarely visited by its lord, and the peasants are a surly bunch |
| 02 Marshwood: stands on a river-girded wooded hill on the fringes of a wide marsh; fouls rumours of inbreeding between Marshwood's human and lizardfolk inhabitants will not die | 08 Glenallon: the half-elven adventurer Villallon once dwelled in this secluded valley; his servants' descendants yet linger here and offer safe haven to those exploring the surrounds |
| 03 Ridgehill: gnomes dwell in this small part-buried clanhold of cosy burrows set amid and below an old ruin which straggles across this high ridge of exposed stone | 09 Torwood: a jagged tower of rock arises from amid the Torwood; the folk of this hidden hamlet of the same name survive by hunting and occasional banditry |
| 04 Clearview: shepherds use the ruined watchtower at the hamlet's heart as a wolf-proof sheep pen; a hidden trapdoor leads to the tower's unknown, deep, undead-infested cellars | 10 Lynfield: stands amid a boggy patchwork of drystone-walled fields bounded by woodland and fed by several streams; a dismal, dank place inhabited by surly, inbred farmers |
| 05 Ramsdell: living in a rocky, steep-sided valley unsuitable for farming, Ramsdell's folk survive by sheep farming; cottages dot the valley floor, which is crisscrossed by several streams | 11 Warren Hills: the folk of Warren Hill farm rabbits for their meat and valuable fur; warrens litter the surrounding hills, and the populace is ever-vigilant for poachers and predators |
| 06 Brackendale: straggling through a secluded and sheltered wooded valley, Brackendale straddles the river issuing from a large cavern-mine at the valley's head | 12 Greenbanks: standing by a wild river, this hamlet perches atop a low hill surrounded by lush water meadows; it is often cut off when the river floods |
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DUNSTONE:

TOWN ON THE BORDERLANDS



The Duchy of Ashlar is small and constrained. Always, the forces of evil and shadow press inwards upon its borders. If it were not for a stout few, death and darkness would have long ago overwhelmed the land. Dunstone was once Ashlar's northern bulwark.

Now, it is a dangerously sleepy and insular place. Wicked humanoids yet lurk in the dark forests and deep valleys of the surrounding hills. Abandoned mines and crumbled ruins stud the surrounds, calling with their siren song to bold adventurers. To the west, lies the time-worn, oft-cursed ruin of the ancient Nameless Monastery. Not all dangers lurk without, though. Folk—both fair and foul—have plans for Dunstone. Change is coming, to the Town on the Borderlands.



OSR

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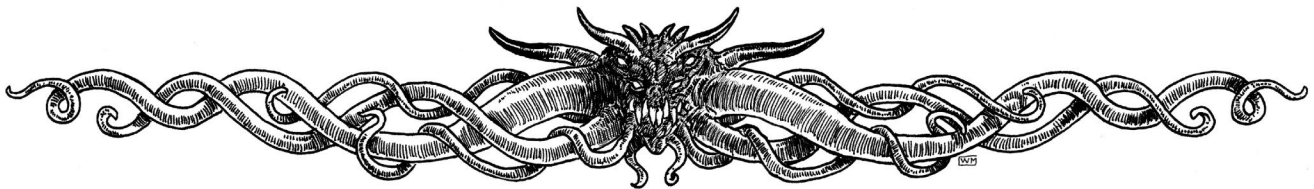
William McAusland, Matt Morrow and Dean Spencer. Some artwork copyright William McAusland, used with permission.

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FOREWORD

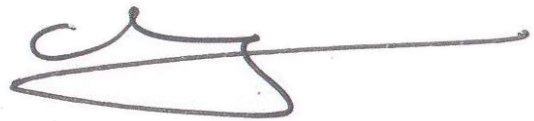
Like so many gamers of a certain age, I think the first adventure I ever owned was the classic B2 *Keep on the Borderlands*. I love that adventure, and I think it had a formative influence on the games I love to play. It turns out I'm a sucker for any RPG product with the word "borderlands" in the title. Thus, welcome to *Dunstone: Town on the Borderlands*!

I love the idea of having a town or other safe-haven perched on the edge of a howling wilderness ripe for adventure and exploration. It's the classic start to a campaign and one I return to repeatedly. I recently explored this theme in *Citadel on the Wilderlands*, but now the setting is *Ashlar*! And even more fun for me, this updated version of *Dunstone* features events and personalities from the campaigns I have set in the town over the years.

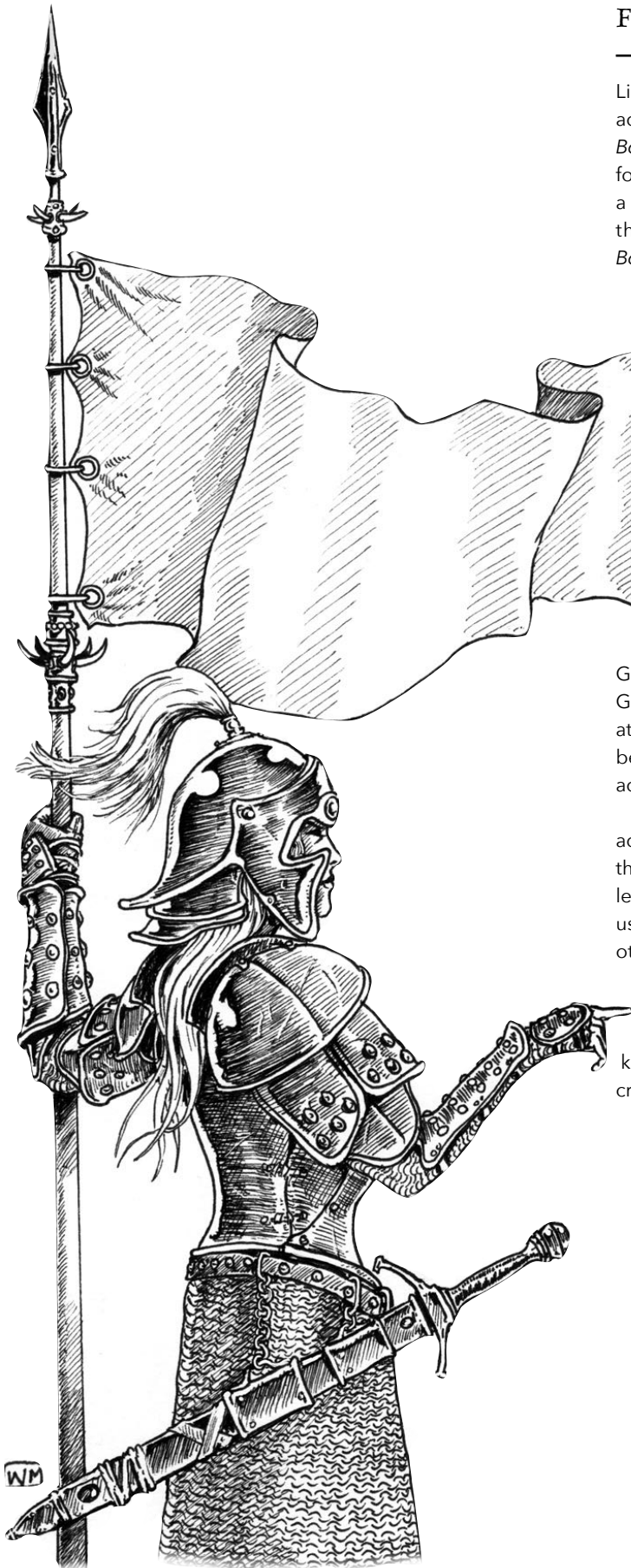
I like slow and steady, iterative design. For me, one of the huge attractions of the *Greyhawk* setting was the amount of "design wiggle room" Gary left for GMs setting their games in the *Flanaess*. I've attempted to follow the same strategy for *Ashlar* and have been slowly designing out the various towns, villages and adventure locales.

Dunstone serves as an excellent jumping-off point for adventures in the hills both to the north and the west. With the region to the west completely unmapped (by me, at least), you can set virtually any adventure therein. You could use *Keep on the Borderlands*, *Horror on the Hill* or almost any other adventure you fancy.

So again, welcome to *Dunstone: Town on the Borderlands*; make it your own. I hope you enjoy the time you spend in *Dunstone* and that you have fun with your friends. Let me know how your game goes; drop me a line at creighton@ragingswan.com.



Creighton
Torquay, October 2024



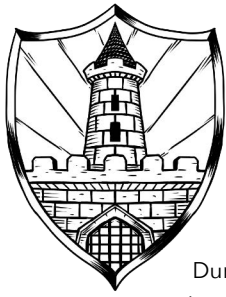
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DUNSTONE: TOWN ON THE BORDERLANDS

DUNSTONE AT A GLANCE



Ruler Benjam Oksanen
Government Overlord
Population 3,574 (3,493 humans, 18 dwarves, 4 elves, 5 half-elves, 11 half-orcs, 33 halflings, 10 gnomes)
Alignments LG, NG, N, LN, LE, NE
Languages Common, Dwarven, Elven

Dunstone huddles under the menacing vastness of the nearby Mottled Spire's granitic bulk. A crumbling 12-foot-high stone wall and an old moss-covered fortress protect the old town. The citadel watches over sagging row houses meandering across a low hill towards the Selka River. Here, surly guardsmen oversee a rickety wooden bridge spanning the river and the path towards the Mottled Spire. In bygone days, monsters crawled out of Gloamhold and down from the Mottled Spire to die against Dunstone's walls and formidable moat. Now, the moat is nothing more than a grassy slope where pigs graze and children play.

Dunstone is civilisation's last bastion before the Mottled Spire; its folk are resilient and hardy. Often cut off from the rest of the Duchy of Ashlar during the deep winter, locals trade whispers and gossip amongst themselves. In this tight-knit community, strangers are treated with suspicion until they prove themselves to be honest and hardworking folk like the Dunstonians. The townspeople engage in farming, raising livestock and crafting trade goods. Except for travelling merchants, few from Dunstone travel into the larger world, though an occasional brash youth dares the hardships of the Mottled Spire. All remember the disaster that befell the village of Greystone almost a century ago.

Lord Benjam Oksanen rules Dunstone fairly, though he is approaching the end of his long life. His young grandson, Aavo, will inherit, Aavo's father having perished long ago in the Mottled Spire. Aavo seeks to revitalise Dunstone's sagging fortunes by granting tax incentives for merchants to carry Dunstone's goods throughout Ashlar. He also wishes to bolster the meagre forces of the Knights of the Eternal Watch, a knighthood with ties to the local Temple of Darlen, and mount further expeditions into the Mottled Spire. Rumours of a dragon lairing to the west in the so-called Nameless Monastery worry the young noble, for dragons often grow hungry, and Dunstone is the nearest source of plentiful food and riches. Finally, Aavo eagerly seeks promising adventurers to map the many paths and trails twisting through the valley-riven behemoth to Gloamhold itself. An influx of wealth might just break the lethargy hanging over a town clinging to its old ways. Yet, even Aavo is unaware of a more insidious threat in Dunstone. Something sinister has crawled up from the depths of Gloamhold, a creature with a malign alien intelligence and boundless greed, and it seeks to integrate itself deeply into the town.

TOWN LORE

A character may know something about Dunstone, its history, and its surroundings based on their local knowledge or through a conversation with a knowledgeable local or traveller. Related some or all of the following information:

- Dunstone lies near the Mottled Spire. It is a quiet town, and its folk have grown used to peace.
- Dunstone seeks to create new trading partnerships with other towns and villages in Ashlar.
- The Darlenites in Dunstone guard an ancient relic of great value to their faith. It is held at the Tower of the Sword (location 2).

TOWNSFOLK

Appearance Dunstonians have fair skin and sandy hair with brown or hazel eyes. Men grow thick beards, and women wear their hair long in braids. Both sexes tend to be stout.

Dress Both sexes prefer heavy, dyed woollen tunics with fleece-lined jackets in the winter. Jewellery is often simple, consisting of rings, brooches, and necklaces.

NOMENCLATURE

d8	FEMALE	MALE	SURNAME
1	Ilma	Hannu	Ehtaro
2	Minja	Kalervo	Mieho
3	Sirpa	Ralf	Jurva
4	Tehri	Osmo	Ilakka
5	Vilina	Kosti	Leino
6	Heta	Isto	Otava
7	Noora	Rister	Toivas
8	Lotta	Ambro	Valta

TALK OF THE TOWN

Some news and rumours are widespread. A character cannot fail to hear them after spending some time in Dunstone.

- **Aavo Rules:** Aavo Oksanen rules the town in all but name now as his grandfather, Benjam, grows increasingly frail. Benjam is dynamic where his grandfather valued stability and peace above all. Change is coming to the Town on the Borderlands.
- **Adventurer's Favourite;** The Dwarf's Folly, a rowdy inn on Selka Street, is a favoured haunt of adventurers visiting Dunstone.
- **Lurking Red Dragon:** A red dragon lurks in the hills to the south and west under the shattered ruin of the Nameless Monastery. The beast was discovered last year by an adventuring band—most of whom it promptly ate—and news of its presence has shaken the townsfolk.

LIFE IN DUNSTONE

The frontier town of Dunstone is seemingly at peace, but a lurking threat within may soon spell the town's doom.

LAW & ORDER

The Oksanens rule Dunstone and the surrounding countryside from Dunstone Keep. The family came to power as a reward for years of dedicated service to the duchy five generations ago after the previous ruling family died without any heirs during an outbreak of plague.

Dunstone's current ruler, Benjam Oksanen (location 1), passes judgment on matters fairly and equitably between nobles, merchants and normal folk. Corruption exists amongst town officials but is severely punished when discovered (which furthers Benjam's popularity).

Lord Oksanen is old now and often bedridden, however, and is leaving more and more of the daily business to his grandson, Aavo. Aavo is proving to be a more than capable administrator. Where his grandfather stymied change, charismatic Aavo embraces it and is already implementing policies designed to lift Dunstone out of stagnation and back into prosperity.

The lurking inner threat to Aavo's plans is Thrayxix, an intellect devourer who recently crept into town and slew Jyrki Klemetti, the owner of the Gilded Swan (location 6). Now, in Jyrki's guise, Thrayxix is quietly forming a small thieves' guild and subtly corrupting influential townsfolk. It's still learning about the human world and sees Dunstone's ultimate downfall as something to savour.

Dunstone supports a small, ill-equipped and ill-trained town guard. In its founding days, a much larger force dealt with threats emerging from the Mottled Spire in conjunction with the Knights of Eternal Watch garrisoning the Tower of the Sword (location 2). As the danger waned, however, so did the size and importance of the guard. Now, even the knights have dwindled in size and importance, and the two organisations rarely cooperate. Aavo recently began implementing changes to the guard, requiring regular drills and additional martial training in hopes of improving the town's defences. Guards derelict in their duties find themselves guarding the bridge spanning the Selka facing the Mottled Spire.

Aavo also sends regular letters to the headquarters of the Knights of the Eternal Watch at Tor Abbey, requesting additional recruits. He also pushes knights to resume their patrols of the Mottled Spire (something High Priest Joonas Mattila is loath to do).

TRADE & INDUSTRY

Dunstone's industry relies primarily on its farmers who grow produce and raise livestock, particularly pigs and sheep. Excess goods sell at the Farmer's Market with the Connite priests buying food which would go to waste for the town's poor and struggling families. Slaughtered livestock are sold to the Butcher's Guild and Dunstone's many taverns. As winter approaches, the meat is salted and stored for the lean, cold months. The Butchers' Guild also commands much power and respect in Dunstone, as they work with the farmers raising the meat and the inns, taverns and common folk.

A few townsfolk make their living fishing trout in the fast-flowing Selka River. A good day's catch can command a tidy sum, particularly from the town's inns and taverns eager to offer something different. It's not uncommon during a cold winter when parts of the Selka freeze over to see small fishing huts dotting its frozen surface.

Many artisans live in Dunstone, producing clothing, dyes, and simple pottery. The Brewers' Guild is Dunstone's fastest-growing guild. In addition to beer and fruit wines, Dunstone is becoming known for its hard spirits due to the excellent sources of nearby peat.

BREWERS' GUILD

Brewers have been in Dunstone since its beginning but did not start to organise until the arrival of Verna Brandybottle (location 8). Verna's immense knowledge of distilling hard spirits and her willingness to share techniques (but not her famous recipes) led to the founding of several small distilleries. Dunstone spirits have a particularly smoky character. As bottles of spirit reach new markets, the distilleries find demand for their products increasing. The distilleries, while secretive of their recipes, work together to promote their products.

BUTCHERS' GUILD

Dunstone's butchers organise themselves along specialities. Some service the common folk, offering various cheap cuts of meat. Others specialise in one or two animals, working with specific farmers to offer premium cuts of meat for upper-class (or rich) customers.

Certain inns and taverns have exclusive contracts with certain butchers to offer consistency in their fare. Despite their specialities, all butchers adhere to specific regulations imposed by their leader, Whurkus Kildann (location 6), to stabilise prices and ensure guild members only offer quality and safe meat for sale. Kildann promotes this practice to hide his own suspect activities (as well as cleverly ensuring he has no black-market competitors).

NOTABLE LOCATIONS AT A GLANCE

Most of Dunstone comprises peasant homes or businesses. A few locations, however, are of interest to adventurers:

1. **Dunstone Keep:** The keep is the Oksanen family home. The current ruler, **Benjam Oksanen**, grows old and his grandson, **Aavo**, now rules the town in all but name.
2. **Tower of the Sword:** This church of Darlen is also a garrison of the Knights of the Eternal Watch. **Father Joonas Mattila** leads worship here.
3. **Bastion of Peace:** Worshippers of Conn gather here, a place that is the heart and soul of the community. The elderly **High Priestess Marjo Oiva** yet leads her flock.
4. **Sheep Knuckles:** This strange inn sticks out just like its outlandish gnomish owner **Roosa Lajunen**. This is Dunstone's most popular inn.
5. **The Gilded Swan:** Ostensibly owned by **Jyrki Klemetti**, this high-class inn offers various hedonistic delights. The intellect devourer **Thraxix** masquerades as the Jyrki while slowly building a thieves' guild.
6. **Kildann's Cuts:** Renowned for his quality meats, **Whurkus Kildann** is a wanted fugitive. He also offers a special menu comprising the flesh of exotic creatures.
7. **Rekola Manor:** Once a wizarding school, the manor and family have fallen into decay. Its current patriarch, **Vieno Rekola**, seeks to repair the family's fortunes.
8. **Brandybottle Distillery:** This halfling-owned distillery is known for its fine spirits. Its owner, **Verna Brandybottle**, single-handedly started a brewing revival in Dunstone.
9. **Fisfelond's Smithy:** The aged elf **Dulannis Fisfelond** is regarded as perhaps Ashlar's best weaponsmith. He only works now when he wants to.
10. **Farmer's Market:** The local farmers gather here to sell produce in a festival-like atmosphere with lively music and fresh beer.
11. **Trade Market:** The trade market allows Dunstone's artisans and guild members to display and sell their
12. **The Dwarf's Folly:** Run by the grizzled ex-mercenary **Rister Osma**, this rowdy inn is a favoured haunt of adventurers and other rough-and-ready sorts.
13. **Tower of the Astromancer:** Herein dwells **Tuulitar Vihas**, the self-styled Astromancer. The tower is one of Dunstone's tallest buildings.
14. **Urzag's Stones:** Here works **Urzag Airikka**—skilled stonemason, stone carver and werewolf. Urzag was born a werewolf, and he is a kindly man. He retreats to his hidden vault when a full moon hangs in the sky.
15. **Merchant of Coin:** The Merchant of Coin deals in all manner of valuable things and provides diverse services. The elderly **Hannes Joutsu** owns the place.
16. **Arrows & Bolts:** The one-armed **Panu Laukkanen** is widely acknowledged as the best bowyer/fletcher in Dunstone. He is no stranger to crafting strange or expensive ammunition for adventurers.

STREET NAMES

Listed here are some of Dunstone's more famed streets. Most are unpaved, comprising little more than packed mud.

- **Beacon Street:** An old, ruined tower undergoing renovation dominates this simple street. In olden times, the tower held a beacon fire to warn of monsters coming down from the Mottled Spire.
- **Brewer's Row:** Most of Dunstone's brewers operate from long wooden buildings on this popular, aromatic street.
- **Butcher Street:** Well-constructed wood and stone shops line both sides of this busy, tree-lined street.
- **Dunstone Boulevard:** Home to Dunstone's town hall, this tree-lined street also features a small public park.
- **Durgan's Alley:** Most of Dunstone's dwarves live in stone buildings along this shaded alley, making a living as gemcutters, jewellers and smiths. A small tavern serves Durgan's Dwarven Delight (a potent dwarven liquor).
- **Fae Way:** This winding road leads past simple cottages. Local rumour has it that fey creatures lived here once. Now, it's home to a large colony of stray cats.
- **Falcon's Aerie:** Located near the top of the hill, the businesses here raise falcons and other birds of prey as well as messenger pigeons and ravens.
- **Gate Course:** Gate Course runs from Dunstone's eastern gate and features several stables and small inns. Several shops also sell simple equipment and riding gear.
- **Hillview:** Located near the top of the hill, Hillview boasts scenic views of the surrounding countryside and is popular with couples.
- **Lotti's Avenue:** Dedicated to a hero of Dunstone, supposedly a shepherd who felled an ogre chieftain, the Wool Guild makes its home here in her honour.
- **Memorial Boulevard:** This small square contains a memorial enshrining the names of Dunstone's heroes and those who have given their lives to defend the town. Worn with age, a new, large one has been commissioned.
- **Oksanen Avenue:** Named after the ruling family, this street of upper-class homes features a stern granite statue of the first Oksanen lord, Havro Oksanen.
- **Rauni Road:** This narrow street was once the place of worship for an ancient fertility goddess. Many small shrines lie between the buildings where Dunstone's midwives and apothecaries practice. During spring, it's not uncommon to see small twig dolls and other fetishes hanging in the windows.
- **Selka Street:** Named after the nearby river, most of the shops here sell fishing and survival gear.
- **Trader's Street:** One of Dunstone's few paved roads, Trader Street runs through the heart of Dunstone; many merchants and artisans do business here. At night, shopkeepers light small lanterns. Wealthier shopkeepers add an alchemical compound to the lanterns, transforming the light into colourful shades.



DUNSTONE BY DAY

During the day, Dunstone is a busy—if a little sleepy—town.

1. A wagon rumbles along the street, splattering mud onto the legs of those it passes.
2. A gaggle of children play in the streets. Their joyous shouts rise above the general hubbub of daily life.
3. Two servants stagger past, carrying a heavy crate between them.
4. A flock of sparrows swoops and wheels overhead.
5. The shouts of shopkeepers and artisans hawking their wares reach the party's ears.
6. A bleary-eyed reveller—clearly hungover and worse for wear—stumbles along the street. They may be going home, or they may be looking for their next drink.
7. Light rain falls over the town.
8. A small knot of townsfolk stands in a rough circle, chatting about local events. As the characters draw near, the townsfolk fall silent.
9. A skinny and filthy dog—probably a stray—lollops down the street.
10. A farmer's son pushes a wheelbarrow crammed full with vegetables along the street. The food is destined for a nearby tavern.
11. Four guards wander along the street. They seem slightly "rumped" and unmotivated.
12. A wagon piled high with boxes and barrels rumbles along the street. Four mercenary guards—tired by their demeanour—flank the wagon and its merchant driver.
13. A hawk soars high above the town. As it swoops down, the other birds in the sky scatter.
14. The clamour of bells ringing at one of Dunstone's churches rises over the usual street noises.
15. Five dirty and dishevelled human adventurers stagger into town, having spent a harrowing few days north of the Selka in the Mottled Spire. They do not want to talk about their experiences.
16. An urchin tugs at one of the character's sleeves and tries to entice them into a nearby tavern. (The boy gets a copper for every customer lured inside).
17. Two townsfolk snigger as the characters pass. Keen-eared characters hear one of them mutter about the "Scions of Delthur".
18. Roll twice on this table and combine the results.
19. A brash man stands outside a shop shouting at the merchant inside. It is obvious the two disagree about the quality of the shop's wares.
20. Dark clouds pregnant with rain hang above the town, casting everything into gloom. The gloom seems to affect the townfolks' moods.
21. A street trader pushes a barrow holding a barrel along the road. He is selling weak ale by the mug and is happy to talk to his customers while they drink. He knows several rumours.
22. The cries of traders hawking their wares at the distant Trade Market are softened almost into melody by the time they reach the characters.
23. A character overhears a snatch of conversation between two townsfolk. They clearly hear the phrases "demon worshippers" and "Rekolas".
24. The street is crowded with folk, and going is slow.
25. A priest of Conn strides swiftly through the crowd—they clearly have important business somewhere.
26. A patrol of six mounted warriors heads south to patrol the Great South Road, connecting the town to the rest of the duchy.
27. An ornate coach pulled by two beautiful horses rolls past. The coach has a driver and a guard. Curtained windows hide the identity of whoever rides within.
28. A small crowd has congregated on a street corner to listen to an itinerant preacher. The dishevelled man seems obsessed with the "lurking shadows that plot our doom." Many of the crowd are openly tittering at him.
29. A cat carrying a dead rat stalks from an alleyway.
30. An old man totters slowly along the street. He leans heavily on a stick and stops often.
31. Three townsfolk are deep in conversation and oblivious to the obstruction they are causing on the street.
32. A broken barrel lies on its side, oozing the dregs of its contents into the street.
33. Roll twice on this table and combine the results; the characters get involved somehow.
34. The clang of metal on metal—blacksmiths and so on at work—drowns out most other sounds.
35. Three large crows perch on a nearby roof and watch the townsfolk going about their business.
36. A wagon has got one of its wheels stuck in a deep pothole. It blocks the street, and the anger of the folk stuck behind it is palpable.
37. Three children play with a large hound. It is hard to say who is having more fun.
38. An old, one-legged man leans heavily on wooden crutches as he makes his way along the road.
39. Wooden scaffolding festoons the front of a building. Several labourers swarm over the scaffold while an older, fatter man directs them from below.
40. A ragged beggar sits by the road, mumbling to himself. A few coppers gleam in his begging bowl.
41. Wan sunshine glimmers on Dunstone's roofs.
42. Two stray dogs nose their way along the street.
43. The heady aromas of cooking, sweat, and excrement—the normal smells of town life—fill the air.
44. The sound of sobbing comes from a nearby window.
45. A mother attempts to herd her three young, exuberant children as she goes about her chores.
46. A wagon piled high with rubbish makes its way slowly down the street. Occasionally, it stops, and townsfolk add more junk to the load.
47. An itinerant trader—pack bulging with goods—knocks on a nearby door.

48. Cries of "Stop Thief!" fill the air.
49. A pack of grubby urchins begging for coins surround a well-dressed merchant.
50. As #47, but the urchins latch onto a character.
51. Open barrels filled with rainwater stand under the eaves of nearby houses.
52. A shepherd herds six sheep toward their doom.
53. Two men stare at the party as they pass.
54. Bright sunlight bathes the town.
55. Voices suddenly raised in anger herald the start of an argument between two street traders.
56. Deep ruts line the earthen street.
57. A sudden gust of wind pushes leaves and rubbish down the street.
58. Roll twice on this table and combine the results.
59. An old woman stands in the middle of the street, shaking her fist at the sky. She seems angry and not a little mad.
60. An obvious newcomer to town stops the party to ask for directions to the Gilded Swan.
61. A wanted poster nailed to a wall—depicting a scowling dwarf—flutters in the breeze.
62. A street urchin unsubtly watches the characters. They could be fascinated by adventurers, or they could be the lookout for a pickpocket gang.
63. A wagon carrying several dressed stone blocks scores deep ruts in the muddy road.
64. Four members of the watch push through the crowd.
65. A mounted warrior—obviously wealthy and important—trots along the road accompanied by six well-armed and alert guards. Townsfolk get out of their way.
66. The weather alternates between periods of bright sun and rain, much to the annoyance of many.
67. Four women carrying baskets filled with clothes make their way toward the Selka River.
68. A man, pushing a barrow piled high with firewood, staggers past the party.
69. Two hunters, carrying a deer slung on a pole, make their way to the nearest butcher shop.
70. Roll thrice on this table and combine the results.
71. A servant dashes through the crowd.
72. A dog lies motionless in the mouth of a shadowy alley.
73. Sunlight glimmers off the puddles left by a heavy bout of overnight rain.
74. A caged wagon rolls past. The cage holds several despondent men.
75. Heavy rain lashes the streets, quickly turning them into muddy morasses.
76. An elderly couple help each other along the street.
77. An old woman slips and falls. She cuts her head on a stone, and a small crowd quickly gathers to help.
78. A child—her face streaked with tears—sits on the side of the road.
79. Laughter and cheers come from a crowd surrounding a street acrobat. She's good but not earning much coin.
80. A worn statue of a warrior stands on a small plinth at the side of the road. Children play at its base.
81. Softly jangling wind chimes dangle from a nearby porch.
82. A woman tries to sell wood carvings from a small handcart. The carvings are exquisite, and some depict imaginative, fantastical creatures.
83. Large brown rats scavenge amid a pile of rubbish.
84. Wisps of smoke drift across the street.
85. A priest of Conn—in full regalia—strides along the road, trying to avoid any puddles or muddy spots.
86. The sun emerges from behind a cloud to bathe the town in brilliant, warming light.
87. A pile of charred timbers show where a fire raged at some point. The adjacent building looks like it has been recently repaired.
88. A street crier loudly proclaims that cheap ale can be had at the Delthur's Folly tavern.
89. A church bell tolls to mark the time.
90. The houses and businesses here seem particularly well looked after.
91. The buildings here look old and tired.
92. A character thinks they catch a fleeting glimpse of an old friend among the crowd.
93. A wagon runs over a distracted man who crosses the street at the worst time. Without immediate care, the man will die.
94. Oblivious townsfolk gossip about recent events. The characters learn one rumour.
95. The street is busy, and the characters must weave their way through the crowd.
96. The harsh crash of blade on blade breaks out. Everyone nearby freezes and then moves rapidly away from the sound of battle.
97. One of the characters suddenly gets the distinct feeling that they are being watched.
98. Roll twice on this table and combine the results.
99. Roll twice on this table and combine the results; the characters get involved somehow.
100. Roll thrice on this table and combine the results; the characters get involved somehow.



DUNSTONE BY NIGHT

At night, most businesses are closed and the feel and pace of life in Dunstone changes.

1. Flickering lights from nearby windows throw weird, dancing shadows into the street.
2. Faint sounds—perhaps moaning and the like—come from the mouth of a dark alley.
3. It is a clear and cool cloudless night, and the stars blaze brightly overhead.
4. Sounds of revelry—singing and laughter—issue from a nearby tavern.
5. A heavily cloaked and cowed figure makes its way along the street. Whoever it is, they are engaged in discrete (or nefarious) business.
6. The soft clomp of hooves heralds the approach of a rider. A mail-clad woman rides a fatigued warhorse into town. She slumps in the saddle—she is obviously as tired as her horse.
7. Bats—abroad from their attic lairs—flutter about town in search of food.
8. Four young men—ruddy-faced and eager—quickly make their to a nearby tavern. Tonight is—apparently—going to be “epic”.
9. Four guards wander along the street. They seem slightly “rumpled” and unmotivated. They make little attempt to investigate strange sounds or dark alleys.
10. This stretch of road is in almost complete darkness. Dark shadows gather against the adjacent buildings.
11. The sounds of a shouted argument carry on the night air from some nearby but unknown place.
12. Sounds of a scuffle come from around a corner. This could be a mugging, two townfolk settling their differences or something more sinister.
13. Two townfolk—arm in arm—stroll along the street, taking in the evening air.
14. As #13, but a heavily and cowed cloaked figure—perhaps a thief or assassin—surreptitiously follows the pair (who are oblivious to their shadow).
15. Lights flare brightly on Castle Dunstone’s battlements. The dim silhouettes of a few patrolling guardsmen are just visible.
16. A well-dressed couple are on their way to the Gilded Swan. Two servants—each carrying a lantern and a club at their belts—escort the pair.
17. The street is almost empty; few people are aboard.
18. Clouds scud across the sky, periodically obscuring the moon from view.
19. Roll twice on this table and combine the results.
20. The glimmer of a distant fire is visible to anyone gazing northwards toward the Mottled Spire.
21. A wagon moves slowly along the road. Every now and then, it stops as its driver pauses to pick up dung littering the street. The wagon and the driver stink.
22. With no warning, the still-warm contents of a chamberpot are hurled into the street from a second-storey window.
23. As #22, but the chamberpot’s noisome contents hit an unlucky character.
24. Roll twice on this table and combine the results.
25. A perceptive character spots a dark shadow crossing their own. Looking up, they catch a glimmer of movement atop a roof.
26. An urchin approaches the characters and tries to convince them to drink at Delthur’s Folly. He gets a copper for each customer he brings to the tavern.
27. Flickering light from a high window silhouettes two people locked in a passionate embrace.
28. The distant sound of music reaches the characters’ ears. Following the sound leads to one of Dunstone’s many taverns. It is busy within.
29. Muffled sounds of a violent struggle come from a shadowed alley.
30. A lady of the night accosts the character with the lowest Charisma and makes certain improper suggestions.
31. One of the characters suddenly realises they are missing their coin pouch. It could have simply fallen from their belt, or—even now—a pickpocket could be laughing at their misfortune.
32. A drunk man swigs from a jack as he staggers along the road. He is happy and tries to share his drink with a character. He knows a rumour.
33. A well-dressed man carrying a lantern strolls confidently along the street. The man wishes the characters a good evening as he passes.
34. A woman storms down the street—a look of thunder on her face. A man hurries behind her, beseeching her to wait and let him explain.
35. Three tired warriors plod into town after a long journey. The trio are looking for a cheap inn for the night; can the characters make a recommendation (and perhaps even make some new friends?)
36. Two watchmen drag an unconscious man along the street. Two other watchmen, carrying clubs, follow them.
37. Wooden scaffolding festoons the front of a building. The upper levels of the scaffold store piles of building materials and tools overnight, ready for the next day’s work. A watchman snoozes on the scaffold.
38. A sudden gust of wind pushes leaves and rubbish along the street.
39. Pale moonlight bathes Dunstone but also creates areas of deep shadow.
40. A dagger—blood on its blade—lies discarded on the road. No one is around.
41. The door of a nearby tavern opens, and a pair of drunk patrons stagger into the street.
42. Roll twice on this table and combine the results; the characters get involved somehow.
43. A servant dashes along the street on some late errand for their employer.

44. Three hard-looking men conspiratorially mutter to each other. As the characters approach, they retreat into a side street.
45. For a few moments, it is blissfully quiet.
46. Heavy clouds obscure the moon and the stars, casting the town into darkness.
47. A street crier loudly proclaims the cheap ale to be had at the Delthur's Folly tavern.
48. A church bell tolls to mark the time.
49. A faint mist hangs over the Selka.
50. A noisy gang of youths laugh and joke as they stroll toward their next drinks.
51. Curled under several blankets, ragged cloaks and the like, a beggar sleeps in a doorway.
52. A young boy sits on a low wall, whistling softly to himself as he watches passersby.
53. Distinctly human snoring sounds waft from a stables abutting a tavern.
54. Thick mist rises from the Selka River and slowly oozes into town.
55. A street urchin unsubtly watches the characters. They could be fascinated by adventurers, or they could be the lookout for a gang of muggers.
56. The steady glow of magical light glimmers from a closed garret window.
57. Shouts of "Fire! Fire!" shatter the quiet.
58. Two men stare at the party as they pass.
59. A sad-looking man examines the seemingly sparse contents of his pouch before turning away from a tavern's door.
60. A cloaked figure makes a (perhaps) suspiciously late-night delivery to a nearby house.
61. Light rain falls over the town.
62. Four members of the watch rush down the road.
63. The screeching of two cats heralds the start of a territorial fight.
64. Somewhere, a dog howls mournfully.
65. The sound of sobbing comes from a nearby building.
66. Comically loud snoring drifts from an open second-storey window.
67. A sudden frenzy of barking shatters the relatively quiet night. Quickly, other nearby dogs join in.
68. A muscular warrior strides past, his hand resting lightly on his sword's hilt. The man's eyes rove from side to side; he is alert for trouble.
69. Rats quest for food among the refuse lining the road; squeaks and rustlings betray their presence.
70. Furtive sounds of movement from the depths of a dark alley may concern paranoid characters. A few moments later, a small stray dog emerges from the darkness carrying a dead rat in its mouth.
71. A peasant dumps a bucket of rubbish in the street before returning to their home.
72. Four rough and ready men stalk along the street. They are street toughs and have no intention of taking on armed adventurers. They give the party a wide berth.
73. As #72, but one of the men looks the characters up and down before muttering, "Not them lads" to his mates.
74. Cries of "Thief, Thief" break the relative quiet of the night. Someone has just been burgled.
75. A priest of Conn wanders the streets, searching for anyone who should need her attention or help.
76. A short, stocky man with a shock of black hair and a drooping moustache eyes the party thoughtfully.
77. A dwarf staggers down the round arm around an equally jolly gnome. Both sing loudly—sadly, they are singing different songs.
78. Roll thrice on this table and combine the results.
79. A watchman stands in a deep, shadowy doorway, watching passersby.
80. Heavy rain pummels the streets, quickly turning them into muddy morasses.
81. With a squeal and the drum of hooves, a large pig trots along the street. Moments later, a running man chasing the pig dashes past.
82. Soft giggling, followed by a contented sigh, comes from an open window.
83. A shop—a money changer and pawnbroker—remains open late for its customers. A bored guard sits outside on a stool.
84. The drum of hoofbeats announces the rapid approach of a rider (who is in a hurry).
85. A short, fat man dressed in fine robes and escorted by two young ladies and a mercenary guard strolls along the street.
86. A skinny man wearing only a loincloth—fear or embarrassment on his face—dashes past.
87. Distant fires glimmer evilly atop the northern hills.
88. The door to a building stands open. It is dark within.
89. A tile from a nearby roof falls to the ground and shatters. What caused it to fall?
90. A flash of light passes across the horizon.
91. The harsh clamour of blade and blade shatters the night. Anyone nearby freezes before moving rapidly away from the sound.
92. The street is empty of people, but several stray dogs poke about looking for food.
93. Rats scuttle from a side alley and stream across the road in front of the party.
94. One of the characters suddenly gets the distinct feeling that they are being watched.
95. The suggestion of movement comes from the mouth of a nearby dark alley or street. If the characters investigate, they find nothing.
96. A large black cat silently stalks across the party's path. It haughtily ignores them.
97. The most paranoid character hears soft chuckling, filled with sinister undertones, coming from an alleyway.
98. Roll twice on this table and combine the results.
99. Roll thrice on this table and combine the results.
100. Roll twice on this table and combine the results; the characters get involved somehow.

THE SURROUNDS

Dunstone lies on Ashlar's northern border. Beyond the Selka River lies the wild Mottled Spire, while to the west and south lie the ore-rich Carmine Hills.

CARMINE HILLS, THE

Lying south and west of Dunstone, the Carmine Hills have a long and bloody history. The banded red rocks which lend the craggy hills their name are rich in iron and copper, marking the area as especially valuable. The orcs of the western hills view the Carmine Hills as their sacred hunting grounds and have long contested Dunstone's control of the region. Some parts of the hills are heavily forested.

HOUSE OF YSPHER

This house has been abandoned for over a century after the owner of the house was implicated in the deaths of nine women. The House of Yspher sits perched upon a lonely hilltop near Dunstone and still attracts a trickle of adventurers following the inevitable rumours of treasures hidden somewhere in the dilapidated and mouldering building.

NAMELESS MONASTERY, THE

A fearsome red dragon is said to dwell in the deep caves below this humanoid-infested monastery nestled amid a densely forested section of the Carmine Hills. Many terrible stories and rumours revolve around the monastery—that the place was old even when Ashlar was founded, that its priests and adherents performed blasphemous rites in front of blood-stained altars for unknowable purposes and that the deep caves below the place hide a connection to the

RELATED RESOURCES

Many of the locales detailed on these pages have appeared in other Raging Swan Press supplements.

ADVENTURES

- Sepulchre of the Wolf King

DUNGEON BACKDROPS

- House of Yspher, the
- Pit of Unquiet Souls, the*
- Ruin of Bleak Hill, the*
- Splintered Crypt, the
- Starfall Chantry*

*Part of the Vile Star storyline, also available from Raging Swan Press.

VILLAGE BACKDROPS

- White Moon Cove

Underlands of the Ebon Realm. Several groups of adventurers have gone missing in the monastery's vicinity over the last few years; only one survivor—Sir Ozloc of Mossvale—has dared the place and survived to tell the (heroic) tale.

SPLINTERED CRYPT, THE

Famed for his unswerving devotion to his celestial lord, Darlen, and his magical sword, *Demon Bane*, Kal Voren was a paladin-hero of old. Laid to rest not in the scared sepulchre below Tor Abbey but among the hills of his youth, Kal Voren's legend—and stories of his legendary blade—live on long after his hidden crypt was lost to time. A recent landslide has returned his resting place—the Splintered Crypt to the world.

STARFALL CHANTRY

Lurking twixt the crag-jagged hills south of Dunstone sit the ruined remains of an old dwarven fortress-temple. This is the so-called Starfall Chantry destroyed by fragments of Morden's Dagger—a Vile Star that passes the world every 370 years. A small contingent of dwarves from Don Galir went missing near the ruin in 575 NR; their fate remains unknown.

MOTTLED SPIRE, THE

This huge chunk of granite glowers over Hard Bay's treacherous waters like an angry giant. Difficult to reach by land or sea, the Mottled Spire shelters Gloamhold deep within its bowels. A wind-blasted, desolate place, it has stubbornly resisted the pernicious encroachment of human civilisation and remains untamed despite an attempt in 351 NR to push the duchy's border north across the Selka River. The leavings of such attempted colonisations—abandoned mines, ruined fortified manor houses and the like—dot the southern hills. The savage orcs of the Mottled Spire believe their chieftains and great heroes trace their bloodlines back to Veznor's and Nargen's direct descendants—legendary heroes who sprang from the throes of the gods' atavistic and bestial lovemaking. Such orcs can transform themselves into savage beasts—bears, wolves and even eagles—and use their divine gifts to destroy their enemies.

SELKA RIVER, THE

The Selka River has long marked Ashlar's northern border. Beyond the river lies the wild uplands of the Mottled Spire and the tribes of savage humanoids, and even fouler monsters, that claim the place. The river's headwaters lie somewhere in the legend-soaked Forest of Gray Spires.

PIT OF UNQUIET SOULS

Saare's Pit has another, more lurid, name—and for good reason. The Pit of Unquiet Souls squats at the centre of a nest of macabre tales of madness, horror and death. It is said, those who spend too much time in the abandoned mine often go mad or disappear, and old miners' tales tell of the pit's very rocks whispering horrible secrets to those toiling in its bowels. Some think glittering treasure yet lurks in the mine's depths.

RUIN OF BLEAK HILL

The wizard-sage Ilmatar Tiera dwelt in this well-known ruin—aptly called Bleak Hill Manor—until her death in 211 NR when her home was destroyed in a ferocious magical assault of unknown origin. Ilmatar was fascinated—or perhaps obsessed—with the heavens and the movement of its various bodies. Her ruined home is a well-known landmark in the southern foothills of the Mottled Spire; sometimes, travellers camp amid its wind-blasted ruins.

SEPULCHRE OF THE WOLF KING

This ancient orc temple-tomb was sacred to the now long-extinct Blood Eye tribe. The tribe's greatest heroes, including Uzlan the Wolf King, lie within the Sepulchre of the Wolf King. Much of the sepulchre is dangerously unstable after a Vile Star fell to earth nearby. A pair of exceedingly large, powerful and ferocious ogres claim the sepulchre's upper level, and from their lair, they have begun to prey on traffic passing between Dunstone and White Moon Cove.

WHITE MOON COVE

White Moon Cove is a small, respectable fishing village located in a sheltered cove that acts as an excellent, natural harbour. The inhabitants of this tight-knit community are relatively sober, hardworking and amiable fisherfolk, traders and other sturdy folk who make their living primarily from the sea. While fishing is the village's main industry, a few small farms dot the surrounding countryside.

During the day, fishing and other activities connected to the sea's many bounties occupy the villagers' time. White Moon Cove is a busy hub for trade. Because of this, the people of White Moon Cove live relatively well, despite their simple and generally rugged way of life. After a long workday, most people retire to their homes. Before heading home, many stop by the Sleeping Triton, for fellowship, laughter and a hearty meal.

The village holds a weekly market that attracts folk from other nearby smaller settlements and merchants from the town of Dunstone.





NOTABLE LOCATIONS

I: DUNSTONE KEEP

Home of family Oksanen and Dunstone's ultimate redoubt

A granite fortress with tall towers and thick walls, Dunstone Keep lords over the surrounding landscape. The keep serves as the Oksanen family home. The current ruler, Benjam Oksanen, has ruled Dunstone for over 50 years. Now in his twilight years, Benjam passes on more and more duties to his only surviving heir and grandson, Aavo Oksanen. While Benjam has been content to rule Dunstone and keep the town locked in its past, Aavo strives for change. Part of this is promoting and trading Dunstone goods with the rest of the duchy. Another strategy involves the exploration and mapping of the Mottled Spire, a job few Dunstonians are willing to do. Aavo seeks ambitious adventurers to accomplish this task and is willing to sponsor such groups.

DUNSTONE KEEP BY DAY

By day, Dunstone Keep's gates are flung open, and a steady stream of visitors, deliveries and workers file in and out about their business. Here, the Oksanens hold court and conduct the business of the town and their domain. The well-drilled garrison patrols the walls and keeps a close eye on the keep's approaches. Every day or two, a mounted patrol canters northwards to White Moon Cove or southwards along the Great Road to the village of Kingsfell.

DUNSTONE KEEP BY NIGHT

At night, the keep's gates are closed, and torches and braziers flare atop its walls. Inside, Benjam or Aavo Oksanen entertain honoured guests in the keep's Great Hall or listen to visiting minstrels. Such feasts or revels do not often go on too late—Benjam is old, and he tires easily.

NOTABLE FOLK

Some folk are often encountered at Dunstone Keep.

- **Benjam Oksanen** (LN old male human fighter 5) rules Dunstone in name but lets his grandson, Aavo, attend to most of the day-to-day business of the town. Benjam has ruled Dunstone for 50 years and tires easily; he is rarely seen beyond the castle walls these days. Benjam's lethargy has infected the town. For all that, he is content to live out his days grooming Aavo as his successor.
- **Aavo Oksanen** (LN male human fighter 5/thief 5/bard 2) rules Dunstone on behalf of his aged grandfather and will soon rule Dunstone in name. Aavo is energetic and driven; he wants to wake Dunstone from its slumbers and re-energise the town and its inhabitants. He dreams of pushing the town's hinterlands north across the Selka River but needs skilled and brave individuals to do so. He loves music and is a good singer.

OTHER FOLK

While the characters are at Dunstone Keep they may encounter one or more folk of interest.

1. **Teemu Mietti** (NE male human fighter 1) wants gold and doesn't care how he gets it. A brawny, belligerent fellow, a warrior's life suits him well, but he is—at heart—lazy and self-obsessed. He is open to bribery and has no loyalty to the Oksanens or his fellows in the garrison. Teemu is tall, handsome in a cruel way and hates getting dirty; he is always immaculately turned out—ironically, this makes his fellows believe he is a good soldier and a credit to the garrison—they could not be more wrong.
2. **Viljami Otava** (LG male human fighter 1) dreams of being a mighty hero and chafes at the boredom and safety of garrison life at the keep. Young and idealistic, he craves adventure and hungers for tales of such. He latches onto any obvious warriors in the group and begs them for stories of derring-do. In the right circumstances, Viljami would desert his post—rationalising it as for the "greater good".
3. **Sergeant Mauno Koveri** (LN middle-aged male human fighter 3) oversees the gate guards and takes his position extremely seriously. A career soldier, he has known no other life and sees adventurers as vainglorious treasure seekers who often bring trouble to the town. Mauno is nearing retirement and the idea terrifies him; he has no idea what he will do or where he will go when he leaves the Oksanen's service.
4. **Inka Lempo** (NE female human thief 2) ponders burgling the castle. To that end, she has disguised herself as a common worker to gain access to its inner precincts. She is carrying a bundle of clothes when she encounters the characters. If they intrigue her, she seeks them out later in a different disguise; it may be that stealing from them is easier than stealing from the castle. Alternatively, Inka is clever and could hatch a scheme to use the characters as unwitting distractions to her planned theft.
5. **Albin Kaipia** (CN young male human) loiters outside the keep, watching the various happenings. Albin is quick-witted and observant and has learned that some people pay handsomely for information about the castle and its folk. He dresses as an urchin and introduces himself to the characters—they are out of the ordinary—and seeks to learn about them and their goals; someone will find the information useful.
6. **Esteri Asikka** (LN female human ranger 2) hunts north of the Selka and found some worrying tracks—tracks of a monstrous wolf on her last expedition. She has come to the castle to warn the garrison of her discovery. Esteri is tall, weather-beaten and possesses a quiet, dynamic energy. She has an effortless, loping stride that hints at her extreme fitness. She is friendly and genuinely interested in helping keep Dunstone and its folk safe.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

While the characters are at Dunstone Keep, one or more things from the list below may occur.

1. **All's Well:** Dunstone Keep is quiet and calm; its folk are getting on with their normal tasks without any sense of worry or urgency. All is well.
2. **Uproar:** The castle's denizens are busy rushing around, getting ready for some event or another. Servants dash about engaged in various tasks while more warriors than normal stand watch upon the walls.
3. **Patrol Rides Out:** A dozen armoured mounted warriors canter out of the castle gates to patrol the trail leading north to White Moon Cove. They won't be back until late.
4. **Inspection:** Elements of the garrison are being inspected in the courtyard; only a small contingent of warriors watches over the gate and walls.
5. **Dark Clouds Gather:** Dark clouds gather over the keep and the town, casting all into gloom and shadow. The castle's grey bulk looms over the surrounding buildings.
6. **Gaggle of Visitors:** A small queue of visitors has formed at the main gate; the guards are taking their time inspecting a wagon stacked with boxes and barrels.

OPPORTUNITIES & COMPLICATIONS

Lucky adventurers find opportunities almost anywhere. Unlucky adventurers find complications almost anywhere.

1. **Aavo Abroad:** As the party nears the keep, Aavo Oksanen (see "Notable Folk") rides forth at the head of a small escort of mounted warriors. If the characters are obviously adventurers, he reins in his horse and asks them their business. Aavo is on the lookout for trustworthy sorts skilled with a blade, and if he likes them, he might entrust them with a minor mission to test their mettle.
2. **Gates Shut:** The castle gates are closed and only those on official business can gain admittance. Most of the guards are resolute in their duty, but if Teemu Mietti (see "Other Folk") is on duty, the characters may still be able to get in.
3. **Gate Unguarded:** The guard is changing, and for a few minutes, the gate is accidentally left undefended. If the characters are quick, they can slip inside.
4. **Sergeant Mauno at the Gate:** Mauno (see "Other Folk") is on duty and takes a cautious dislike to the characters. He vigorously questions them about their purpose at the keep and does not admit them until he is satisfied with their answers.
5. **Benjam Abroad:** Riding in his fine coach and escorted by a dozen mounted warriors, Benjam leaves the castle. His plan is to roll through the town so his subjects can see him and to stop at the Tower of the Sword (location 2) to pay his respects to Father Joonas Mattila—the temple's high priest.

6. **Alarm Bell:** An alarm bell begins to sound from somewhere inside the castle. The castle's outer gates slam shut and no one is admitted while the bell sounds. The guards do not explain what is going on; the characters must come back another time. The general confusion that ensues could offer the characters a useful diversion if they had nefarious plans.

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

The characters may overhear or learn some of the rumours (which may or may not be true) below.

1. **Knights in Schism:** The Knights of the Eternal Watch are in schism. Some like the status quo while a smaller group want to take a more active role in defending the town.
2. **The Nameless Monastery:** A ruined monastery of great age and fell reputation squats in the western tree-shrouded hills. Few know how to reach the place—the hills are particularly labyrinthine in the locality—although many travellers have glimpsed the ruin from afar. Some say a red dragon lairs below the ruin and that when it hungers, it will fly forth to utterly devastate Dunstone.
3. **Aavo Dreams:** The lord's grandson is young and energetic. He dreams of glory and conquest. Once his grandfather is dead and he rules he'll expand Dunstone's borders beyond the Selka River. Several rulers have tried that before; it never goes well, as the savage orcs and other humanoids dwelling in the deep hills savagely resist any human northward expansion.
4. **Shapechanging Orcs:** Several ferocious tribes of orcs dwell in the rugged, ruin-strewn northern hills. Some of the orcs' mightiest warriors, spellcasters and chieftains can change shape—taking on the forms of eagles, wolves and bears! The orcs jealously guard their territory and sometimes cross the Selka to raid and pillage. No serious raid has stuck Dunstone's environs for years.
5. **An Astromancer in Need:** The astromancer, Tuulitar Vihas, is a powerful wizard; as her title suggests. She is obsessed with the stars and the heavens. She can often be seen on her tower's roof at night, surveying the night sky. She has recently made it known that she seeks a reliable band of skilled warriors and the like for a dangerous mission that will require the band to cross the Selka River. She can be found at her tower (location 13).
6. **The Lord Ails:** Lord Benjam Oksanen nears the end of his life, and his grandson, Aavo, will shortly take his place. What this means for the town is anyone's guess, but Aavo is far younger and more dynamic than his grandfather. Many wonder if he will seek to push Dunstone's borders northwards into the Mottled Spire.

2: TOWER OF THE SWORD

Temple of Darlen

The Tower of the Sword, a three-storey granite tower with attached buildings, serves as both a place of worship for Darlen's faithful and a garrison for a contingent of the Knights of the Eternal Watch.

Father Joonas Mattila serves as high priest and commander of the knights (who are mostly bored, miscreant scions of the duchy's elite families and crusty, old men living in the past). The knights patrol the countryside, rounding up stray cattle and sheep while avoiding their real purpose for being in Dunstone—defending the town from the foul humanoids lurking in the Mottled Spire. (This attitude is something Aavo Oksanen wishes to change, but thus far he has found the order tremendously entrenched in its ways).

When the Tower was built, the Darlenites were entrusted with guarding a sacred relic of their faith, the longsword *Heaven's Vengeance*. The weapon was wielded by an old hero of the faith and has great symbolic meaning to the temple's clergy and worshippers. Father Joonas recently discovered the weapon missing—he presumes stolen—but so far has not told anyone as he desperately seeks the thief.

THE TOWER OF THE SWORD BY DAY

By day, the tower is open to all visitors. Plate-clad guards flank the tower's entrance, and at least one acolyte is always on hand in the Hall of Worship. The morning service—held at daybreak—is the busiest time of the day.

THE TOWER OF THE SWORD BY NIGHT

At night, the tower is considerably quieter than during the day. After Dusk Song, most of the worshippers depart, the collection plate is emptied and the clergy retire to rest, perform personal projects and otherwise relax. The temple doors are not locked at night, but guards stand vigil throughout the dark hours.

NOTABLE FOLK

Some folk are often encountered at the Tower of the Sword.

- **Father Joonas Mattila** (LG old male human cleric [Darlen] 5) desperately seeks *Heaven's Vengeance*. Worry over the relic's fate has aged the already old cleric. While still vigorous, for an old man, he is far past his peak and knows he cannot hope to retrieve the weapon without aid. Joonas is a good man, but his leadership of the knights has been lacklustre at best.
- **Lusia Paasia** (LG female human paladin [Darlen] 2) knows something is wrong with, or bothering, Father Joonas. She is an inquisitive woman prone to assuming the worst and so has been watching Joonas carefully these past months. Lusia has a reputation as a strict

orthodox believer. She does not suffer unbelievers gladly and preaches to all such folk she encounters.

OTHER VISITORS

While the characters are at the Tower of the Sword they may encounter one or more folk of interest.

1. **Iisak Meurakas** (LN male human fighter 3) visits the temple in search of healing and respite. While adventuring beyond the Selka, he was scratched by a ferocious wolf, and he has been feeling unwell ever since. With deep bags under his eyes and a spasming left hand, he does not look well. Unfortunately, Iisak lacks the requisite coin to pay for magical healing.
2. **Katri Nousia** (NG female human fighter 2) believes there is more to life than simply slaying monsters and stealing their loot. What that is, though, remains open to debate. She has come to the tower to learn more about Darlen's faith and is happy to talk philosophy and religion with anyone. She has an intensely inquisitive mind and has the aptitude to join the priesthood.
3. **Kaarle Ehtaro** (LG male human cleric [Darlen] 1) prays devoutly before the tower's altar. Newly arrived in Dunstone, Kaarle greatly desires to battle the forces of evil he is certain lurk beyond the Selka. He is forthright, decisive and seeks a suitable band of heroes to join. He is—sadly—inflexible on matters of the faith, and has been marked as a troublemaker by some of his fellow priests. Thus, if anyone enquires about “adventuring clerics” Kaarle's name is at the top of that list.
4. **Magdaleena Janakka** (N young female) hangs around the temple in the hopes of securing coin from the worshippers. She's not a beggar as such but has realised worshippers here can be a good source of easy money. She is knowledgeable about Dunstone, its ways and citizens, and she would make an excellent guide and assistant for an adventurer new in town.
5. **Serafia Ikturso** (LG female human paladin [Darlen] 4) believes the defenders and folk of Dunstone have largely lost their way. She has recently received a vision—she believes from Darlen himself—which troubles her greatly. In it, she saw a gleaming silver sword lying in a dark cave. By the sword's soft glow she could make out something huge, red and scaly moving in the shadows. Thus far, few have given any credence to her vision.
6. **Heikki Kaleva** (NE male human thief 4) plots to burgle the temple's vault for he believes (correctly) the clergy are far richer than they let on. The tricky matters of the temple's defenders, and perhaps magical guardians and traps, vex him. If only, some kind of distraction could be arranged. Heikki prefers to work alone. He has heard the rumours of a nascent thieves' guild in the town but doesn't want to share his loot with anyone. Heikki is a master of disguise and is currently masquerading as a simple farmer—who has lots of questions about the temple, its folk and so on.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

While the characters are at the Tower of the Sword, one or more things from the list below may occur.

1. **In Prayer:** The clergy are leading the faithful in prayer. The service—a special one convened to pray for a member of the congregation lost in the lands beyond the Selka—cannot be interrupted.
2. **Argument:** Two members of the clergy are engaged in a fierce theological debate. There is no danger of violence, but the two's positions seem almost diametrically opposed.
3. **Empty:** But for an acolyte tending the temple's candles, the Hall of Worship is empty. The characters experience a rare moment of calm amid Dunstone's bustle.
4. **Sobbing Worshipper:** A priest sits at the back of the temple whispering quietly to a man who sobs uncontrollably. This could be Heikki Kaleva (see "Other Visitors" #6) or a genuinely upset visitor.
5. **Barking Dog:** A stray dog noses around outside the tower, and takes a dislike to one of the guards. The dog starts barking and will not stop.
6. **Dark Clouds:** Dark clouds shroud the tower in deep shadow. Perceptive characters note the shadows around the tower seem deeper than those in the surrounds. Is this a fell omen?

NOTABLE THINGS FOR SALE

Roll on this list, to determine what notable items or services are available for sale at the Tower of the Sword:

1. **Silvered Holy Water (6; 40 gp each):** These vials of holy water have been treated with extra powdered silver to increase their efficacy against the undead. Unlike normal holy water, they deal 2d6+2 damage on a hit.
2. **The Blazing Shield (280 gp):** Darlen's symbol—the rising sun—emblazons the front of this heavy steel shield and its matching thick canvas cover. The shield's symbol has been treated with a *continual light* which blazes forth when the shield's cover is removed.
3. **Scripture of Law (100 gp):** This vast tome details teachings, stories and lessons from some of the earliest priests and believers of the faith. The large book is beautifully illuminated and has a blazing sun embossed on its front cover.
4. **Silvered Longsword (500 gp):** This gleaming, wickedly sharp longsword is a silvered weapon. Sun sigils decorate its blade and haft.
5. **Magic Scroll (1,800 gp):** This scroll holds three *cure light wounds* and one *cure serious wounds* spells.
6. **Symbol of St. Miina (1,250 gp):** This beautifully wrought gold and silver holy symbol contains a sliver of one of St. Miina's rib bones. Small amethysts and rubies stud this overly large and heavy symbol.

OPPORTUNITIES & COMPLICATIONS

Lucky adventurers find opportunities almost anywhere. Unlucky adventurers find complications almost anywhere.

1. **Where is Heaven's Vengeance?** Father Joonas is desperate to find *Heaven's Vengeance*. He's considering enlisting outsiders to investigate the matter as Dunstonians are too prone to gossip to trust. Are the characters people he can trust?
2. **Arrogant Knights:** The party encounter a patrol of the Eternal Watch. The knights are returning from a patrol of the countryside, are tired and in a hurry to return to the temple for rest and recuperation. They expect the party to stand aside—are the knights not honoured defenders of the town—and do not react well to truculent peasants. Violence will not ensue, but the party could make enemies of one or more of the knights.
3. **Join the Knights:** An agent of Aavo Oksanen approaches a suitable character—a lawful good cleric, fighter or paladin. Would the character serve as Aavo's eyes and ears in the Knights of the Eternal Watch?
4. **Wounded Adventurer:** Two warriors clad in battered chain armour carry a third man on a stretcher. A bloody bandage is wrapped around the third man's head. The badly injured man moans in pain, and one of his companions urgently calls for aid.
5. **Lusia Paasia:** Lusia Paasia (see "Notable Folk") takes an interest in the party, and questions them about their faith, past deeds and so on.
6. **Scuffle:** Five drunk mercenaries disrespect the guards standing vigil outside the tower; a brawl ensues.

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

The characters may overhear or learn some of the rumours (which may or may not be true) below.

1. **Something Is Wrong:** Something is wrong, at the Tower of the Sword. Several people have noted how old and distracted its high priest, Father Joonas Mattila, is of late.
2. **Sacred Relic:** The Tower of the Sword is so named because the faithful guard a holy relic of the faith—the longsword *Heaven's Vengeance*. It was wielded by a great hero of the faith and it is said to have impressive magical powers.
3. **Wealthy:** The clergy at the Tower of the Sword store great wealth in the crypts below the temple.
4. **The Mad Dwarf:** The so-called "Mad Dwarf", Kildrak, has been seen near the tower. What deranged crime does the homicidal maniac plan?
5. **Knights in Schism:** The Knights of the Eternal Watch are in schism. Some like the status quo while a smaller group want to take a more active role in defending the town.
6. **Sanctuary:** If you need sanctuary, the Tower of the Sword is the place to go. The clergy turn no one away.

3: BASTION OF PEACE

Temple of Conn

Conn's temple in Dunstone, the Bastion of Peace, features an elaborate domed roof and high windows to admit the morning sun. It is a stupendous building and is one of Dunstone's finest.

Here, High Priestess Marjo Oiva tends to Conn's faithful in Dunstone, who number in the hundreds. As an important and influential community leader, Marjo Oiva regularly meets with Aavo Oksanen (location 1) to discuss Dunstone's future and helps make introductions among Dunstone's prominent merchants and guild leaders.

Rumours abound of an old love triangle between Marjo, Joonas Mattila (location 2) and Benjam Oksanen (location 1). Marjo gets along well with Father Mattila, but lately, she has noticed something is amiss with him and that he's spending more and more time at the tower. Marjo also feels uncomfortable around Jyrki Klemetti (location 5) the few times she has met the man. If she had the time, she would investigate both issues and may be willing to employ those who could do the job without raising suspicion.

THE BASTION OF PEACE BY DAY

The Bastion of Peace is a busy place during the day. Worship of Conn is the pre-eminent religion in Dunstone and folk come here to worship, meet friends or seek the advice and help of the clergy.

THE BASTION OF PEACE BY NIGHT

By night, the Bastion of Peace is quiet and mostly deserted. Its doors are not locked, however, and at least one minor priest tends the high altar during the dark of the night. When it is cold or wet, a couple of beggars can often be found here sheltering from the elements.

NOTABLE FOLK

Some folk are often encountered at the Bastion of Peace.

- **High Priestess Marjo Oiva** (NG old female human cleric [Conn] 4) works with Aavo to increase her flock's prosperity and wellbeing. She understands more trade will bring both to the town but worries that northward expansion in the Mottled Spire could awake things best left slumbering. She does not often leave the temple these days but sometimes visits Dunstone Keep (location 1) or the Tower of the Sword (location 2).
- **Ambro Ihalempi** (NG male human cleric [Conn] 1) loves Marjo as his mother and is devoted to her. He knows of her concerns about Jyrki Klemetti and wants to help her uncover the truth. Ambro is young, enthusiastic and naive about life's challenges.
- **Serafia Kupias** (LN female human cleric [Conn] 3) plots to become the faith's next high priest in Dunstone. She

dreams of ushering in a new chapter in Conn's worship in the town and an aggressive expansion plan for the temple. She is ambitious and single-minded.

OTHER VISITORS

While the characters are at the Bastion of Peace, they may encounter one or more folk of interest.

1. **Immo Kokko** (LN male human fighter 2) tarries awhile in the Bastion. He has nothing else to do and likes the quiet here. He is friendly but not interested in joining an adventuring party. He is, however, interested in hearing of the party's exploits—perhaps at a nearby tavern.
2. **Elsa Mieho** (N female human thief 3) planned to rob the Bastion but has had a change of heart. A street denizen who has dragged herself up through hard (illegal) work, Elsa has realised the clergy do much good in the community. Stealing from them would be stealing from those who have virtually nothing—and that does not work for her. If a thief is among the party, they might recognise her and wonder what she is doing here...
3. **Hannu Lempinen** (LN middle-aged male human cleric [Conn] 3) visits the Bastion of Peace from far-off Languard. Hannu is full of news from the capital; he is an incorrigible gossip and loves sharing and hearing news. When the characters arrive, he is pontificating at length on recent events in Gloamhold's cursed, benighted depths. Hannu is corpulent and enjoys the good things in life. Characters supplying him with high-quality food and drink can learn much of import.
4. **Iisak Lempo** (CN male human fighter 2) recently arrived from plague-riddled Ashford, Iisak looks and feels decidedly unwell. He suspects he has the plague, and he is right. With pale, clammy skin and red-rimmed eyes, he is obviously ill. He is at the temple to get magical healing but has almost no money.
5. **Aatami Lempi** (LN male human) seeks help from the clergy. He lives on Selka Street and has recently been working on expanding his cellar. While enlarging a side room he broke through into a natural cave. This discovery has scared him, and he wants a priest to come and bless the cave. Anyone seeing Aatami can tell he is supremely nervous and has not recently slept.
6. **Kaleva Vilja** (LN male human fighter 6) leads a mercenary company of a dozen soldiers and is trying to sell his services to the clergy. Temples, after all, need guarding, and he and his followers are reliable and trustworthy. Kaleva is a stout middle-aged man who has seen a lot in his 40-odd years. While he seeks employment with the church, he is open to other offers. He makes it abundantly clear, however, he and his men are not adventurers.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

While the characters are at the Bastion of Peace, one or more things from the list below may occur.

1. **Worship:** The characters arrive while a service is in progress. Depending on the time, this could be a normal service or marriage, funeral or the like. They must wait for the service to finish. To interrupt it, except in the direst of circumstances, is unforgivable. If the characters are lucky, the service only has a half-hour or so to go.
2. **Injured Child:** Just after the characters have entered the church and introduced themselves to the clergy, a local man bursts in. Shouting for help, he breathlessly explains that a wagon has run over a child outside. Any priests present dash outside to help.
3. **All Quiet:** The chapel is quiet. A few worshippers silently pray while a priest dusts the high altar. Unless the characters are quiet, everyone notices their arrival.
4. **Masons:** A master mason and two apprentices are erecting wooden scaffolding to get a better look at a section of crumbling wall. A wagon full of more scaffolding stands outside the temple.
5. **Funeral:** A funeral is just finishing. The deceased's coffin is carried through the door leading to the catacombs below the temple as the characters arrive. Mourners—some inconsolable with grief—stand about.
6. **Theology in Discussion:** Two priests discuss a theological matter. They have wildly opposed opinions. They turn to a character to get the view of a "simple man of the people". The character might find their attitude patronising and irritating.

OPPORTUNITIES & COMPLICATIONS

Lucky adventurers find opportunities almost anywhere. Unlucky adventurers find complications almost anywhere.

1. **Guards! Guards!:** Marji seeks to sponsor warriors to guard merchant caravans travelling to and from Dunstone in the hopes of increasing trade. The characters arrive as she discusses the matter with a prominent local merchant.
2. **What's Wrong with Jyrki?** Marji's concerns about Jyrki Klemetti (location 5) have been growing lately, and she has decided to do something about it. She sends acolytes to watch over the Gilded Swan but quickly realises they stand out like sore thumbs. If the characters are members of the faith, have proved themselves honourable folk, or need her favour, she asks them to investigate the inn on her behalf.
3. **Where is Ambro?** Three days ago, Ambro Ihalempi (see "Notable Folk") decided to investigate the Gilded Swan (location 5). He has not been seen since. Having found his diary, in which he explains his intentions, Marji is frantic with worry. Will the characters look into his disappearance for her?

4. **Unwell Lisak:** Lisak Lempo (see "Folk Out & About") spots the characters and staggers over to them to see if they can help him. Only after a few minutes of conversation does he mention he might have the plague and that he can't afford magical healing.
5. **What's in the Cellar:** A character overhears Aatami Lempi (see #5 "Other Visitors") speaking loudly with a priest. As they do so, the priest locks eyes with the character and realises he could hive off this task to a group of brave adventurers.
6. **Fire:** Just as the characters arrive, the cry of, "Fire!" fills the air. A clumsy and unobservant worshipper has just knocked over a large candle that caught in the fold of an ornate tapestry hanging on the wall. The worshipper did not notice what they had done until the smell of smoke filled the air.

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

The characters may overhear or learn some of the rumours (which may or may not be true) below.

1. **Old Love Triangle:** Decades ago, Mario Oiva, Joonas Mattila and Benjam Oksanen were trapped in a complicated love triangle. The three never confirmed the rumours and wags still discuss it.
2. **Ageing Priestess:** High Priestess Marjo Oiva grows old, and the intrigues to replace her have already started. Whoever replaces her will be one of the most powerful and influential people in Dunstone.
3. **The Catacombs are Full:** The catacombs below the Bastion of Peace are almost full. Either they must be expanded or a new burial site outside town must be found. This is a subject of much debate among the clergy and worshippers. Both options are likely to be expensive and time-consuming.
4. **Change is Afoot:** Change is afoot in Dunstone, and Aavo Oksanen will—depending on whom you ask—either be good for the town or awaken things in the wilds that are best left well alone.
5. **Opportunities Abound:** Many ambitious folk have come to Dunstone intent on making their fortunes. Those seeking employment with such personages should try the Gilded Swan (location 5) or the Dwarf's Folly (location 12).
6. **Thievery on the Rise:** Compared to Languard, Dunstone is—or rather was—a quiet place little troubled by serious crime. However, there has been a steady increase in robberies, muggings, and even murders in the last year or so. This bothers the clergy at the Bastion as a lawful and ordered society is a happy, peaceful society. Anyone getting to the root of the problem would undoubtedly earn their gratitude.

4: SHEEP KNUCKLES

Dunstone's most popular inn

This strange, two-storey wooden building features walls painted in different garish colours as well as rings of brightly coloured mushrooms growing on the thatched roof. The gnomish proprietor, Roosa Lajunen, exudes infectious energy, which seems to fill Dunstone's favourite watering hole and inn with enthusiasm and merriment. Many have pointed out that the inn's name, the Sheep Knuckles, makes no sense. To this, Roosa just shrugs and laughs.

The inn's offering is cheap and basic:

- **Drink:** Mug of ale (4 cp), pitcher of wine (2 sp), glass of whiskey (1 gp), bottle of good wine (10 gp).
- **Food (Cheap):** Lamb stew with parsnips or fish stew with mashed potatoes (1 sp).
- **Food (Good):** Roast chicken or lamb with a platter of vegetables (3 sp).
- **Lifestyle:** Characters staying in one of the inn's eight bedrooms can enjoy a poor (3 gp/month) or average (10 gp/month) lifestyle.

THE SHEEP KNUCKLES BY DAY

The Sheep Knuckles is quiet during the day. During daylight hours, only a few diehard regulars and the inn's staying guests can be found in the taproom. Sometimes, a local performer practises on the inn's stage, and the few drinkers in attendance get a free show.

THE SHEEP KNUCKLES BY NIGHT

The Sheep Knuckles comes alive at night. Rarely are evenings here boring and mundane. Roosa performs magic shows nightly but is always willing to let others perform if she gets a cut of their tips.

NOTABLE FOLK

Some folk are often encountered at the Sheep Knuckles.

- **Roosa Lajunen** (CG female gnome illusionist 3) exudes infectious energy and enthusiasm. Roosa is a bit of an enigma—a gnome raised by humans after being found abandoned as a baby on a hilltop. She is always friendly and cheerful. Sometimes, she appears tired—normally after she has suffered one of her prophetic dreams (see "Opportunities & Compilations #1). She performs a nightly magic show for her patrons.
- **Reko Ehtaro** (CG middle-aged male human) can't hear as well as he used to and is almost completely bald. Still, this portly and gregarious chap loves the hubbub and unpredictability of a good night. He helps run the inn and is Roosa's righthand man. He plays a mean violin and loves cooking.

FOLK OUT & ABOUT

While the characters are at the Sheep Knuckles, they may encounter one or more folk of interest.

1. **Reijo Kainu** (LN middle-aged male human) merchant has a problem. A pair of ogres have been attacking travellers travelling between Dunstone and White Moon Cove. Reijo would like the attacks stopped and is willing to pay handsomely. He is well-dressed, liberal with his gold and a smidge drunk. (See the adventure *Sepulchre of the Wolf King* for more details.)
2. **Samu Airikka** (NG male human fighter 2) loves showy, bright and colourful magic. Although he is a seasoned warrior and has gained some fame as a handy companion in a tight spot, there is still something of the child about this burly, black-haired man.
3. **Tilda Laulaja** (LG female human cleric [Darlen] 1) stays at the Sheep Knuckles in preparation for presenting herself at the Tower of the Sword (location 2 on the Dunstone map) to its high priest, Father Jones Mattila. She is earnest, good-natured and new to the frontier. She has heard the rumours of orc raiders to the north and wants to help keep the town safe.
4. **Reetta Miekka** (N middle-aged female human) works at the Sheep Knuckles. When she isn't working here, she is invariably drinking here. Reetta is secretly in love with Reko Ehtaro (see "Notable Folk") and spends her nights watching him from the corner of her eye. She is popular with the locals and knows much of what is going on around town. Reetta has an incredible capacity for alcohol—as the dwarven warrior Dordin Ovlag found out to his cost during a now-legendary drinking competition several years ago.
5. **Niilo Vesi** (NE male human thief 3) preys on lone, drunk townfolk and drunker adventurers staggering home after a night at the Sheep Knuckles. A master of disguise, Niilo appears to be a labourer—his clothes are dirty and much-repaired—relaxing after a hard day's work. He feigns a bad limp to explain the stout "walking stick" he carries. This cudgel of heavy wood is his weapon of choice, and he uses it to strike his unsuspecting mark on the back of their head. He doesn't deliberately try to kill anyone, but several of his victims have died from their injuries; he couldn't care less.
6. **Inkeri Tornio** (NG female human ranger 1) takes her ease here after a harrowing week in the northern hills. She has been investigating reports of emboldened orc raiding parties coming dangerously close to the Selka. She tells any obvious adventurers of her worries and observations. Inkeri is a stout woman with mid-length brown hair who possesses great wilderness skills. She is brave and not scared of a fight. If the characters decide to head into the hills, and she likes them, she offers to accompany them as she knows the area well.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

While the characters are at the Sheep Knuckles, one or more things from the list below may occur.

1. **Busy:** During the day, the taproom is uncommonly busy; a performer is practising, and word has got around. By night, the same performer packs out the taproom, which is standing-room only.
2. **Delivery:** Verna Brandybottle (from the Brandybottle Distillery, location 8) has come to the inn to deliver a dozen bottles of her finest whiskey personally. Roosa enthusiastically welcomes her halfling friend, and soon, the two are busy sampling one of the bottles.
3. **Argument:** A drunk and truculent half-elf has started an argument with a group of locals. The half-elf doesn't believe that Vilmzair Aralivar is the world's greatest-ever bard (or even a legendary pirate captain). The locals are loudly putting the stranger right.
4. **Rolling Out the Barrel:** A barrel of ale has just been emptied, and Reko Ehtaro (see "Notable Folk") is rolling the empty one out through the taproom; customers squeeze to get out of his way.
5. **Thatchers:** Two thatchers are repairing a small part of the inn's roof. Roosa is watching them carefully—she doesn't want them to damage the mushrooms growing across the thatch.
6. **Tired Roosa:** Roosa has had another night of unsettling, prophetic dreams. She sits on a high stool, her head on the bar, snoozing. Reko Entaro is behind the bar.

OPPORTUNITIES & COMPLICATIONS

Lucky adventurers find opportunities almost anywhere. Unlucky adventurers find complications almost anywhere.

1. **Prophetic Dreams:** Roosa Lajunen regularly has almost prophetic dreams, usually of boring, everyday events. Lately, she's dreamt of a terrifying dark shape looming over Dunstone and laughing in a strange tongue. Troubled by this, she shares her dream with friendly adventuring types.
2. **Roosa Sick:** Felled by fever for the past four days, Roosa's delirious ravings mention a terrible "Yellow Man" who will soon come from "the dark between the stars". Her illness is sudden and mysterious, and it is the talk of the town. Perhaps fell forces are at work.
3. **Truculent Half-Elf:** A half-elf argues with a group of regulars (see "What's Going On" #3). Realising the characters are fellow adventurers, the half-elf—who refuses to give his name—tries to enlist them to his side. If the argument escalates and a brawl seems imminent, the half-elf is suddenly nowhere to be found.
4. **Standing Room Only:** The taproom is so busy that it is standing room only. If the characters visit during the day, the Brewery Guild is holding a meeting here, and the inn

is closed to all but those renting one of its rooms; if it is nighttime, the inn is merely exceptionally busy.

5. **Uncomfortable Wealthy Merchant:** A wealthy merchant, Reijo Kainu (see #1 "Folk Out and About") is visiting the inn. He is quite well-to-do and thought he might "slum it" for a bit. He is looking for adventurers and spots the characters.
6. **Roosa's Show:** Roosa is either performing her nightly magic show or practising something a "little bit different" (if the characters are here during the day). Roosa needs a volunteer—preferably a female with long hair—and calls a character up to the stage.

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

The characters may overhear or learn some of the rumours (which may or may not be true) below.

1. **The House of Yspher:** This dilapidated house stands on a lonely hilltop south of Dunstone. A dreaded wizard once dwelled in the manor. Not all who enter the ramshackle building emerge, and horrible things are said to lurk in the ruin. (See *Dungeon Backdrop: The House of Yspher* for more details).
2. **'Ware the Dragon:** A dragon's lair—complete with a red dragon—has been discovered buried in the hills to the west. Apparently, the beast lairs in caverns below a ruined monastery. Most of the adventurers who made the discovery are dead; only one survivor—a fleet of foot half-elf—escaped the beast. Some folk name the half-elf a hero for bringing news of the danger back to the town, while others mutter he abandoned his friends to save his own skin.
3. **Northward Expansion:** Ashlar's rulers are again planning northward expansion and opportunities for reward and advancement await those brave enough to venture over the border. The ruin of many previous attempts to settle the wild northern hills dot the Mottled Spire. One such place is the so-called "Ruin of Bleak Hill". (See *Dungeon Backdrop: Ruins of Bleak Hill* for more details on this locale).
4. **The Plague:** The nearby village of Ashford remains beset with plague. How anyone yet survives in the village is a mystery. The town watch keeps an eye out for anyone coming from the south who looks ill. Such folk are barred entry to the town or ejected if they have already entered.
5. **Devil Worshippers:** The Rekolos worship a demon or devil. Their house caught fire decades ago as a punishment from Darlen. Most of the family are now nothing but crazed, near-penniless magicians.
6. **Restless Orcs:** The orcs of the Mottled Spire are growing restless and bold. Their raiding parties have been getting closer to the Selka's north bank, and several bands of adventurers have reported savage skirmishes with these ferocious warriors.

5: THE GILDED SWAN

Dunstone's finest inn and the nexus of dark plots

This elegant three-storey wood and stone building stands at the corner of Butcher's Row and Oksanen Avenue, in a commanding position just north of Gate Course. Over the last year, Dunstone's newest and savviest businessman, Jyrki Klemetti, has spent a small fortune transforming the Gilded Swan into Dunstone's finest inn. Catering to visiting merchants and Dunstone's richest citizens, the Gilded Swan is the place to be seen.

All is not what it seems, however, at the Gilded Swan. Jyrki is not himself, and the inn stands at the centre of a burgeoning thieves' guild. In a secret cellar, dark delights are available to those who pay the steep price.

- **Food & Drink:** *Meal:* roast honey boar (2 gp), roasted pheasant (1 gp); *Drink:* bottle of wine (10 gp), mead (4 sp), ale (2 sp).
- **Accommodation:** The Gilded Swan has six sumptuous rooms available on the second floor. Each is finely appointed and costs 2 gp a night. One suite is available on the third floor; this costs 15 gp a night.
- **Lifestyle:** Characters staying at the Gilded Swan enjoy a wealthy (100 gp/month) or extravagant (1,000 gp) lifestyle. Those attempting to enjoy a lesser lifestyle are politely (at first) asked to leave. Those refusing are firmly ejected and refused re-entry.

THE GILDED SWAN BY DAY

By day, the Gilded Swan is a quiet place. Some residents conduct their business in the inn's comfortable taproom while the inn's many workers go quietly about their tasks. Deliveries come and go, and the general mundanities of running a business take place; all seems normal.

THE GILDED SWAN BY NIGHT

By night, the Gilded Swan is transformed from a quiet, peaceful place into a hive of activity. Dunstone's "great and good" gather here to enjoy fine wine and excellent food, and to hobnob with others of their ilk.

Meanwhile, those in the know can access the inn's secret cellar. Therein, the select few can enjoy virtually anything their heart desires. This hidden place is a secret Thrayxix has killed to maintain.

NOTABLE FOLK

Some folk are often encountered at the Gilded Swan.

- **Jyrki Klemetti** (N male human) owns and operates the Gilded Swan. Jyrki is widely seen as a clever, innovative (and wealthy) businessman, but he has a surprising secret: he is dead. The flesh sack that was once Jyrki

Klemetti is nothing but a vehicle for Thrayxix— an intellect devourer recently escaped from Gloamhold.

- **Thrayxix** (CE intellect devourer) grew bored of killing adventurers in Gloamhold, and wandered into Dunstone seeking new experiences. Less hedonistic than others of its ilk, Thrayxix revels in its new position of power, slowly corrupting those around it and creating a burgeoning thieves' guild while conducting legitimate business. It seeks to learn more of the strange human world—and how to control more of it—and has even started to befriend Aavo Oksanen in its guise as a wealthy commoner keen to do his bit for the town.
- **Ilta Hirvi** (LG female human) knows something isn't quite right at the Gilded Swan, but can't put her finger on exactly what bothers her. She works here as a server and chambermaid because the money is good. She is a tall, thickset woman who has a no-nonsense approach to life. She does not like Jyrki.

FOLK IN THE TAPROOM

While the characters are at the Gilded Swan they may encounter one or more folk of interest.

7. **Nuythel Wilmattyn** (NG male half-elf fighter 5) dreams of advancement and, one day, joining the ranks of Ashlar's nobility. This wealthy and stylish brown-haired half-elf made his money adventuring in the south and owns a painstakingly researched map showing many of the ruins in the southern portion of the Mottled Spire. He might not look dangerous, but he is lethal with a blade.
8. **Auni Ilakka** (LN female human wizard 7) stays at the inn, having arrived a few days ago. She does not like Dunstone and cannot wait to return to her home in Languard. However, certain aspects of her astronomical research have drawn her hither. Auni is a snob and used to the fine things in life.
9. **Krister Janakka** (LN male human) loves the Gilded Swan, and is here most nights (and it shows). This corpulent, bleary-eyed fellow wears wine-stained robes and talks loudly and at great length to anyone who'll listen about his business dealings. Krister is lonely, although he'd never admit it, and is looking for new friends. Although he tries to glamourise his work, his wares are boring and mundane (but profitable).

EXPANDING THIS EVENTURE

Two of the folk staying at the Gilded Swan—Nuythel Wilmattyn and Auni Ilakka—are looking for a group of brave adventurers to head north into the Mottled Spire. See the "Ruin in the Hills" and "Wizardly Doings" adventure hooks in *Dungeon Backdrop: Ruin of Bleak Hill*, for more details. Alternatively, download the free Vile Star Storyline supplement from the Raging Swan Press store.

10. **Whurkus Kildann** (LE male dwarf thief 4) leads the local butcher's guild and owns Kildann's Cuts (location 6 on the Dunstone map). He deals extensively with the Gilded Swan, and always has the best table when dining here. He is a wanted murderer in his distant homeland.
11. **Verna Brandybottle** (NG female halfling) owns the finest distillery in Dunstone; many of the drinks served at the Gilded Swan come from the Brandybottle Distillery (location 8 on the Dunstone map). She happily shares a drink with strangers. Verna regularly pays adventurers to travel into the Mottled Spire or the Salt Mire to protect the peat-cutting so vital to her distillery.
12. **Aili Tuuli** (NG female human fighter 2) lingers in Dunstone for a few days before continuing on to White Moon Cove. (Thus far, her journey has proved surprisingly enervating.) Aili deals in antiques and oddities and has heard rumours of strange things brought forth from the sea by White Moon's fisherfolk.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

While the characters are at the Gilded Swan, one or more things from the list below may occur.

1. **Busy:** The taproom is busy, and there are no tables free. The characters must hang around at the bar or try to share a table with another patron.
2. **Rising Crime:** Two merchants sit together loudly lamenting the rising crime rate in Dunstone, and how it is bad for their businesses.
3. **Fine Dining:** The Gilded Swan offers a special menu of peacock and swan, and the taproom is packed. Tonight, the price for dining at the inn is doubled.
4. **Heavy Rain:** As heavy rain pounds the town, the inn's customers settle in for a simply marvellous evening.
5. **Singing Bard:** A bard entertains the patrons with amazing stories of the legendary pirate captain and bard Vilimzair Aralivar's incredible adventures.
6. **Illicit Lovers:** Two finely dressed diners sit dangerously close to one another at a discrete table in a shadowy corner. The two seem enamoured with one another.

OPPORTUNITIES & COMPLICATIONS

Lucky adventurers find opportunities almost anywhere. Unlucky adventurers find complications almost anywhere.

1. **Star Maps:** Auni Ilakka (#2 "Folk in the Taproom") sits alone at a table, examining several parchments bearing star maps along with a map of the Mottled Spire. She is not in the mood for distractions—unless the person distracting her has similar interests or is obviously a knowledgeable person of the right sort.
2. **Smiling Elf:** Nuythel Wilmatyn (#1 "Folk in the Taproom") has identified the characters as adventurers, and smiles a greeting. If they seem friendly, he invites them to join him for a glass of wine. During the ensuing conversation he

finds out as much as he can about them—he might have a job for them.

3. **Inquisitive Innkeep:** Jyrki/Thrayxix takes an interest in the characters. He seems friendly, but perceptive characters may suspect there is something odd about the genial ostler. Thrayxix is trying to work out if the characters are a threat to its operation.
4. **Drinking Adventurers:** Four adventurers enter the inn. Their travel-stained clothes and coarse humour starkly contrasts with the inn's normal clientele. After a short while, muttering about the prices, they leave.
5. **Visiting Noble:** Aavo Oksanen, (LN male human fighter 5/thief 5/bard 2) Dunstone's de facto ruler, along with a few friends, dines at the inn. Their meal is subdued—Aavo is mourning a close friend recently murdered by a homicidal dwarf.
6. **Messenger:** A servant arrives with an important message for a guest. Having read the message, the recipient hurries out—leaving payment in unattended glimmering gold on their table.

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

The characters may overhear or learn some of the rumours (which may or may not be true) below.

1. **The Lord Ails:** Lord Benjam Oksanen nears the end of his life, and his grandson, Aavo, will shortly take his place. What this means for the town is anyone's guess, but Aavo is far younger and more dynamic than his grandfather. Many wonder if he will seek to push Dunstone's borders northwards into the Mottled Spire.
2. **'Ware the Dragon:** A dragon's lair—complete with red dragon—has been discovered buried in the hills to the west. Apparently, the beast lairs in caverns below a ruined monastery. Most of the adventurers who made the discovery are dead; only one survivor—a fleet of foot half-elf—escaped the beast. Some folk name the half-elf a hero for bringing news of the danger back to the town, while others mutter he abandoned his friends to save his own skin.
3. **Monsters in the Hills:** Tribes of savage orcs dwell in the hills. Sometimes they raid across the border, but they have been quiet of late. Hopefully, they have all killed each other.
4. **The Best Meat:** Kildann's Cuts (location 6 on the Dunstone map) is the best butcher in town. The meat is so good, it's what the Gilded Swan serves.
5. **Fine Weapons:** The elf Dulannis Fiselond is the best weaponsmith in all Ashlar, but he is in semi-retirement now. He lives and works at Fiselond's Smithy (location 9 on the Dunstone map).
6. **Taxes on the Rise:** Taxes will rise soon, and that will be bad for everyone except the Oksanens.

6: KILDANN'S CUTS

Dunstone's finest butcher shop and home of a murderer

Kildann's Cuts stands on Butcher's Street, and premium cuts of meat hang in the windows to attract Dunstone's elite. The head of the town's butchers' guild, Whurkus Kildann, owns Kildann's Cuts and is a dwarf with a dark past. Wanted in his native homeland for murder, Kildann now applies his unique talents to the butchering of animals.

Kildann also procures rare and unusual meats, hosting special dinners for the rich. Recently, he has worked with Jyrki Klemetti (the Gilded Swan; location 5) to provide "custom" meats to Jyrki's clientele. Whurkus actively recruits adventurers from out of town, offering them rich rewards for exotic monster corpses they bring back.

The dwarf is dangerous, though. Anyone snooping into Whurkus's business or past ends up on his special menu. Despite his nefarious methods and murderous tendencies, Whurkus expertly manages the affairs of the Butchers' Guild, ensuring prices are fair and meat is safe to eat.

Whurkus works in a slaughterhouse behind his shop. Unlike many of his fellow butchers, Whurkus keeps his slaughterhouse clean and tidy. Deep cold cellars below the building hold the dwarf's prepared meats and the like.

KILDANN'S CUTS BY DAY

Kildann's Cuts opens early at or near dawn to serve high-class customers seeking fine cuts of meat for their tables. The servants of well-to-do families are also a fixture, buying food for their masters. By mid-afternoon, the shop is quiet, and Kildann often closes early.

KILDANN'S CUTS BY NIGHT

Kildann's Cuts is closed at night—except if Whurkus is taking in a special delivery. He lives above the shop, and lights often blaze long into the night. In truth, being a dwarf, Whurkus has no need for lights and sometimes uses them as a distraction if he is "busy" elsewhere.

NOTABLE FOLK

Some folk are often encountered at Kildann's Cuts.

- **Whurkus Kildann** (LE male dwarf assassin 4) owns the shop and is well-regarded throughout town. No one in Dunstone guesses the darkness lurking in Whurkus's heart. Capable of extreme, breathtaking violence Whurkus is inured to the sight of blood and gore. He is also an excellent businessman well versed in the accumulation of gold. Short and stocky, as typical for a dwarf, he dresses well—except when in the slaughterhouse—and has an elaborately braided beard.

FOLK OUT & ABOUT

While the characters are at Kildann's Cuts, they may encounter one or more folk of interest.

1. **Pirkko Paaso** (LN middle-aged female human) works for a wealthy merchant and has come here at her master's command to buy fresh meat for a feast he will shortly be giving. Pirkko is prim and proper and a bit of a snob—she has status among other servants as the trusted servant of a powerful man. She dresses well, as befits her role, and carries a purse of gold to pay for the meat.
2. **Erkki Nousia** (NG male human ranger 2) waits to see Whurkus. Erkki is an experienced hunter, and during his last hunt in the western hills, he saw a manticore (from a distance). He is willing to guide a group of hunters to the location—for a price, of course. Erkki has the look of one comfortable outside and with hardship. He is chatty—he misses conversation and good cheer while in the wilderness—and is more than happy to have a drink with adventurers, hunters and similar folk. The characters could engage him as a guide if they plan their own trip into the western hills.
3. **Kreeta Repo** (N young female human) visits the shop as a prospective employee. She hails from Languard and has come here in pursuit of an easier life. She is a butcher's apprentice and is in need of a job. She is dressed well, if plainly, and carries a haversack with the tools of her trade—knives, saws and more. A character seeing inside her bag, however, might leap to an altogether different conclusion...
4. **Mateli Kaleva** (LE female human wizard 4) visits Kildann's Cuts in search of various specialist "components" for her research that she thinks Whurkus could secure for her. This well-dressed woman is hanging around the shop—she wants to discuss her business in private. Mateli is empathic and perceptive, and she has sensed the butcher is a kindred spirit in many ways.
5. **Sampsä Laulaja** (NE young male human) hangs around outside the shop because he knows its customers are rich. Sampsä is a burgeoning thief not opposed to a mugging—if his victim is vulnerable enough. This teenager has unkempt black hair, a unibrow and an intense, angry glare. Sometimes, he begs—and people tend to give him coin to make him go away; he exudes an air of barely suppressed violence.
6. **Taneli Ukko** (LN middle-aged male human) thinks he recognises Whurkus—he hails from the same distant realm as the murderous dwarf. Taneli stands outside the shop, watching it intently. A man with a conscience, he is trying to muster up enough courage to enter the shop and make sure he has the right person before informing the authorities. Taneli is well-dressed in sensible clothes.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

While the characters are at Kildann's Cuts, one or more things from the list below may occur.

1. **Quiet:** The shop is quiet, and no other customers are present. The characters receive swift service.
2. **Busy:** Kildann's Cuts is busy—the servants of several wealthy folk are here buying fresh meat for their employer's table. The characters must wait outside until a few of the customers have completed their business.
3. **Departing Adventurers:** Two hunters push past the characters as the group enters the shop; both are smiling in anticipation of a profitable hunt.
4. **Urchins:** A pack of ragged children hang around outside the shop; they loudly beg for spare coin from anyone coming near. Kildann hates the children, but whenever he runs them off, they return later.
5. **Delivery:** A covered wagon stands in the street in front of the shop. The carter emerges from the shop and takes the wagon around the back to the slaughterhouse's more discrete rear entrance.
6. **Industrious Sounds:** Faint sounds of sawing and hacking coming from the slaughterhouse reach the ears of characters browsing the shop's wares.

OPPORTUNITIES & COMPLICATIONS

Lucky adventurers find opportunities almost anywhere. Unlucky adventurers find complications almost anywhere.

1. **Whurkus Wants Meat:** Recognising the characters as adventurers, Whurkus approaches them discreetly to see if they would be interested in working for him. He offers to pay good money for "exotic" meats.
2. **Thieving Urchin:** A ragged boy, Reijo Unaja (CN young male human), dashes into the shop, grabs the nearest piece of meat and then flees. Whurkus is outraged by the lad's daring. Perceptive characters spot a murderous gleam in the dwarf's eyes.
3. **A Deal:** Whurkus has some manticores meat that is close to turning. He offers the characters a deal on the steaks, partly to get rid of the meat and partly to gauge their interest in exotic meats.
4. **Kildann Needs a Snake:** Kildann has been engaged by a wealthy customer to supply the centerpiece of his next feast—a large snake that is to be filled with other choice meats. Large snakes dwell in the Salt Mire's depths—would the characters be interested in hunting one down for him?
5. **Odd Sounds:** Odd and indistinct sounds come from the slaughterhouse behind the shop. To a paranoid character, the sounds may seem suspicious—in any event, Whurkus does not take kindly to nosy folk asking questions about his business.
6. **Stray Dogs:** A pack of stray dogs noses about outside Kildann's Cuts. One of Whurkus's apprentices emerges

with a bucket of water, and he throws it over the dogs. Barking furiously, the dogs run off down the street and knock an old woman over as they flee.

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

The characters may overhear or learn some of the rumours (which may or may not be true) below.

1. **Special Menu for Special Customers:** Kildann's Cuts has a special menu for discreet customers.
2. **The Best Meat:** Kildann's Cuts is the best butcher shop in Dunstone. The meat is so good that the Gilded Swan serves it to its wealthy customers. Kildann is the head of Dunstone's butchers' guild.
3. **'Ware the Dragon:** A dragon's lair—complete with red dragon—has been discovered buried in the hills to the west. Apparently, the beast lairs in caverns below a ruined monastery. Most of the adventurers who made the discovery are dead; only one survivor—a fleet of foot half-elf—escaped the beast. Some folk name the half-elf a hero for bringing news of the danger back to the town, while others mutter he abandoned his friends to save his own skin.
4. **Thievery on the Rise:** Dunstone is experiencing an increase in thievery. Reports have been slowly on the rise for a year or so. Some believe the rise in crime is linked to the increasing number of adventurers in the town. Others worry the town's thieves are organising.
5. **Whurkus Seeks Trustworthy Hunters:** Adventurers and hunters looking for employment can often find work at Kildann's Cut. The butcher is always looking for exotic meats, and folk with the skills to get them are always welcome at the dwarf's shop.
6. **Whurkus Has a Secret:** No one knows his secret, but Whurkus is a very private man—it makes you think he has something to hide. His rivals in the guild would give much to know what it is!



7: REKOLA MANOR

A fallen family of wizards eke out a life in this old manor

Ivy crawls over the stone walls of this rambling, sagging manor house. Pigeons nest in the crumbling remains of one of its two towers. Weeds and wild bushes fill the garden, clogging a dry fountain where a faded, stained statue of a man looms. Home to the once preeminent wizard family in Dunstone, the manor has seen much better days.

The family once taught the magical arts to those who showed promise. However, no students come here anymore after a magical experiment gone wrong destroyed most of the family's spellbooks and research material decades ago. The head of the family, Vieno Rekola, potters around the decaying home with his sons and daughters, lamenting his family's fall from glory. Rekola and his family scrape together a small living, crafting simple potions and scrolls cobbled together from mouldering spellbooks.

REKOLA MANOR BY DAY

By day, Rekola Manor appears almost deserted. Townsfolk mainly avoid the place, and perceptive characters notice few even look at the mouldering ruin as they pass. Sometimes lone figures are seen in the untended garden. Adventurers occasionally visit the place, but they usually do so by day.

REKOLA MANOR BY NIGHT

By night, Rekola Manor takes on a wild, sinister demeanour. Thick shadows cluster amid the riotously overgrown gardens while faint lights flicker in some of the manor's windows. When night falls, traffic on the road outside the manor dwindles to a trickle. Strange sounds and lights coming from the manor are studiously ignored by its neighbours.

NOTABLE FOLK

Some folk are often encountered at Rekola Manor.

- **Vieno Rekola** (N old male human wizard 4) potters about his ruined family home, lamenting the horrible mistake wrought by his father that led to the family's near-destitution. Vieno is desperate and seizes on virtually any money-making scheme suggested by any vaguely trustworthy guest or customer.
- **Mauno Rekola** (N male human wizard 3) cares only about rebuilding the family's fortune and reputation. Mercenary in the extreme, he will teach anyone or sell anything as long as there is profit in it for the family.
- **Hanna Rekola** (NG female human wizard 3) sees the family's fortune as inextricably linked to that of Dunstone. She pushes her father to be more involved in town business, but thus far, he has rebuffed her pleas. Goodhearted and kind, Hanna is the Rekola most often seen at large about town.

- **Ambro Rekola** (CG young male human wizard 1) dreams of becoming a powerful wizard and righting the family's fortunes and reputation. With youth's nativity and haphazard focus, he is unlikely to achieve either, but his heart is in the right place. Ambro tries to join any suitable band of adventurers visiting the manor. He is headstrong, quick-witted and comfortable with hardship.
- **Mateli Rekola** (CN young female human wizard 1) couldn't care less about the family; she wants comfort and luxury and will attach herself to anyone willing to provide them. Of all the Rekolas she is the most likely to abandon her kin and move on. Mateli lies and cheats to get what she wants, but she rarely gets caught because she is intensely intelligent.

FOLK OUT & ABOUT

While the characters are at Rekola Manor they may encounter one or more folk of interest.

1. **Aidal Urzak** (LG male dwarf fighter 2) investigates rumours of the Rekola's foul doings. He lingers on the street outside the manor at night, sipping from a hip flask and watching for any strange occurrences.
2. **Niilo Aikio** (N male human cleric [Morden] 1) visits the Rekolas in the hopes of searching through their depleted, fire-damaged library. He has come from Languard and hopes to track down some old accounts of the Twilight City. This earnest young man will be disappointed. He is delighted to talk with other wizards.
3. **Marke Jurva** (CE female human cleric [Braal] 2) visits the Rekolas to discover if the rumours of their demonic practices are true. (She hopes to ally with them.) She is in disguise as a simple warrior when the party arrive. Marke hails from Dulwich.
4. **Panu Kotarikko** (N male human thief 3) watches the manor because he does not believe the Rekolas are as broke as they appear. If the characters visit the manor at night, they may spot Panu slinking through the garden.
5. **Kylli Mieho** (N female human fighter 2/thief 3) wants to buy the Rekola's *potion of gaseous form* but refuses to meet their price. She asks a character to pretend to have another such potion for sale to drive down the Rekola's price. Kylli is cunning and quick-witted. She knows Dunstone well and could be a useful friend.
6. **Gor** (NE male half-orc fighter 3) waits for a Rekola to emerge from the manor. The family owes his employer several hundred gold and are late paying. Gor plans to remind them of this fact through the medium of a clenched fist. He is brutish but focused on his task. The half-orc has no argument with the party and will back down if they intercede. However, he marks them well and quickly reports back to his employer. The party may have just made a powerful enemy.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

While the characters are at Rekola Manor, one or more things from the list below may occur.

1. **Magical Doings:** The sounds of faint chanting emanate from an attic window. The chanting continues for quite some time before trailing off into silence.
2. **Small Children:** A gaggle of small children cluster on the street near the ruined mansion. In high-pitched, excitable voices, they are trying to convince one of their number to throw stones at the statue overseeing the manor's dried up fountain.
3. **Empty Street:** The street is empty outside the mansion; a perceptive character notes townsfolk going out of their way to avoid the place.
4. **Crows:** Three large black crows perch atop the manor's crumbling ridge. The birds watch anyone approaching the manor. Sometimes they lean their heads together as if they are having a whispered conversation.
5. **Dark Cloud:** Dark clouds hover over the manor and its surrounds, casting deep shade over the area. This gloom and a slight chill in the air give the manor a somewhat sinister appearance.
6. **It's a Sign:** Mauno Rekola (see "Notable Folk") erects a small sign in a prominent position overlooking the street. The sign reads, "Apprenticeships Available". A few days later, a passing character notices the sign has fallen over (or perhaps a superstitious or well-meaning local has knocked it down).

NOTABLE THINGS FOR SALE

Although the Rekola fortune is much diminished—or perhaps even extinguished—they still have a few things for sale.

1. **Scroll of Magic Missile (300 gp):** This old, tattered scroll comes in a battered and stained leather case. Both are decades old.
2. **Potion of Gaseous Form (400 gp):** This pale green, slightly effervescent potion fills a small iron vial.
3. **Blank Spellbook (50 gp):** This blank spellbook has some water damage to its front cover. Although it looks worse for wear, it is perfectly capable of accepting spells.
4. **Silver Dagger (50 gp):** Obviously of an old design, this silver dagger comes in a worn, frayed sheath. For all that, the weapon's blade remains sharp and bright.
5. **Spellcasting Services:** Any of the Rekolas will cast spells (such as *identify*) for the characters. Hard bargaining can secure up to a 50% discount, but the characters must supply any expensive components.
6. **Alchemical Services:** Several of the Rekolas are alchemists as well as wizards and will happily engage in such research and work for a paying client. All are keen to secure a wealthy patron.

OPPORTUNITIES & COMPLICATIONS

Lucky adventurers find opportunities almost anywhere. Unlucky adventurers find complications almost anywhere.

1. **New Books and Items:** Vieno Rekola is desperate to get his hands on new spellbooks and to convince the Oksanens to give him a grant to reopen his family's school. If he hears of any visiting wizards or adventurers in town, he might hire them to seek out such books. Alternatively, he may offer to buy any such items from adventurers, but he will not offer full price—he can't afford it.
2. **I'd Like to Join You:** Ambro Rekola (see "Notable Folk") bounds up to the party and asks to accompany them on their next adventure.
3. **Things for Sale:** Mauno Rekola (see "Notable Folk") approaches the party and tries to sell them something listed under "Notable Things for Sale".
4. **Smoke:** A loud bang sounds from the manor. Shortly thereafter black smoke billows from an upstairs window. Nearby townsfolk beg the party to investigate.
5. **Laus Missing:** A young child, Laus Ilma (CN male human), is missing. He was last seen near Rekola Manor, and some people mutter that the wizards have captured him for some horrible purpose. Several townsfolk think the characters should investigate.
6. **I'd Like to Join You:** Mateli Rekola (see "Notable Folk") approaches the party and asks to join them. If they agree, they quickly discover she is less than an asset.

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

The characters may overhear or learn some of the rumours (which may or may not be true) below.

1. **Devil Worshipers:** The Rekolas worship a demon or devil. Their house caught fire decades ago as a punishment from Darlen. Most of the family are now nothing but crazed magicians.
2. **Magic School:** The Rekolas used to run a magic school, but that closed after an explosion and fire badly damaged the manor. Old Vieno wants to reopen the school, but no locals will send their children there.
3. **Magical Items For Sale:** The Rekolas sometimes have wondrous items of arcane power for sale. They are desperate for money, and a buyer with ready cash can drive a hard bargain.
4. **Deep Cellars:** Rekola Manor has deep cellars. Who knows what the debased wizards and sorcerers do therein to further their magical powers.
5. **Selling Up:** Old Vieno Rekola will sell the family home if the price is right. Who would buy the dump, though?
6. **Selling Wondrous Items:** If you have magical items you do not want, the Rekolas may buy them from you, but you won't get what they are worth.

8: BRANDYBOTTLE DISTILLERY

Popular distillery famed for its hard spirits

Several large wooden buildings surround this stone and earth home covered with a grass-covered roof. Brandybottle Distillery, owned and operated by Verna Brandybottle and most of Dunstone's halfling community, is one of the town's most successful businesses.

Hailing from the Lonely Coast, Verna came to Dunstone decades ago to take advantage of the excellent sources of peat located between Dunstone and the Salt Mire. Over the years, she's developed several potent spirits and helped to create a growing brewing industry in Dunstone. She heads the Brewery Guild, which includes beer makers as well as whiskey makers.

Most taverns in Dunstone offer a wide selection of local brews, and Verna's best bottles can be found at the Gilded Swan (location 5). Verna pays adventurers well to clear and guard monster-infested areas where excellent peat can be found. She is also seeking assistance in distributing her spirits throughout the duchy.

BRANDYBOTTLE DISTILLERY BY DAY

By day, Brandybottle Distillery is normally a hive of activity; as demand for her products has increased Verna has increased production. This has necessitated hiring more of her brethren and expanding her operation. Most of the employees are halflings although a few humans also work here.

BRANDYBOTTLE DISTILLERY BY NIGHT

By night, Brandybottle Distillery is quiet and closed-up. Verna Brandybottle employs several night-guards to patrol the place after dark—she fears theft by Dunstone's thieves and is worried about the recent increase in crime. Sometimes, she gives parties at her home—invitations to such events are highly sought after as her food and drink are (unsurprisingly) of excellent quality.

NOTABLE FOLK

Some folk are often encountered at the Brandybottle Distillery.

- **Verna Brandybottle** (NG female halfling) hails from the Lonely Coast. She runs the Brandybottle Distillery and heads the Brewery Guild. Verna is chatty, friendly and portly. She loves food and drink and has an impressive capacity for alcohol. Verna is quick-witted and a shrewd judge of character.
- **Furogren Overhill** (N male halfling) serves as Verna's right-hand man and foreman. He is decisive, loud and almost as skilled as she is in the arts of brewery and distillation. He is tall (for a halfling), plump and wears an impressive, many-pocketed scarlet apron when at work.

FOLK OUT & ABOUT

While the characters are at the Brandybottle Distillery, they may encounter one or more folk of interest.

1. **Hedvig Tapio** (LN middle-aged female human) waits to talk to Verna about a business deal. She is visiting from distant Languard and would like to buy a wagon-load of Verna's spirits. Hedvig is smooth-talking and a shrewd negotiator. She dresses well and is unfailingly polite. If she manages to secure a good price from Verna, she then seeks out trustworthy guards to escort her and her cargo back to Languard.
2. **Juuso Helliikki** (CN male human) wants to buy some cheap whiskey and is already half drunk. He is loud and cheerful but has a mercurial temper and takes offence easily. Skinny as a rake, be-stubbled and wearing worn, dirty clothes, he presents a less-than-desirable image. He also smells of smoke.
3. **Kustaa Mieho** (LN middle-aged male human fighter 3) hangs around, waiting to chat with Verna. He has worked for the halfling before as a mercenary guard watching over the peat cutters working on the Salt Mire's fringes. He has heard of unrest amongst the lizardfolk tribes dwelling therein and has come to warn Verna.
4. **Cora Keeneer** (N female halfling thief 1) arrived in Dunstone only a day or two ago and has come to meet those of her own ilk. Cora is from the halfling village of Underdell and is not above some light thievery if the opportunity presents itself. If the characters seem interesting and are obviously adventurers, she introduces herself. She has a wandering spirit and would happily attach herself to a group of like-minded individuals for adventurous fun. She is short, even for a halfling, wears worn leather armour and has a half-dozen daggers hidden about her person.
5. **Rusi Kuura** (NG male human ranger 1) hails from the muddy, isolated village of Thornhill. He brings good news and bad; the lizardfolk of the surrounds are acting strangely, and some say a horrible disease is working its way through the tribes. On the other hand, he recently discovered rich deposits of peat in the marsh and is willing to sell Verna a map showing its location.
6. **Erserd Dwojyr** (LG female dwarf fighter 2) visits Dunstone with the express purpose of meeting Verna Brandybottle. She has travelled a great distance to be here and has survived pirates and other dangers including a powerful storm that almost sunk the vessel she was on. For all that, she is yet patient—although she won't take kindly to adventurous types trying to see Verna first. Such folk can wait their turn. As well as being an expert brewer, Erserd is steeped in dwarven lore, and although not a native of Ashlar, she knows much about its dwarves of old. She could be a useful source of information for characters wanting to learn more about Vongyth and its fate.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

While the characters are at the Brandybottle Distillery, one or more things from the list below may occur.

1. **Busy:** The workers at Brandybottle Distillery are exceptionally busy, and few have time to stop and chat. The characters must be exceptionally persuasive to get a meeting with Verna.
2. **Delivery:** Several heavy-laden wagons filled with peat harvested from the Salt Mire have just arrived at the distillery. The workers—tired and dishevelled—begin to unload the wagons.
3. **Verna Out:** Verna Brandybottle is out on Brewery Guild business and will be unavailable all day.
4. **Adventurers, Leaving:** Four dirty adventurers—guards for an expedition into the Salt Mire—are leaving as the characters arrive. They are exhausted and in no mood for a conversation with the characters.
5. **Handcart Delivery:** Two workers are carefully pushing a handcart stacked with two straw-filled crates to the Gilded Swan (location 5). The crates each hold six bottles of Verna's famed whiskey.
6. **Closed:** The distillery is closed to visitors for the day.

OPPORTUNITIES & COMPLICATIONS

Lucky adventurers find opportunities almost anywhere. Unlucky adventurers find complications almost anywhere.

1. **Clear the Salt Mire:** Verna Brandybottle (see "Notable Folk") recognises the characters as adventurers and offers them a job—clearing a certain part of the Salt Mire so her workers can dig up the rich peat therein.
2. **Travel to Dunstone:** Verna Brandybottle (see "Notable Folk") has a consignment of spirits bound for Dunstone. She will be delivering the spirits herself and needs reliable guards. If she realises the characters are adventurers, and they seem like decent sorts, she asks them to accompany her.
3. **Distillery Tour:** Verna Brandybottle (see "Notable Folk") is on a charm offensive and is offering distillery tours (which include a tasting session) for a minimal fee. This way, she hopes to meet interesting and useful contacts and increase awareness of the guild's offerings.
4. **Fire:** A careless worker, enjoying a pipe on his break, caused sparks which set a pile of peat on fire. The peat smoulders for a half-hour before flames become visible. When she learns of the fire, Verna Brandybottle (see "Notable Folk") wonders whether it was an accident or a deliberate act. Either way, she is in a foul mood for the balance of the day.
5. **Stolen Bottles:** One of the distillery's workers has gambling debts and has stolen two bottles of Verna's whiskey to sell. Would the characters like a deal?
6. **Urchins:** Urchins hang around the distillery, waiting to cause mischief. Two workers are watching them closely.

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

The characters may overhear or learn some of the rumours (which may or may not be true) below.

1. **Dangerous Lizardfolk:** The lizardfolk of the Salt Mire are best avoided. Normally, they are not aggressive, but recently, travellers have reported more worrisome encounters with them. Some even tell of seeing obviously diseased lizardfolk in the mire's depths.
2. **The House of Yspher:** This dilapidated house stands on a lonely hilltop south of Dunstone. A dreaded wizard once dwelled in the manor. Not all who enter the ramshackle building emerge, and horrible things are said to lurk in the ruin. (See *Dungeon Backdrop: The House of Yspher* for more details.)
3. **'Ware the Dragon:** A dragon's lair—complete with a red dragon—has been discovered buried in the hills to the west. Apparently, the beast lairs in caverns below a ruined monastery. Most of the adventurers who made the discovery are dead; only one survivor—a fleet of foot half-elf—escaped the beast. Some folk name the half-elf a hero for bringing news of the danger back to the town, while others mutter he abandoned his friends to save his own skin.
4. **Northward Expansion:** Ashlar's rulers are again planning northward expansion, and opportunities for reward and advancement await those brave enough to venture over the border. The ruin of many previous attempts to settle the wild northern hills dot the Mottled Spire. One such place is the so-called "Ruin of Bleak Hill". (See *Dungeon Backdrop: Ruins of Bleak Hill* for more details on this locale.)
5. **Taxes on the Rise:** Taxes will rise soon, and that will be bad for everyone except the Oksanens.
6. **Verna is Incredibly Wealthy:** Verna Brandybottle is incredibly wealthy. She has a secret vault below her home where she stores her gold.

THINGS FOR SALE

Visitors to Brandybottle Distillery can buy a wide range of the Brewery Guild's wares.

1. **White Cove Whiskey (10 gp):** Distilled using seaweed-fed fires, this whisky has a distinct pungent taste.
2. **Burnt Wine Brandy 10 gp):** Sold in oak-charred casks, this brandy only gets better with age.
3. **Tanglefeet Beer (1sp):** This potent ale is rightly named. Those drinking a lot of it seem to have trouble walking.
4. **Fleet Foot Ale (1 sp):** This recent brew was created to celebrate the derring-do of brave Sir Ozloc—a local hero—famed for being the only survivor of an attempt to slay a huge red dragon in the western hills.
5. **Mire Whiskey (20 gp):** A small-batch strong whiskey.
6. **Sharp (1 sp):** Cloudy cider sold in clay jars.

9: FISFELOND'S SMITHY

Home to Ashlar's preeminent weaponsmith

Fisfelond's Smithy—a two-storey building with a connected forge at the rear—seems to hide unassumingly amongst its neighbours. The shop is open by appointment only, and a few dusty wares hang in the windows on display.

Dulannis Fisfelond is regarded as perhaps Ashlar's best weaponsmith. When the town still feared the monsters in the Mottled Spire, he forged weapons for the townsfolk and for good-hearted adventurers. Now, most customers just want hoes and plough blades, which has pushed Fisfelond into semi-retirement.

FISFELOND'S SMITHY BY DAY

Fisfelond's smithy is rarely a hive of activity. The elf-smith has only one apprentice and most locals have no need of his services. Only wealthy adventurers or mercenaries and Ashlar's nobility can afford his services—and Fisfelond is not predisposed to work for just anyone these days. His shop is open by appointment only. The smith often takes long walks in the nearby countryside during the day.

FISFELOND'S SMITHY BY NIGHT

By night, Fisfelond's Smithy is invariably dark, cold and empty. It has been many years since Fisfelond last worked through the night, and he will only do so now in times of great need. Fisfelond can sometimes be found at the Gilded Swan (location 5) or the Dwarf's Folly (location 1) of an evening. When he is out, his frustrated apprentice, Tahvana, watches over the shop.

NOTABLE FOLK

Some folk are often encountered at Fisfelond's Smithy.

- **Dulannis Fisfelond** (LG male elf fighter 6) settled in Dunstone decades ago after many years of wandering. Lately, he only makes weapons for people he considers "interesting" or who pursue a noble cause. The elf is rarely in a hurry, and he is never rushed. Sometimes, he finds the human propensity for dashing about irritating, and he purposefully slows down as a result. He believes patience (in a human) is a virtue.
- **Tahvana Meurakas** (LG male human) chafes at the lack of work taken on by his master but already knows more than most of his contemporaries will ever learn. He is a burly, pleasant man who loves Dunstone and its people. He often exhorts Dulannis to do more to protect the town and could be a good friend to like-minded, good-aligned adventurers.

FOLK OUT & ABOUT

While the characters are at Fisfelond's Smithy, they may encounter one or more folk of interest.

1. **Taavi Nousia** (LN middle-aged male human fighter 2) works for Bernhard Badger of Badger's in Dulwich (location 15 on the Dulwich map). He is here to enquire if Dulannis has any magical weapons for sale, as Bernhard has a client looking for an enchanted sword. This grey-haired man has a veteran's look and carries himself stiffly—age ever creeps up on him—but with confidence. He is chatty and invites any characters who visit Dulwich to call on his employer.
2. **Aelliah Renrianinn** (NG female half-elf fighter 5) hopes her elven heritage will open Fisfelond's door. She is clad in robes of obvious elven cut and is using her elf name in preference to her human name (Ilta Rauma). She has long, black hair, a ready smile, and a veteran warrior's compact, lithe build. Aelliah has gained some small fame as an adventuring warrior who has trod Gloamhold's benighted, doom-drenched halls; the characters may have heard of her.
3. **Vilhelmi Otra** (CN male human thief 2) plans to rob Dulannis's shop but has given little thought to the elf's likely vigilance or blade skill. Filled with youth's hubris, he has already come up with a genius plan: rob the shop while the elf smith sleeps. (He does not know elves do not sleep, and his endeavour is doomed.) He is cocky and pretends to be a skilled warrior if challenged or approached. Vilhelmi is handsome and used to his good looks smoothing his way through life.
4. **Maalin Rautia** (LG female human paladin [Darlen] 2) believes Fisfelond could be a useful ally to the church and is frustrated he doesn't do more to help the town. This tall, powerfully-built woman has never lied to the elf, but she comes here often to browse his wares and "subtly" preach to Dulannis and his apprentice. Dulannis knows what she is doing and indulges her—he knows a goodly, well-intentioned spirit when he sees one.
5. **Urho Paasia** (N male human fighter 5) has a +1 *two-handed sword* and wants to sell it to Dulannis. Urho needs money and won't accept less than the going rate for the weapon. This tall, rangy man has met the love of his life and wants to move to Languard to settle down and start a family; thus, he has no need for the weapon.
6. **Kreeta Puukko** (NE female half-orc fighter 2/assassin 3) wants to buy a dagger from Dulannis, but the elf has given her the brush-off—he senses her dark heart. She now hangs around in the shop's vicinity, waiting for other adventurers to visit. When she spots likely candidates, she offers them gold if they will buy her a certain dagger (#2 "Things to Buy") she knows to be in the smithy.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

While the characters are at Fiselond's Smithy, one or more things from the list below may occur.

1. **Closed:** The shop is closed, but Dulannis is around. If the characters enquire about browsing, they can make an appointment for the next day.
2. **Open:** The shop is open, and Dulannis is entertaining a warrior who has travelled to Dunstone specifically to meet the elf smith.
3. **Adventurer Without:** Another customer (roll on "Folk Out & About") is trying to gain access to the shop. Tahvana is loudly apologising that the shop is not open but that he'd be happy to make an appointment so the adventurer can return at a time convenient for Dulannis.
4. **Dulannis Arrives:** The characters have arrived to discover the shop closed. As they leave, they bump into Dulannis, who has just returned from seeing a friend. The elf is in a rare sociable mood and invites well-mannered, goodly folk inside to peruse his wares.
5. **Closed:** The shop is closed, and Dulannis is away in Languard. If the characters enquire about shopping within, they can make an appointment for next week.
6. **Delivery:** Dulannis and Tahvana are overseeing a delivery of iron ore and, coal and other necessary supplies. A few townsfolk have stopped to watch proceedings and whisper among themselves that the elf smith is preparing for one of his rare commissions.

OPPORTUNITIES & COMPLICATIONS

Lucky adventurers find opportunities almost anywhere. Unlucky adventurers find complications almost anywhere.

1. **Maps to Adventure:** Dulannis possesses a few old maps showing nearby ruins. If a group seems willing and trustworthy enough, he might be willing to part with one or more or assist in funding an expedition.
2. **Magical Blades to Sell:** Dulannis still retains a keen eye for inspecting magic weapons. The news of such items for sale or in need of repair is enough to pique his interest and open his doors to strangers.
3. **Shop Closed:** Dulannis has closed his smithy and is not planning to open it again for a month or more. The characters must be exceptionally persuasive if they wish to commission the master smith.
4. **Shop Open:** Tahvana is cleaning and tidying the smithy, and the doors and windows are flung wide open. If the characters want to browse, he lets them but cautions the adventurers that he cannot sell anything without his master's permission.
5. **Urho Frustrated:** Urho (see "Folk Out & About") has failed to sell his magical two-handed sword to Dulannis and is frustrated. Would the characters like to buy it?
6. **Dulannis at Work:** The elf smith is at work at the forge with his apprentice, Tahvana, and is in a good mood.

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

The characters may overhear or learn some of the rumours (which may or may not be true) below.

1. **The Greatest Weaponsmith:** The elf-smith Dulannis Fiselond is Ashlar's greatest living weaponsmith, but he barely works at the forge these days. Some whisper that he is dying; others believe he will only forge weapons for good and noble heroes—something Ashlar seems to need more and more of these days.
2. **Devil Worshipers:** The Rekolos worship a demon or devil. Their house caught fire decades ago as a punishment from Darlen. Most of the family are now nothing but crazed magicians.
3. **Delthur's Folly Found:** Someone has found Delthur's legendary lost mine! Speculation about the lucky person's identity is rife—if the rumours are true, much wealth remains in the mine. Several groups are planning expeditions into the northern hills—as soon as they know who to follow.
4. **Thievery on the Rise:** Dunstone is experiencing an increase in thievery. Reports have been slowly on the rise for a year or so. Some believe the rise in crime is linked to the increasing number of adventurers in the town. Others worry the town's thieves are organising.
5. **The Lord Ails:** Lord Benjam Oksanen nears the end of his life, and his grandson, Aavo, will shortly take his place. What this means for the town is anyone's guess, but Aavo is far younger and more dynamic than his grandfather. Many wonder if he will seek to push Dunstone's borders northwards into the Mottled Spire.
6. **Magical Items For Sale:** The Rekolos sometimes have wondrous items for sale. They are desperate for money; a buyer with ready cash can drive a hard bargain.

THINGS FOR SALE

Sometimes, Fiselond has interesting, valuable or unique weapons for sale at his shop. All the weapons listed below are of high enough quality to be enchanted.

1. **Curved Elven Longsword (450 gp):** Forged in the elder style by Dulannis himself, this blade has never tasted blood. It is beautiful in an unadorned way.
2. **Ebon Dagger (320 gp):** Forged with steel blended with ash from an ancient yew, this dagger is jet black, preternaturally sharp, and has a matching sheath.
3. **Short Sword (350 GP):** Well-balanced and lightweight, this dagger, sized for an elf, is a lethal stabbing weapon.
4. **Arrowheads (20; 2 gp each):** Tiny holes pierce these arrowheads; when loosed, they make a high-pitched screeching sound.
5. **Slender Spear (320 gp):** This sharp, tapered spearhead sits atop a stout, beautifully stained oaken shaft.
6. **Longsword (400 gp):** Forged for a holy warrior, this weapon has Darlen's sun symbol engraved on its blade.

10: FARMER'S MARKET

Here can be had all manner of local produce

Numerous wooden stalls fill this dusty square, which turns to mud after heavy rain. Here, local farmers and other artisans sell local produce from many local farms. On weekends, the market features lively music, games and a barrel or two of beer from the Brewers' Guild. The market is the place for the town's commoners—or the servants of the wealthy—to shop for life's necessities.

Soili Kotka organises the market and is responsible for collecting taxes for the town. She's a busybody who seems to know everyone and their business (which she has no problems gossiping about).

THE FARMERS' MARKET BY DAY

Unless the weather is foul, the farmer's market is normally busy during the day. Most stalls are open shortly after dawn—many customers shop early—and by the middle of the afternoon, the stallholders begin to drift away. Much is for sale at the market; most of the offerings are food or drink-related, but some farm-related trades—leatherworkers, woodcarvers, and the like—can be found here.

THE FARMERS' MARKET BY NIGHT

By night, the market is quiet and empty. Most stallholders pack up their stalls daily but a few leave their goods here under the guard of nightwatchmen. Few folk come to the market at night, with the exception of petty thieves and beggars come to see what they can spirit away.

NOTABLE FOLK

Some folk are often encountered at the Farmers' Market.

- **Soili Kotka** (LG female human) runs the farmer's market and also serves as a midwife. Soili always takes an interest in new visitors to the town and is a busybody gossip, always keen to learn about other people's business. Over the years, she has had to squash a few rumours of witchcraft.
- **Tahvo Lalli** (LN middle-aged male human fighter 2) works with Soili and helps her gather the town's due from the stallholders. Tahvo has a good reputation locally and is respected by many as a fair and honest man. He once served in Dunstone's army but retired years ago. Tahvo likes the quiet life and prefers to dispel any trouble with patience and diplomacy; he's no coward, though, if danger should arrive in the market.

FOLK OUT & ABOUT

While the characters are at the Farmers' Market they may encounter one or more folk of interest.

1. **Lauri Kurikka** (CN young male human) wanders the market looking for fun—and the characters seem like fun (or at the least interesting). This young farmboy shadows the party to see what they will do; he secretly hopes a monster appears so the characters will slay it. Perceptive characters may notice him hanging around, but engaging him in conversation doesn't elicit much information—Lauri is shy and tongue-tied.
2. **Kusti Ilma** (LN middle-aged male human) tries to sell his produce at the market, but no one is buying. His wares—apples, pears and a variety of vegetables—all look "off"—they are small and slightly discoloured. Kusti is desperate; he is running out of money and soon won't be able to feed his family. He blames the situation on his well—the water has tasted rank since the last full moon when he thought he saw an oddly coloured miasma rising from the shaft. At the time, he thought he was seeing things; now, he is not so sure.
3. **Ilma Mielo** (N female human) sells butter and cheese. She is well known locally for the quality of her produce, and her prices reflect that. She has a farm a few miles south of Dunstone well placed near the Great South Road. If the characters plan a trip into the western hills, she offers her barn as somewhere for them to stage from. In return, she'd like them to hunt down a wolf that has been seen near her herd.
4. **Salu Neuvo** (NE male human thief 1) wanders the market in search of an easy target; he prefers mugging servants of rich folk—they often carry more coin than normal folk and sometimes have nice things—wine, fresh meat and so on—to steal. This slender, shabbily dressed man is strictly a small-time thief—but he is vicious and a real threat to his victims.
5. **Kaarina Mielo** (CN young female human) cries loudly as she looks desperately around. She is Ilma's daughter, and she is lost. She is little more than a toddler and wants her mummy. If the characters help her find Ilma, both are grateful. Ilma, realising the characters are adventurers, has a proposition for them (see #3 above for more details).
6. **Dorotea Vaito** (NG female human) dreams of being a famous bard. She has an excellent singing voice and is also a skilled knife juggler. She has come to the market, as she often does, to hone her skills and earn a bit of coin. She is also an accomplished knife-thrower and enjoys excitement. Dorotea could easily fall under the spell of a charismatic character—of either sex—and offer to join the party for a few weeks or so. She loves travelling, has all her own gear and knows all the rumours listed under "Whispers & Rumours".

WHAT'S GOING ON?

While the characters are at the Farmers' Market, one or more things from the list below may occur.

1. **Busy Market:** The market is bustling, and many people are here browsing the stalls; this is fertile ground for pickpockets and cutpurses.
2. **Children Playing:** Ragged peasant children dash about the market playing "catch and whack".
3. **Dark Clouds Gather:** Dark clouds loom over the market, casting all into shade.
4. **Dour Farmers:** Many of the stallholders are in dour moods; a neighbour recently died, either killed in a mundane farming accident or slain by a predator such as a wolf. While the peasants grieve for their neighbour and their family, if a predator was responsible for the death, they also worry that their farm could be next.
5. **Stray Dogs:** Several stray dogs wander the market in search of food. Some people feed and pet the animals, while others curse and kick them away.
6. **Watch Patrol:** A four-person squad of the town watch wanders the marketplace. They don't expect any trouble and aren't exactly vigilant; they are merely here to remind everyone who rules the town.

OPPORTUNITIES & COMPLICATIONS

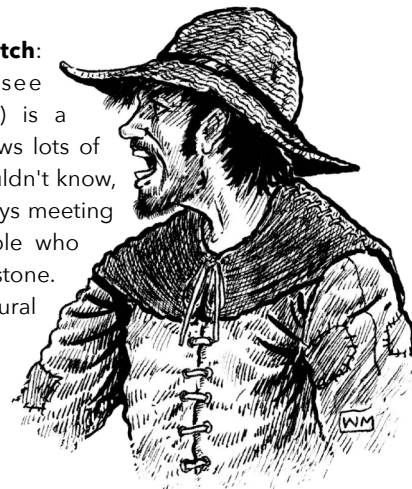
Lucky adventurers find opportunities almost anywhere. Unlucky adventurers find complications almost anywhere.

1. **Wandering Bard:** A bard strolls through the marketplace, entertaining the shoppers with songs. Every now and then, he holds his hat out for donations. The bard knows two rumours from "Whispers & Rumours" and will impart them in exchange for coin.
2. **Insistent Child:** A young child tries to drag a character to their parents' stall.
3. **Starving Thief:** Shouts of "Thief, Thief!" ring out over the general hubbub. A young, skinny boy wearing dirty rags runs past the party, clutching a loaf of bread. Unless the characters stop him, he disappears into the crowd.
4. **Spooked Horse:** Spooked by a dog barking and nipping at its legs, this large horse rears up and flails about with its hooves. People scatter, and the horse might bolt into the crowd unless someone calms it.
5. **Bric-a-Brac Stall:** A long stall at the edge of the market is piled high with all manner of junk, odds and ends and so on. The owner—a wandering merchant—is here for several days and will shortly move on. A character browsing the stall discovers an interesting trinket (that might lead to their next adventure).
6. **Desperate Farmers:** As #4 in "What's Going On?" but the recent death is the result of a predator—a neighbour saw the attack from a distance but was too far away to help. A farmer asks if the characters will end the threat.

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

The characters may overhear or learn some of the rumours (which may or may not be true) below.

1. **Something is Killing Sheep:** Something is stalking and killing sheep grazing in the hills west of Dunstone. Shepherds report finding horribly gored and part-eaten corpses in the early mornings. Some believe wolves are to blame; others believe something more sinister lurks in the hills.
2. **Flickering Lights:** Odd-coloured, flickering lights have been seen in the vicinity of the House of Yspher. Decent-minded folk have no business at that old house and stay away. Some think the lights are the glowing souls of all those who died in the house. Other people blame treasure hunters or bandits.
3. **Devil Worshipers:** The Rekola family (location 7) worships a demon or devil. Their house caught fire decades ago as a punishment from Darlen. Most of the family are now nothing but crazed magicians. All right-minded folk avoid them; why they are suffered to remain in Dunstone is anyone's guess.
4. **'Ware the Dragon:** A dragon's lair—complete with a red dragon—has been discovered buried in the hills to the west. Apparently, the beast lairs in caverns below a ruined monastery. Most of the adventurers who made the discovery are dead; only one survivor—a fleet of foot half-elf—escaped the beast. Some folk name the half-elf a hero for bringing news of the danger back to the town, while others mutter he abandoned his friends to save his own skin.
5. **Northward Expansion:** Ashlar's rulers are again planning northward expansion, and opportunities for reward and advancement await those brave enough to venture over the border. The ruin of many previous attempts to settle the wild northern hills dot the Mottled Spire. One such place is the so-called "Ruin of Bleak Hill". (See *Dungeon Backdrop: Ruins of Bleak Hill* for more about this locale.) Such expansion plans are bound to result in an increased level of taxation.
6. **Soili is a Witch:** Soili Kotka (see "Notable Folk") is a witch! She knows lots of things she shouldn't know, and she is always meeting with new people who come to Dunstone. She has unnatural knowledge!



11: TRADE MARKET

Artisans and guild members sell their goods here

Unlike the farmer's market, the trade market allows Dunstone's artisans and guild members to display and sell their products and creations; thus, most common, everyday items can be found here.

Mari Parviainen, Dunstone's senior tax collector, keeps a close eye on the marketplace. Seen as Aavo's Oksanen right hand here, she takes his goal of revitalising Dunstone seriously. To this end, Mari sets aside several stalls for visiting merchants, hoping to establish new business relationships between Dunstone and the duchy's other towns and villages. She also hosts special events in the market on the weekends. These events highlight one of the town's guilds or businesses, allowing the participants to demonstrate their wares and offer special sales on their goods.

THE TRADE MARKET BY DAY

By day, the trade market is a bustling hive of activity—except when the weather is bad. If the weather is good or tolerable, the market is normally busy during the day. Most stalls are open by midmorning, but by late afternoon, the stallholders begin to pack away. Much is for sale at the market, and the offering is ever-changing as different artisans or merchants hire a stall for a day or two. Out-of-town merchants bringing curiosities or things not normally available in Dunstone are always in demand.

THE TRADE MARKET BY NIGHT

By night, the trade market is quiet and empty. Stallholders pack up their wares at the end of the day, and the stalls are empty; however, the town posts a couple of guards here to ensure no undesirable behaviour occurs overnight.

NOTABLE FOLK

Some folk are often encountered at the Trade Market:

- **Mari Parviainen** (NG female half-elf) diligently serves as Dunstone's chief tax collector to collect what the Oksanens are due and strengthen the town's economy; she walks a fine line. Mari, an orphan, was raised in the Oksanen household and is loyal to the family; she is Aavo's good friend. (Rumours abound of a special relationship between Mari and Aavo.) She's been instructed to watch for promising individuals suited to exploring the Mottled Spire.
- **Kultimo Tiera** (LN middle-aged male human) works as Mari's assistant. He is eager and diligent but also a bit of a social climber. He lusts after Mari's contacts and is something of a sycophant.

FOLK OUT & ABOUT

While the characters are at the Trade Market, they may encounter one or more folk of interest:

1. **Eevi Repo** (NG female human thief 1) wanders the marketplace—she has nowhere pressing to be and all day to get there. She happily chats with the characters and even invites them for a drink if they seem interesting. This well-travelled, personable woman has recently arrived from Dulwich and can share some rumours doing the rounds in the south.
2. **Matias Nousia** (N middle-aged male human) trundles a handcart laden with several small barrels through the throng. He offers refreshments—watered-down wine and weak ale—to thirsty shoppers. While Matias is not a thief, he is spectacularly unobservant, and several pickpockets follow in his wake, waiting for him to distract a mark. They don't target adventurers, but an observant character may spot them loitering nearby.
3. **Panu Auvo** (LN male human) works for his master, Osma Hirvi, who trusts him to run a stall on his own. Panu is an apprentice weaponsmith and is enamoured with adventurers and their heroic lifestyles. If he spots the characters, he eagerly calls them over to the stall and enthusiastically engages them in conversation. He asks about their adventures and has “just the thing” for anyone mentioning a specific kind of foe.
4. **Niku Kallas** (male human) walks the marketplace calling out about the various stalls—Niku is a town crier, and he has an exceptionally booming voice. He also has a brass handbell—his pride and joy—that he rings enthusiastically to get attention before calling out his messages. He is impeccably dressed in ostentatious red robes and is a good source of news and the like.
5. **Hedvig Panu** (LG female human) introduces herself to the characters. She is a guide and local “fixer” who helps newcomers find their way around town and to get what they need. She is friendly and personable and has a wealth of local contacts useful for both merchants and adventurers. If the characters ask around, they discover Hedvig has an excellent reputation. However, she only works in Dunstone and won't travel into the wilderness with adventurers. If they need help preparing an expedition, however, she's the person to speak with.
6. **Kustaava Tapio** (CE female human thief 3) dreams of being wealthy and enjoying a life of opulent indolence. Obviously, she'd rather not work for a living and is exploring the possibility of starting a protection racket in the market. Thus far, she is unhappy with what she has seen—the marketplace seems safe and well-run. A perceptive character can see she is in a bad mood. To assuage her feelings, she engages in petty thefts and vindictive vandalism. Although attractive and well-dressed, Kustaava is not a pleasant person; she is not someone to be crossed lightly.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

While the characters are at the Trade Market, one or more things from the list below may occur:

1. **Busy Market:** The market is bustling, and many people are browsing the stalls; this is fertile ground for pickpockets and cutpurses. Several stallholders use their apprentices to watch over their stock; several carry stout cudgels to keep undesirables away.
2. **Children Playing:** Ragged peasant children dash about the market playing "catch and whack." They are loud, unruly and unpopular with the smallholders.
3. **Watch Patrol:** A four-person squad of the town watch wanders the marketplace. They don't expect any trouble and aren't particularly vigilant; they are merely here to remind everyone who rules the town.
4. **Quiet:** The market is quiet, and the stallholders are desperate to make sales; many of them call out to obviously wealthy adventurers as they pass, offering free samples, special prices and more. If the characters stop, the hard (and desperate) sell begins!
5. **Heavy Rain:** As the characters browse the market, heavy rain begins to fall. Those stallholders without canopies over their goods curse and immediately begin to pack up. Quickly, the marketplace empties; business is mostly done for the day.
6. **Arguing Stallholders:** Two rival stallholders who practise the same trade have stalls next to one another. As a customer begins to browse one stall, the other merchant offers to undercut his rival's prices; inevitably, an argument breaks out. As the two artisans shout at each other, the customer gives up and wanders off.

OPPORTUNITIES & COMPLICATIONS

Lucky adventurers find opportunities almost anywhere; unlucky adventurers find complications almost anywhere:

1. **The Characters Intrigue Mari:** Mari has been instructed to watch out for adventurers and similar folk capable of exploring and surviving north of the Selka. The characters pique her interest, and she introduces herself. If she likes what she sees, she mentions them to Aavo Oksanen—and he takes her recommendation seriously.
2. **Whispers & Rumours:** A character overhears two stallholders gossiping and learns one rumour from "Whispers & Rumours".
3. **Failed Pickpocketing:** A character feels someone tug at their pouch. The unskilled and hungry pickpocket—Helena Raita (CN young female human)—a ten-year-old girl wearing ragged clothes—dashes into the crowd once she realises she has been noticed.
4. **Mischievous Children:** A group of children are playing loudly nearby to act as a distraction for a minor robbery—they want to steal some wine and get drunk. The children

also act as a screen to slow down meddling adventurers, the guard and so on if they should chase the thief.

5. **Weapons & Armour for Sale:** A merchant, Pentti Leino (LN middle-aged male human), has set up a stall to sell weapons and armour, and he has a large selection. Four mercenary guards watch over the stall and the merchant's wagon (which contains much stock).
6. **Aavo Visits the Market:** On a whim, Aavo Oskanen (LN male human fighter 5/thief 5/bard 2) has come to visit his childhood friend, Mari Parvianen (see "Notable Folk"). Six burly guards accompany the finely dressed nobleman. Even if the characters do not know who Aavo is, it is obvious he is an important person; everyone gets out of his way, and the townsfolk bow respectfully as he passes. Aavo makes a great show of inspecting some of the stalls and buying a few things here and there. If the characters introduce themselves, he instantly begins to evaluate them—if he decides they might be useful to him, he invites them to dine with him at Dunstone Keep (location 1) in two days. While dining with them, he asks the characters to investigate and explore one of the old ruins lying across the Selka River.

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

The characters may overhear or learn some of the rumours (which may or may not be true) below:

1. **Aavo Dreams:** The lord's grandson is young and energetic. He dreams of glory and conquest. Once his grandfather is dead and he rules he'll expand Dunstone's borders beyond the Selka River. Several rulers have tried that before; it never goes well, as the savage orcs and other humanoids dwelling in the deep hills savagely resist any human northward expansion.
2. **The Best Meat:** Kildann's Cuts (location 6 on the Dunstone map) is the best butcher in town. The meat is so good, it's what the Gilded Swan serves.
3. **Taxes on the Rise:** Taxes will rise soon, and that will be bad for everyone except the Oksanens.
4. **Delthur's Folly Found:** Someone has found Delthur's legendary lost mine! Speculation about the lucky person's identity is rife—if the rumours are true, much wealth remains in the mine. Several groups are planning expeditions into the northern hills—as soon as they know who to follow.
5. **Brewers' Guild:** The brewers' guild is looking for guards comfortable in the wilderness to protect their peat-cutting expeditions in the Salt Marsh. Interested parties should visit the Brandybottle Distillery (location 8 on the Dunstone map) and ask for Verna Brandybottle.
6. **Thievery on the Rise:** Dunstone is experiencing an increase in thievery. Reports have been slowly on the rise for a year or so. Some believe the rise in crime is linked to the increasing number of adventurers in the town. Others worry the town's thieves are organising.

12: THE DWARF'S FOLLY

Rowdy inn popular with adventurers

Standing on Selka Street, this rowdy inn is a favoured haunt of adventurers, mercenaries and other rough and ready sorts. Run by the grizzled ex-mercenary Rister Osma the place offers cheap, no-frills food, drink and accommodation.

Two large common rooms, along with a kitchen and storerooms, dominate the ground floor while 16 bedrooms of various sizes fill the second floor. Rister dwells in the converted, but cramped, attic. Extensive cellars lie below the Dwarf's Folly, but these are prone to minor flooding due to the inn's proximity to the Selka.

The inn's offering is cheap and basic:

- **Drink:** Mug of ale (4 cp), gallon of ale (2 sp), pitcher of wine (2 sp), bottle of wine (10 gp).
- **Food (Cheap):** Black pudding with turnip and bread, parsnip stew with onion bread or bean and barley pottage (1 sp).
- **Food (Good):** Cheap sausage with fried onion and apple chunks, leek and chestnut stew or chicken with buttered parsnip (3 sp).
- **Lifestyle:** Characters staying in one of the inn's 16 bedrooms can enjoy a poor (3 gp/month) or average (10 gp/month) lifestyle.

THE DWARF'S FOLLY BY DAY

During the day, the Dwarf's Folly is a quiet place. Normally, the only customers present are those who have no pressing business in town or who sit in the common room nursing the banging hangover of the night before.

THE DWARF'S FOLLY BY NIGHT

As the sun sets, the Dwarf's Folly comes alive. Here gather adventurers, mercenaries and their hangers-on to drink ale, swap lies and carouse. The common rooms are normally noisy and busy until the early hours. This is not a place for a quiet (or discrete) drink.

NOTABLE FOLK

Some folk are often encountered at the Dwarf's Folly.

- **Rister Osma** (LN middle-aged male human fighter 4) loves running the Dwarf's Folly. While not a coward, he has no desire to return to his old life of travel, danger and hardship. He loves good drink and tall tales—bards are always welcome at the Dwarf's Folly. Rister is a consummate host and can make almost anyone feel special and welcome. Consequently, he is a popular fellow, with his customers.
- **Jussi Ihamuoto** (CN male human fighter 1) works behind the bar most nights. A borderline alcoholic, Jussi knows his job well and is popular with the regulars. He enjoys

singing—loudly and badly—and is a good juggler. Stick-thin with a shock of red hair and a somewhat questionable dress sense he is hard to miss. Surprisingly, he can be a mean drunk.

FOLK IN THE COMMON ROOM

While the characters are at the Dwarf's Folly, they may encounter one or more folk of interest.

1. **Vilina Toivettu** (LG female human fighter 3) visits the Dwarf's Folly on behalf of Aavo Oksanen. Drinking quietly—and sparingly—she is here to gather intelligence for Aavo on potential friends or enemies of the town. This experienced warrior is friendly but guarded. She has adventured in the surrounds and has a good store of stories to share. She wears worn studded leather and has a short sword at her hip.
2. **likka Himottu** (NG male human) dreams of heroic adventure, glory and untold wealth; his view of adventuring is based on bards' stories and not reality. He pesters any and every group in the inn to let him join them. Scraggly, barely into his teenage years and unable to keep quiet likka rarely makes a good impression. He has no useful skills, but enough enthusiasm, positivity and daring for an entire party of heroes.
3. **Urho Puukko** (N male human fighter 2) works as a mercenary guard around town—watching warehouses, acting as a bodyguard for wealthy merchants and so on. Recently, he has grown bored of such humdrum activities and is looking for adventure. Along with Tuuli he looks for a group to join. He loves ale and is an entertaining drinking companion.
4. **Tuuli Neuvo** (N female human fighter 2) dreams of high adventure and has recently talked Urho into pursuing a more exciting lifestyle. She is the brains of the two and leads any negotiations for the pair's services. Tuuli is a local and knows many people around town. She is popular, but has a reputation for dramatic doings.
5. **Taavi Kuura** (LG male human) drinks at the Dwarf's Folly at the behest of Father Joonas Mattila (location 2). He is here to find a suitable group of adventurers—but does not know why. If the characters seem suitable, he strikes up a conversation and steers talk (unsubtly) around to their exploits. Paranoid or suspicious characters may wonder how a peasant can have so much gold.
6. **Talvikki Kalamies** (CE female half-elf thief 4) nurtures dreams of greatness and has come to Dunstone searching for opportunities. If she can get away with stealing from inebriated adventurers she will, but she is far more interested in the rumours of a burgeoning thieves' guild in the town.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

While the characters are at the Dwarf's Folly, one or more things from the list below may occur.

1. **Lone Half-Elf:** A morose half-elf sits alone at a table. He's halfway through a bottle of wine and not slowing down. The man stares into space; sometimes, he wipes his eyes as if beset with grit. He wants to be left alone.
2. **Busy Night:** The inn is busy; Rister and his staff are rushed off their feet. They have little time to talk. Rister only has two rooms left to rent for the night.
3. **Dragon and the Thief:** A lively game of Dragon and the Thief is in progress. Several mercenaries and adventurers are playing for small stakes while each pumps the others for rumours and information. One of the characters would be welcome to join the game.
4. **Suitable Types:** Taavi Kuura (See "Folk in the Common Room") is bored and watches the group to learn more about them. She may approach them, later.
5. **The Watch:** A small watch patrol pops into the Dwarf's Folly to refresh themselves. Their presence quiets the crowd somewhat, and Rister is delighted when they go.
6. **Goodnatured Brawl:** Two drunkards start a good-natured bout of fisticuffs. Rister quickly steps in, to quieten the two.

OPPORTUNITIES & COMPLICATIONS

Lucky adventurers find opportunities almost anywhere. Unlucky adventurers find complications almost anywhere.

1. **Friends & Patrons:** Adventurous folk, their hangers-on and the like, along with opportunistic thieves and even patrons, gravitate to the Dwarf's Folly. The tavern is an excellent place to make new friends and secure a job.
2. **Aavo's Agents:** Aavo Oksanen—ruler of Dunstone in all but name—sometimes despatches trusted servants and friends to the Dwarf's Folly to keep an eye out for notable folk who could be useful to Dunstone (or who could potentially cause the town harm). One such agent is Vilina Toivettu (see "Folk in the Common Room"). She takes a keen interest in the characters.
3. **Quiet Night:** The inn is quiet, and Rister Osma wanders over to the characters' table to have a chat.
4. **Missing Coins:** One of the characters discovers their purse is lighter than it should be—they've been robbed!
5. **Passed Out:** A huge warrior, Simo Aikio (N male human fighter 4), lies slumped over a table, snoring loudly. A small pile of gold and silver coins glimmer invitingly on the table. Several folk are eyeing the pile with interest.
6. **Delthur's Folly:** A regular, Rauni Janakka (NG female human), with a flair for storytelling, is cajoled into telling the story of Delthur Madann (see sidebar). Her version of the story contains many truths, but also much conjecture and many guesses about the dwarf's ultimate fate.

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

The characters may overhear or learn some of the rumours (which may or may not be true) below.

1. **Delthur's Folly Found:** Someone has found Delthur's legendary lost mine! Speculation is rife as to the lucky person's identity—if the rumours are true much wealth remains in the mine. Several groups are planning expeditions into the northern hills—as soon as they know who to follow.
2. **The House of Yspher:** This dilapidated house stands on a lonely hilltop south of Dunstone. A dreaded wizard once dwelled in the manor; not all who enter the ramshackle building emerge. Horrible things are said to lurk in the ruin.
3. **The Nameless Monastery:** A ruined monastery of great age and fell reputation squats in the western tree-shrouded hills. Few know how to reach the place—the hills are particularly labyrinthine in the locality—although many travellers have glimpsed the ruin from afar.
4. **Brewers' Guild:** The brewers' guild is looking for guards comfortable in the wilderness to protect their peat-cutting expeditions in the Salt Marsh. Interested parties should visit the Brandybottle Distillery (location 8 on the Dunstone map) and ask for Verna Brandybottle.
5. **Thievery on the Rise:** Dunstone is experiencing an increase in thievery. Reports have been slowly on the rise for a year or so. Some believe the rise in crime is linked to the increasing number of adventurers in the town. Others worry the town's thieves are organising.
6. **Trafficking with Demons:** The Rekola were once a decent, trustworthy bunch. Magical ability has always run strong in the family, but a recent downturn in their fortunes have led them into the clutches of a demon! Few now voluntarily visit their ramshackle mansion in Old Town (location 7 on the Dunstone map).

DELTHUR MADANN

The Dwarf's Folly is named "in honour" of Delthur Madann—infamous miner and madman who claimed to have a hidden mine somewhere in the Mottled Spire.

Delthur's ultimate fate remains unknown and since his disappearance 50 years ago many folk have searched for his mine. Such expeditions have uniformly ended in disaster or disappointment (or both). Locally, the phrase "Delthur's Folly" has become synonymous with obviously doomed, badly conceived and executed plans and expeditions. In Dunstone, a "Scion of Delthur" is one marked for an early, foolish death in the lands beyond the Selka River.

For more detail of Delthur's lost mine, refer to *Dungeon Backdrop: Delthur's Folly*.

13: TOWER OF THE ASTROMANCER

Here dwells and works the Astromancer

The Tower of the Astromancer also features in *Cursed Tower of the Astromancer* and also works well with *Ruin of Bleak Hill*.

One of Dunstone's tallest buildings, the Tower of the Astromancer, stands on Selka Street on the north edge of town. From here, it commands unrestrained views of the Mottled Spire and the open sky.

Herein dwells Tuulitar Vihas, the self-styled Astromancer. She lives with her apprentice but, as a powerful wizard, has no need for guards.

Tuulitar is independently wealthy, having a diverse range of investments in far-off Languard. Thus, she has no need to earn money satisfying adventurers—answering their irritating questions, sating their constant need for magic scrolls and so on—but occasionally hires such folk. For this reason, adventurers are not always summarily turned away from her tower-home.

Tuulitar owns several powerful—eye-wateringly expensive—spyglasses and telescopes and is building an ornate and complicated orrery in her tower. She pours all her money into this project, and the rest of the tower, its furnishings and so on, while fine are dated as a result.

THE TOWER BY DAY

After long nights spent gazing at the night sky, the tower's two occupants often rise late, sleeping well into the mid-morning. They do not appreciate being disturbed before they awake. For an outside observer, the tower is quiet, the only visible activity being the occasional courier delivering items such as food and drink, spell components, books and other mundane equipment.

Within the tower, Tuulitar and her apprentice are employed constantly with their work, leaving little time for other pursuits. Often engaged with activities such as working on experiments, adjusting and taking readings from the orrery and pouring over ancient tomes from the tower's ever-growing library, they rarely pause.

THE TOWER BY NIGHT

On nights with clear skies and bright stars, the dark silhouettes of the astromancer and her apprentice can usually be seen against the moonlight sky, gazing at the heavens through a variety of astronomical instruments. On such nights, Tuulitar takes a dim view of visitors.

Although the tower is always locked up and quiet on nights of inclement weather, lights can sometimes be observed emanating from the tower's flat roof. Unsurprisingly, the astromancer is a night owl and often conducts experiments and meetings or chats with her trusted friends—most of whom are learned folk—when she is unable to gaze at the stars.

NOTABLE FOLK

Some folk are often encountered at the Tower of the Astromancer.

- **Tuulitar Vihas the Astromancer** (N old female half-elf wizard 9) believes great power lies in the stars and is determined to unlock that power for herself. To this aged half-elf, nothing else matters.
- **Reima Itkonen** (NE male human wizard 5) schemes against his mistress, although he professes great loyalty to, and admiration of, her. He serves her solely to steal her power and lore. Reima has a black heart and cares for no one but himself. He is a proficient deceiver, though, and appears to be a thoroughly pleasant and helpful, if a little obsequious, chap.

FOLK OUT & ABOUT

While the characters are at the Tower of the Astromancer, they may encounter one or more folk of interest.

1. **Ambro Kylli** (LG male human fighter 1) recently returned from his first goblin-hunting expedition. He is a young adventurer, enthusiastic but inexperienced, and his understanding of magic isn't the best; sadly, the "magical goblin treasures" he's here to sell are nothing but mundane junk.
2. **Orion Kuutamo** (CN male human fighter 3) triumphantly clutches a bundle of sleek, jet-black feathers in his hand. He is a skilled hunter tasked with locating and bringing down a rare bird whose feathers are famous for their magical properties. He is here for payment.
3. **Kaija Salme** (CN female human thief 3) poses as a scholar interested in perusing the astromancer's extensive library. In reality, she is a skilled thief on a reconnaissance mission in preparation for a burglary she is planning.
4. **Priitta Joutsi** (LN female human) lives on the fringes of town. She is a poor farm woman whose farm is going through a hard time. Knowing (at least she thinks) of the astromancer's bond with the heavens, she is here to plead for Tuulitar to increase the region's rainfall so that her crops might become more fruitful.
5. **Dimble 'Acornseeker' Scheppen** (NG male gnome illusionist 2) hails from the secretive gnomish enclave of Goldentree, deep in the southern woods. Passionate about preserving his woodland home, he's journeyed to the tower to consult the astromancer's extensive library on the natural world, hoping to better understand the link between the heavens and the forests.
6. **Matleena Cassiopeia** (LN female half-elf) visits on business. She is from Languard's Dreaming Spires and is here to respond to the astromancer's request to consult several rare tomes in their collection. Given the scarcity and importance of these manuscripts, she is here to negotiate in person.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

While the characters are at the Tower of the Astromancer, one or more things from the list below may occur.

1. **Inclement Weather:** A blanket of dark, gloomy clouds with only occasional breaks drifts across the sky. Tonight will not be a good night for stargazing.
2. **Heated Argument:** While adjusting the positioning of the celestial bodies, Reima has just broken a piece of Tuulitar's precious orrery; although it is easily fixed, the accident has sparked a heated argument.
3. **Not Alone:** Creaking wooden floorboards overhead signal someone else in the tower, pacing slowly up and down in the chamber above.
4. **Bored Apprentice:** Reima Itkonen sits at an ornate dark wood desk, hard at work, taking voluminous notes from a thick, well-thumbed manuscript. He seems exasperated by his task as if it were beneath him.
5. **Angry Knocking:** As the characters talk with Tuulitar, an angry knocking sounds from the iron-banded front door. Tuulitar comments that it is "probably another superstitious local" and ignores it.
6. **Glowing Orbs:** As the characters arrive, the astromancer is enchanting several of the orbs that rotate around her orrery to glow with radiant white light. If questioned, she explains that these are important stars.

OPPORTUNITIES & COMPLICATIONS

Lucky adventurers find opportunities almost anywhere. Unlucky adventurers find complications almost anywhere.

1. **An Experiment Gone Wrong:** An experiment attempting to harness the stars' fiery power has gone wrong, seriously injuring both the astromancer and her apprentice. Any healing aid the characters could provide would be most welcome.
2. **Rare Astronomical Event:** A rare astronomical event is in progress; fiery orbs streak across the firmament, eagerly observed and documented by Tuulitar and her apprentice. Both are far too engrossed in their work to see the characters.
3. **Escort Required:** A newly forged and expensive component for the orrery needs escorting safely from Languard to Dunstone. Too busy to undertake this journey herself, Tuulitar would be grateful if a group of adventurers could ensure its safe delivery.
4. **Arcane Defences:** Not keen on uninvited visitors, the astromancer wards her tower against bothersome interruptions. In addition to stoutly locked doors, those who venture forth to knock are often overcome with a strange compulsion to hasten from the tower's vicinity.
5. **Recent Break-in:** A skilled thief recently snuck past the tower's arcane defences and broke into the astromancer's private quarters, making off with several magical tomes. Although able to divine the stolen items'

location herself, she is in need of a band of adventurers to recover them and bring said thief to justice.

6. **Interrupted Experiment:** The astromancer and her apprentice are conducting an important experiment; the character's arrival interrupts their efforts at a crucial juncture; Tuulitar finds this extremely irritating.

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

The characters may overhear or learn some of the rumours (which may or may not be true) below.

1. **Obsessed with the Stars:** The astromancer is a powerful wizard; as her title suggests, she is obsessed with the stars and the heavens. She can often be seen on her tower's roof at night, surveying the night sky.
2. **Adventurers Stay Away:** The astromancer, Tuulitar Vihas, has no time for adventurers bothering her in the hopes she will craft magic items for them—her research is too important to waste time on such trivialities.
3. **Ill-Favoured Apprentice:** The astromancer's apprentice, Reima Itkonen, is not well-liked around town. He is entirely too nice to be genuine, and some folk whisper of his mercurial temper.
4. **Meddling with the Weather:** Many townsfolk have noticed that on nights predicted to play host to a rare celestial event, the weather is always clear and favourable for stargazing. Several storms have passed in the nick of time, and many suspect Tuulitar of influencing the weather with her arcane powers.
5. **Thirst for Knowledge:** The astromancer is possessed of a deep thirst for knowledge, but her worst detractors whisper that it goes further; they say her lust for answers has led her to make bargains with mysterious entities from far-flung corners of the night sky—entities with nefarious designs on this material plane.
6. **Extensive Library:** The astromancer is seemingly always in pursuit of some rare book or another, often sending requests to Languard for tomes on a wide variety of subjects. By now, she must surely have accumulated an extensive and well-stocked library.



14: URZAG'S STONES

This stonemason has a dark secret—he's a werewolf

Stone blocks—some in various states of carving and others merely dressed—litter the ground in front of this substantial stone building. Here works Urzag Airikka—skilled stonemason and stone carver. Urzag is an upstanding member of the community but has a terrible secret: he is infected with lycanthropy and has been since birth.

Urzag lives alone but employs two stonemasons, four apprentices and a variable number of labourers to assist him with his work. Although much of Dunstone's defences have been left to decay, there remains plenty of work for Urzag, and he is busy. Thus, there is a waiting list for his services (unless one can pay substantially over the odds).

URZAG'S STONES BY DAY

By day, the sound of industry fills the air around Urzag's Stones. If Urzag is here, he is likely working on a complicated carving for a wealthy client or dressing stone blocks to his exacting standards for his next job. Urzag's various apprentices, labourers and assistants are also busy. Work is always being done at Urzag's Stones.

URZAG'S STONES BY NIGHT

At night, Urzag's Stones is quiet and dark. Urzag lives alone and is protective of this privacy—for obvious reasons. Urzag has no need for light, thanks to his orc heritage, but keeps lights burning in his home to keep up a display of normalcy.

Urzag never works at night but sometimes ranges throughout the surrounding countryside in wolf form when he cannot deny the moon's pull. He never attacks humans and the like while in wolf form but has occasionally encountered (and killed) orc scouts and the like.

NOTABLE FOLK

Some folk are often encountered at Urzag's Stones.

- **Urzag Airikka** (NG middle-aged male half-orc werewolf fighter 3) worries incessantly he will seriously hurt or kill someone as a result of his curse. Urzag inherited the "moon curse" (as he calls it) from his orc father. When he moved to Dunstone, he built a secret stone vault beneath his home. He retreats to the vault when the moon is full and seals himself in. Thus, the half-orc protects his neighbours and friends from himself. Twelve hours later, a cunningly conceived mechanism of counterweights opens the vault.
- **Viljami Lemmikki** (N young male human) idolises Urzag and dreams of one day being as big, strong and skilled as the half-orc. He lives nearby and is often the first into work. He sometimes hears strange sounds from underground—the sound of Urzag's vault opening—but the half-orc has convinced him he's hearing things.

FOLK OUT & ABOUT

While the characters are at Urzag's Stones, they may encounter one or more folk of interest.

1. **Teppo Miemo** (NE male human fighter 1) hates Urzag for his orc heritage and desperately wants to ruin the half-orc's business. Teppo—tall, muscular and brown-haired—is a vindictive racist and searches for some way of bringing Urzag down. He suspects Urzag is hiding something but does not know what. Despite his odious views, Teppo is popular with his fellows and no stranger to Dunstone's many taverns and alehouses.
2. **Lotta Tornia** (N female wizard 7) visits Dunstone specifically to engage Urzag to craft a gargoyle for her tower. She intends to eventually transform the statue into a quasi-sentient guardian and has a long list of specific attributes the statue must possess. These are handily noted in a long scroll she presents to the half-orc. Lotta does not compromise easily and assumes that gold talks.
3. **Salu Vartia** (CN young male human) lurks in the yard behind a pile of blocks. His father has told him to steal some dressed stone so they can repair a crumbling wall in their house. Salu plans to steal one a day. He is scrawny, pale-skinned and possessed of excessive nervous energy. He is an excellent runner and jumper; if he is spotted mid-theft, he flees.
4. **Heta Ilakka** (NG middle-aged female human) nurses a raging infatuation with Urzag. This well-to-do woman often visits the yard to chat with the half-orc. She is a widower and drops this fact into any conversation with the half-orc at every opportunity. Heta is a good person, and Urzag likes her; however, his "condition" stops him from returning her attentions. Heta is tall, robust and has an air of capability about herself.
5. **Santeri Ihamuoto** (NE male human cleric [Brael] 5) wants a hideous statue of a lurker in shadows to decorate his secret shrine. He presents himself as a wealthy merchant who wants a "talking piece" for his hallway. Urzag is not so sure about the request, and Santeri is growing frustrated. To sweeten the deal, Santeri "suddenly" remembers additional maintenance work his house needs.
6. **Jarani Dwojor** (LG female dwarf fighter 3) senses something is off with Urzag but has put it down to them preferring different stone working techniques and styles. Jarani is a skilled stonemason and has come here to observe Urzag and perhaps to work with him for a while. The two have a lot in common and spend the afternoons drinking ale, discussing stone working and so on. Sometimes, they compete to see who can dress a stone block the fastest and whose carving techniques are better. These are friendly competitions.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

While the characters are at Urzag's Stones, one or more things from the list below may occur.

1. **Busy:** Urzag and his workers are busy getting ready for a big job—replacing some stones and decorating a wealthy resident's home. Urzag has little time to spare for idle talk.
2. **Urzag Away:** Urzag is out in Dunstone, meeting with a prospective client. He will not return until late afternoon.
3. **Urzag Resting:** Urzag is enjoying a quiet mug of ale while watching an apprentice work a stone block. He is content, relaxed and happy to chat with visitors.
4. **Stone Delivery:** Three heavily laden carts arrive at Urzag's Stones just as the characters arrive. Urzag has laid on extra labourers to unload the wagons. The yard is a hive of activity.
5. **Barking Dog:** A stray dog noses around outside Urzag's Stones. Perceptive characters note the dog seems scared or aggressive. Every now and then, it barks frenziedly in the direction of the yard.
6. **Gloomy Weather:** A blanket of dark, gloomy clouds with only occasional breaks drifts across the sky, plunging the town—and Urzag's Stones into chill shade.

OPPORTUNITIES & COMPLICATIONS

Lucky adventurers find opportunities almost anywhere. Unlucky adventurers find complications almost anywhere.

1. **Urzag Busy:** Urzag is finishing a complicated project for a wealthy client and cannot be distrusted. The characters should return next week.
2. **A Lull:** Urzag is in town, and his apprentices and labourers are taking the chance for a sneaky rest. When the characters arrive, it seems—at first—as if the yard is deserted. (The workers are lounging behind a pile of stone, playing a game of Dragon and the Thief.)
3. **Fire:** As the characters arrive, one of the nearby houses catches fire—the result of an untended cooking fire. As smoke begins to billow from the building's windows, the owner rushes out of the house and screams for help. Characters helping extinguish the fire gain Urzag's favour—he likes his neighbours and is impressed with the characters' altruism.
4. **Visiting Priest:** Father Joonas Mattila (LG old male human cleric [Darlen] 5; location 2, the Tower of the Sword) is visiting Urzag's Stones to discuss the commissioning of a new statue of his patron. He is happy to talk with respectful adventurers and any fellow follower of Darlen.
5. **Chatty Viljami:** Viljami Lemmikki (see "Notable Folk") is in a chatty mood and tells the characters all about the strange sounds that seem to come from underground he sometimes hears in the early mornings.

6. **Where is Urzag?** The widow Heta Ilakka (NG middle-aged female human; [see "Folk Out & About"]) hasn't seen Urzag for two days and is concerned. She asks the characters to investigate. Heta lives next door and is infatuated with the half-orc.

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

The characters may overhear or learn some of the rumours (which may or may not be true) below.

1. **Delthur's Folly Found:** Someone has found Delthur's legendary lost mine! Speculation about the lucky person's identity is rife—if the rumours are true, much wealth remains in the mine. Several groups are planning expeditions into the northern hills—as soon as they know who to follow.
2. **Thievery on the Rise:** Dunstone is experiencing an increase in thievery. Reports have been slowly on the rise for a year or so. Some believe the rise in crime is linked to the increasing number of adventurers in the town. Others worry the town's thieves are organising.
3. **The Lord Ails:** Lord Benjam Oksanen nears the end of his life, and his grandson, Aavo, will shortly take his place. What this means for the town is anyone's guess, but Aavo is far younger and more dynamic than his grandfather. Many wonder if he will seek to push Dunstone's borders northwards into the Mottled Spire.
4. **Urzag is in Demand:** Urzag Airikka is one of Dunstone's most skilled and in-demand stonemasons. The half-orc is a hard worker but keeps to himself. Unless you can pay handsomely, there is always a wait for his services. Often, wizards and priests engage the stoneworker to carve hideous gargoyles and pious statues for their homes or places of worship.
5. **Wolf Attack:** The howling of what sounds like a huge wolf has been heard at the northern edge of the town of late. Adventurers crossing the Selka also report discovering the bodies of three orcs torn to shreds by something large and powerful. Something dangerous is lurking in the hills beyond the river.
6. **The Mad Dwarf:** The so-called "Mad Dwarf", Kildrak, has been seen near Dunstone. What deranged crime does the homicidal maniac plan?



15: MERCHANT OF COIN

Moneychanger, shop, storage vault and gem trader

Nestled on Butcher's Row in Old Town, this fine stone and wood building is a fixture of Dunstone's mercantile and social life.

The Merchant of Coin deals in all manner of valuable things and offers a diverse range of other services to its clientele. Here can be traded gems, jewellery and other precious commodities. Customers can store their valuables in the vault buried beneath the building, for a small fee. They can also transfer their coin into more portable forms of wealth (for another small fee) or discretely borrow funds.

The Merchant of Coin maintains a small, velvet-curtained showroom wherein they sell fine items to Dunstone's monied folk. Many of these items come from adventurers selling their hard-won loot, while others come from storied Languard or other, more exotic and distant, locales.

NOTABLE FOLK

Some folk are often encountered at the Merchant of Coin.

- **Hannes Joutsi** (LN old male human fighter 3) works here as he has done for decades. He works hard to teach his beloved daughter all she needs to run the business. He is honest and wise but growing increasingly jaded with the business's day to day operation.
- **Aune Joutsi** (LN female human fighter 2) enjoys her work and takes great pleasure in serving—and being part of—the community. She has big expansion plans; chief among them is luring a jeweller and gem-cutter here from Languard to increase profits and offer bespoke jewellery making and repairing services.
- **Tilda Vasara** (LG old female human wizard 2) handles all transactions in the business. She is slow, exacting and honest to a fault. Tilda has worked here almost as long as Hannes and is a fixture of the place. Tilda perches in a small booth near the door where she deals with all payments and the like.
- **Vilhelm Mieho** (LN male human fighter 1) watches over the shop. Clad in plate armour and carrying a battleaxe he cuts an imposing figure. Vilhelm enjoys his job—it's pretty easy, really, except when a rowdy adventurer does not like the deal they are offered. Vilhelm is friendly and polite. The warrior is loyal to the Joutsis and secretly fancies Aune.

THE MERCHANT OF COIN BY DAY

By day, the Merchant of Coin is often quiet. While the shop is a fixture of the town's mercantile landscape it mostly caters to wealthy folk or adventurers offloading their unwanted booty. Thus, there are rarely more than one or two customers in the shop at a time.

THE MERCHANT OF COIN BY NIGHT

At night, the Merchant of Coin is normally closed. However, sometimes the shop opens for exclusive events or particularly wealthy clients. Hannes only lets customers into the vault after dark in exceptional circumstances.

CUSTOMERS

While the characters are at the Merchant of Coin, they may encounter one or more folk of interest.

1. **Saara Lempinen** (NG female human fighter 3) seeks to improve herself in life and social position and knows first impressions count. The Merchant of Coin is one of many places she'll be visiting in search of suitable finery and other accoutrements. Sadly, Saara is more comfortable in leather and chain and is somewhat out of her comfort zone. She'll be grateful to anyone helping her navigate the horrors of polite society and fashion.
2. **Maalin Kostia** (LN old female human) browses to stave off boredom. She retired from the mercantile life years ago and now busies herself growing her collection of interesting ornaments, relics and trinkets. She is a regular at the Merchant of Coin and is also someone who could hire a party of adventurers to acquire certain items of interest. She wears a fine velvet robe and is accompanied by a burly manservant who carries a heavy cudgel he pretends is a walking stick.
3. **Aldal Mildann** (LG male dwarf fighter 5) has money to spend after surviving a delve into Gloamhold. He's come to Dunstone for a change of scenery—Gloamhold's benighted depths depressed him. Aldal's skin is greyer than the norm, and he has a haggard look in his eyes.
4. **Juhana Arpia** (N male human thief 3) needs money to pay off a gambling debt and is thinking of robbing the Merchant of Coin. He's trying to as if he belongs, but a perceptive character sees through his deception. His plan is simple: break-in at night and steal everything easily to hand.
5. **Isto Jurva** (CN male human fighter 2) enjoys going where he is not welcome, expected or wanted. Smelling strongly of sweat and mud Isto cuts an incongruous figure in the shop. He's obviously not wealthy but is insisting on looking at everything. Isto is (deliberately) not making any friends here and is looking for a reason to be offended.
6. **Eiraruil Kuura** (N female half-elf cleric [Morden] 1/wizard 1) worships the god of magic and has come here to register her interest in any minor items of power the Joutsis come across. She's well-to-do and pleasant. If any of the party are obvious magic-users, she introduces herself and strikes up an animated conversation. Eiraruil lodges at the Gilded Swan (location 5) and invites anyone she gets on with for a meal and long chat. Her conversation is quite one-dimensional; she is obsessed with magic.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

While the characters are at the Merchant of Coin, one or more things from the list below may occur.

1. **Quiet:** The Merchant of Coin is devoid of other customers. Aune dusts the displays while Tilda tells a long, convoluted story. She stops in mid-sentence when the characters arrive.
2. **Closed:** A visiting noble patronises the Merchant of Coin, which is closed to other customers. Vilhelm Mieho (see "Notable Folk") stands outside to keep the noble's visit private and the riff-raff out.
3. **Visiting Adventurer:** Another adventurer (see "Customers") is loudly (and perhaps a little desperately) trying to sell a +1 *dagger*.
4. **In the Vault:** Hannes and Aune are in the vault with a client and are temporarily unavailable.

OPPORTUNITIES & COMPLICATIONS

Lucky adventurers find opportunities almost anywhere. Unlucky adventurers find complications almost anywhere.

1. **Gotten Gains:** Hannes Joutsis moves in diverse social circles. For adventurers, explorers and the like the Merchant of Coin is a good place to offload loot or to buy and sell gems, jewellery and other precious things.
2. **Thief Thief!** As the party nears the Merchant of Coin, they hear cries of, "Thief! Thief!" Moments later, a nondescript man dashes past the party chased by Aune. If the characters intervene, they might gain the Joutsis family's friendship.
3. **An Approach:** Aune Joutsis approaches the characters. She has heard of the party and believes they could be a useful source of goods for her business. She also offers them the services of her vault—for a fee.
4. **Evening Event:** A sign on the shop's front door promotes an exclusive evening auction event. Customers are invited to petition for an invitation.

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

The characters may overhear or learn some of the rumours (which may or may not be true) below.

1. **Thieves:** Shady figures have been spotted outside the Merchant of Coin of late. A gang may be plotting to burgle the place.
2. **Hidden Vault:** The Merchant of Coin has a hidden vault below its "public" vault. There the Joutsis store their vast wealth and the things they don't want anyone to see.
3. **Magic Items For Sale:** Sometimes, the Joutsis have minor magic items for sale at the Merchant of Coin. Such items are rarely publically displayed.
4. **A Good Place:** The Merchant of Coin is a good place to do business. The Joutsis are honest and law-abiding folk.

WHAT'S FOR SALE

Some or all of the notable items below are for sale at the Merchant of Coin.

1. **Carved Tusk (20 gp):** This almost two-foot-long boar tusk comes complete with an oak stand. Carvings on the tusk commemorate the hunt which yielded the tusk.
2. **Silver Cup (120 gp):** Decorated with a complex geometric pattern around its rim, this large, ceremonial cup is the kind of thing drunk from to seal a compact or deal. Its stem is large enough for two hands.
3. **Crystal Decanter (50 gp):** Fragile and beautiful, this crystal decanter is more of a display piece than something for everyday use. Strange properties in the glass cause it to scintillate in a rainbow of colours when exposed to strong, direct sunlight.
4. **Jade Ring (200 gp):** A highly polished piece of jade surmounts this gleaming, slender silver ring. The elven symbol for long life is etched into the jade. Faintly engraved in Elven a secret message decorates the inside of the ring's band.
5. **Fur-Trimmed Cape (50 gp):** Fabulously rare gleaming white fur trims this brown cape's hem and hood. A silver chain and clasps at the neck provides the means of securing the cape.
6. **Three Vellum Books (35 gp each):** An ornate lock protects each of these beautifully bound 200-page vellum books. These three books are part of a matching set but can be purchased individually. The iron lock on each book is elegantly wrought in the shape of the mystic rune for magic.
7. **Gold and Silver Belt (150 gp):** Slender, highly polished silver and gold thread is woven around this thin black leather belt. The belt has three small secret compartments, each big enough to hold a scrap of parchment, several coins or other tiny objects.
8. **Thieves' Tools (150 gp):** Reportedly owned by the famed gentleman-thief Klemetti Montaja this set of thieves' tools is offered more as a curiosity than a serious item for sale. The set is of superlative quality and highly organised in a handy set of black leather pouches organised by task—lock picks, trap finding and so on. The pouches come attached to a thin, strong belt.
9. **Iron Box with Secret Lock (100 gp):** Intricate wrought but lurid and highly graphic bas-relief sculptings on this stout iron coffer depict a soul's passage through hell. The box's hard-to-find lock hides at the bottom of the soul's journey to hell.
10. **Selection of Gem (var.):** Four bloodstones (dark green transparent stones; 50 gp each), two amethysts (translucent purple stones; 200 gp each), two pearls (opaque white stones; 100 gp each) and a small ruby (transparent red stone; 1,000 gp) fill a small black-velvet lined case. The gems are for sale separately.

16: ARROWS & BOLTS

The best bowyer/fletcher in town

A beautiful carved sign depicting an arrow crossed with a crossbow bolt hangs over this shop's door. Ornate wood carvings of various animals—wolves, bears, falcons and more—decorate the building's frontage.

Inside, Panu Laukkanen and his son and daughter craft innumerable bolts, arrows and bows for Dunstone's hunters and garrison. Arrows & Bolts is widely acknowledged as the best bowyer/fletcher in Dunstone, and Panu is not a stranger to crafting strange or expensive ammunition for adventurers. A steady trickle of such folk visits his establishment.

A short shooting range stands behind the shop so potential customers can test their purchases before parting with their gold. No one does so without one of the Laukkanens in attendance.

ARROWS & BOLTS BY DAY

By day, Arrows & Bolts is always open. Older customers—those who have shopped here for years—only like dealing with Panu, and when he is at work, the place is normally busier. The shop's shooting range is in use on a daily basis, and sometimes Ossi or Elimia supervise the town's children shooting here using small bows Panu crafted for his children when they were younger.

ARROWS & BOLTS BY NIGHT

Arrows & Bolts is usually closed at night. Sometimes, Panu works late if he is close to finishing an important commission, but otherwise, he spends the evening with his family.

NOTABLE FOLK

Some folk are often encountered at Arrows & Bolts.

- **Panu Laukkanen** (NG middle-aged male human fighter 3) lost his left hand a decade ago in the Mottled Spire—he doesn't like to talk about it—but can still work. He has a wide range of special tools which enable him to continue his craft. He even owns a bronze hand shaped to hold a bow forged by the elf weaponsmith Dulannis Fiselond (location 9). Panu remains an excellent archer.
- **Ossi Laukkanen** (NG male human fighter 1) enjoys the day-to-day routine of creating things with his hands. He is a good bowyer but prefers wood carvings; it is his work that decorates the shop front. Ossi is pleasant and welcoming but defers to his father in most matters.
- **Elimia Laukkanen** (NG female human fighter 2) chaffs at the day-to-day work of a bowyer/fletcher and dreams of spending time in the "northern wilds". Her father is dead set against her dream, and thus far, she has indulged him. Soon, however, her adventure lust will grow impossible to resist.

FOLK OUT & ABOUT

While the characters are at Arrows & Bolts, they may encounter one or more folk of interest.

1. **Lalli Urho** (NG middle-aged male human ranger 2) comes to Arrows & Bolts regularly. He could make his own arrows, but he likes Panu and enjoys chatting with the skilled craftsman. Lalli is craggy, rough-looking and lean. He is a skilled outdoorsman and would make a good guide. He can be talked into the role if the characters seem genuinely keen on protecting Dunstone.
2. **Maunu Tornia** (LN male human fighter 1) plans his first foray into wild lands beyond the Selka River. He wants a decent bow and a score of arrows, but this impoverished archer cannot afford them. He is browsing disconsolately when the characters arrive.
3. **Lamahas Sehiatier** (NG female elf fighter 4) curiously examines the shop's stock. This willow-thin black-haired elf is new in town and has come here in part to visit Arrows & Bolts. She is a fanatical archer and obsessed with details. She has heard that Panu is exceptionally skilled for a human fletcher and wants to buy his finest arrows. She is about to head to the range behind the shop when the characters arrive; she'll be there for much of the day.
4. **Serafia Janakka** (LN female human) owns a small export concern and has long wanted to offer Arrows & Bolt's items to her customers in Dulwich. She is waiting patiently for a long conversation with Panu about the possibility of working together. If the characters are obviously wealthy or adventurers, she introduces herself and invites them to visit her shop. Serafia is canny, and she knows that having adventurer-friends can be very useful—both as customers and useful hirelings.
5. **Kosti Torio** (CG male human fighter 4) courts Elimia (see "Notable Folk"). This handsome warrior is obsessed with her and comes here most days to "inspect the wares". Elimia is onto him and enjoys his attention. Panu, however, worries; Kosti is known locally as a hero who often plunges into the wild north lands on daring adventures, and Panu is concerned that one day he might take Elimia with him. Thus, perceptive characters may sense a certain tension in the shop.
6. **Noora Otra** (CN young female human) wants to shoot on the range behind the shop, but no one is available to supervise her. She is hanging around, bored, when the characters arrive. If any of them appear to be archers, she begs them to supervise her. The Laukkanens at the shop happily agree if the characters agree—Noora's presence is not conducive to focused work. Noora is a bundle of energy and speaks exceptionally quickly; she can be exhausting.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

While the characters are at Arrows & Bolts, one or more things from the list below may occur.

1. **Arrows & Bolts Busy:** A group of hunters is at Arrows & Bolts; many of the hunters are Panu's friends, and the resultant sales will take a long time. Ales must be drunk, practise shots taken and the like.
2. **Arrows & Bolts Quiet:** Arrows & Bolts has no other customers when the characters arrive, so the group enjoys prompt service.
3. **Panu Putting on a Show:** Panu is testing several new longbows he has recently completed, and a small crowd has gathered to watch. He is incredibly skilled—particularly as he has only one hand.
4. **Screams of Fun:** When the characters arrive high-pitched screams and yelps of excitement are coming from behind Arrows & Bolts. Elimia Laukkanen (see "Notable Folk") is supervising several young children on the shooting range.
5. **Happy Customer:** As the characters approach the shop, they hear laughter from within. A few moments later, Lalli Urho (see "Folk Out & About") leaves the shop. He stops the characters and praises Panu's skills.
6. **Shop Closed:** Arrows & Bolts is closed; the family are all at Dunstone Keep.

OPPORTUNITIES & COMPLICATIONS

Lucky adventurers find opportunities almost anywhere. Unlucky adventurers find complications almost anywhere.

1. **Special Ammunition:** Word reaches the characters Panu has some special arrows and bolts for sale. These could include silvered weapons along with more esoteric weaponry—perhaps blunt or whistling arrows—or even a small consignment of rare elf-wrought bows or dwarf-built crossbows.
2. **Adventurous Daughter:** When they visit Arrows & Bolts, the characters encounter Elimia. She begs to join the party if they are heading north and enthusiastically offers to demonstrate her skill with a bow. As a doting father, Panu makes it abundantly clear he holds the characters collectively responsible for her safety, if they let her join the group.
3. **Low Stock Levels:** Arrows & Bolts have just fulfilled a large order for Dunstone Keep (location 1), and stock levels in the shop are low. There is a 50% chance that whatever the characters want, the shop does not have (except for normal arrows and bolts).
4. **Archery Competition:** Arrows & Bolts is hosting an archery competition next week, and customers entering the shop are invited to compete. The first prize is a bow or crossbow made to the winner's specifications. It costs adventurers 20 gp to enter the competition.

5. **Shop Burgled:** The characters arrive to discover Arrows & Bolts in an uproar. Someone broke in last night and stole several choice items—silver arrows, a beautiful longbow and sundry other items. Panu wants his property back and offers the characters a reward if they recover the items.
6. **Aavo Visits:** Aavo Oksanen (LN male human fighter 5/ thief 5/bard 2; Dunstone Keep, location 1) personally visits Arrows & Bolts to discuss business with Panu. A small retinue of warriors-at-arms waits outside for their lord; they give the characters a hard look if the heroes enter the shop. If the characters are obviously adventurers and polite, Aavo is happy to speak with them—such folk have their uses, after all.

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

The characters may overhear or learn some of the rumours (which may or may not be true) below.

1. **The Lord Ails:** Lord Benjam Oksanen nears the end of his life, and his grandson, Aavo, will shortly take his place. What this means for the town is anyone's guess, but Aavo is far younger and more dynamic than his grandfather. Many wonder if he will seek to push Dunstone's borders northwards into the Mottled Spire.
2. **The Greatest Weaponsmith:** The elf-smith Dulannis Fiselond is Ashlar's greatest living weaponsmith, but he barely works at the forge these days. Some whisper that he is dying; others believe he will only forge weapons for good and noble heroes—something Ashlar seems to need more and more of these days.
3. **Delthur's Folly Found:** Someone has found Delthur's legendary lost mine! Speculation is rife as to the lucky person's identity—if the rumours are true, much wealth remains in the mine. Several groups are planning expeditions into the northern hills—as soon as they know who to follow.
4. **The House of Yspher:** This dilapidated house stands on a lonely hilltop south of Dunstone. A dreaded wizard once dwelled in the manor; not all who enter the ramshackle building emerge. Horrible things are said to lurk in the ruin.
5. **The Nameless Monastery:** A ruined monastery of great age and fell reputation squats in the western tree-shrouded hills. Few know how to reach the place—the hills are particularly labyrinthine in the locality—although many travellers have glimpsed the ruin from afar. Some say a red dragon lairs below the ruin and that when it hungers, it will fly forth to utterly devastate Dunstone.
6. **Ferocious Ogres:** A pair of exceedingly large, powerful and ferocious ogres prey on travellers and merchants travelling between Dunstone and the village of White Moon Cove. Their depredations are hurting trade—someone should do something to end this menace!



PLAYER'S GUIDE TO DUNSTONE

DUNSTONE



Ruler Benjam Oksanen

Government Overlord

Population 3,574

Alignments LG, NG, N, LN, LE, NE

Languages Common, Dwarven, Elven

Dunstone huddles under the menacing vastness of the nearby Mottled Spire's granitic bulk. A crumbling 12-foot-high stone wall and an old moss-covered fortress protect the old town. The citadel watches over sagging row houses meandering across a low hill towards the Selka River. Here, surly guardsmen oversee a rickety wooden bridge spanning the river and the path towards the Mottled Spire. In bygone days, monsters crawled out of Gloamhold and down from the Mottled Spire to die against Dunstone's walls and formidable moat. Now, the moat is nothing more than a grassy slope where pigs graze and children play.

Dunstone is civilisation's last bastion before the Mottled Spire; its folk are resilient and hardy. Often cut off from the rest of the Duchy of Ashlar during the deep winter, locals trade whispers and gossip amongst themselves. In this tight-knit community, strangers are treated with suspicion until they prove themselves to be honest and hardworking folk like the Dunstonians. The townspeople engage in farming, raising livestock and crafting trade goods. Except for travelling merchants, few from Dunstone travel into the larger world, though an occasional brash youth dares the hardships of the Mottled Spire.

TALK OF THE TOWN

Some news and rumours are widespread in Dunstone.

- **Aavo Rules:** Aavo Oksanen rules the town in all but name now as his grandfather, Benjam, grows increasingly frail. Benjam is dynamic where his grandfather valued stability and peace above all. Change is coming to the Town on the Borderlands.
- **Adventurer's Favourite:** The Dwarf's Folly, a rowdy inn on Selka Street, is a favoured haunt of adventurers visiting Dunstone.
- **Adventurers Wanted:** Powerful and wealthy folk always seek to expand their influence and holdings. The nearest sources of unclaimed land lie in the nearby hills. Brave adventurers can doubtless find ready employment exploring the Mottled Spire or the Carmine Hills and the many ruins studding both ranges.
- **Lurking Red Dragon:** A red dragon lurks in the hills to the south and west under the shattered ruin of the Nameless Monastery. The beast was discovered last year by an adventuring band—most of whom it promptly ate—and news of its presence has shaken the townsfolk.

NOTABLE LOCATIONS IN TOWN

Most of Dunstone comprises peasant homes or businesses. A few locations, however, are of interest to adventurers:

1. **Dunstone Keep:** The keep is the Oksanen family home. The current ruler, **Benjam Oksanen**, grows old and tired, and his grandson, **Aavo Oksanen**, now rules the town in all but name.
2. **Tower of the Sword:** This church of Darlen is also a garrison of the Knights of the Eternal Watch. **Father Joonas Mattila** leads worship here.
3. **Bastion of Peace:** Worshippers of Conn gather here, a place that is the heart and soul of the community. The elderly **High Priestess Marjo Oiva** yet leads her flock.
4. **Sheep Knuckles:** This strange inn sticks out just like its outlandish gnomish owner **Roosa Lajunen**. This is Dunstone's most popular inn.
5. **The Gilded Swan:** Owned by **Jyrki Klemetti**, this high-class inn offers various hedonistic delights.
6. **Kildann's Cuts:** Renowned for his quality meats, **Whurkus Kildann** is the best butcher in town. He also offers a special menu comprising the flesh of exotic creatures to wealthy customers.
7. **Rekola Manor:** Once a wizarding school, the manor and family have fallen into decay. Its current patriarch, **Vieno Rekola**, seeks to repair the family's fortunes.
8. **Brandybottle Distillery:** This halfling-owned distillery is known for its fine spirits. Its owner, **Verna Brandybottle**, single-handedly started a brewing revival in Dunstone.
9. **Fisfelond's Smithy:** The aged elf **Dulannis Fisfelond** is regarded as perhaps Ashlar's best weaponsmith. He only works now when he wants to.
10. **Farmer's Market:** The local farmers gather here to sell produce in a festival-like atmosphere with lively music and fresh beer.
11. **Trade Market:** The trade market allows Dunstone's artisans and guild members to display and sell their
12. **The Dwarf's Folly:** Run by the grizzled ex-mercenary **Rister Osma**, this rowdy inn is a favoured haunt of adventurers and other rough-and-ready sorts.
13. **Tower of the Astromancer:** Herein dwells **Tuulitar Vihas**, the self-styled Astromancer. The tower is one of Dunstone's tallest buildings.
14. **Urzag's Stones:** Here works **Urzag Airikka**—skilled stonemason and stone carver
15. **Merchant of Coin:** The Merchant of Coin deals in all manner of valuable things and provides diverse services. The elderly **Hannes Joutsi** owns the place.
16. **Arrows & Bolts:** The one-armed **Panu Laukkanen** is widely acknowledged as the best bowyer/fletcher in Dunstone. He is no stranger to crafting strange or expensive ammunition for adventurers



THE SURROUNDS

Dunstone lies on the Duchy of Ashlar's northern border. The Mottled Spire lies to the north across the Selka River while the Carmine Hills comprise the town's western flank. While parts of the Carmine Hills are quasi-civilised the Mottled Spire remains a monster-infested wilderness.

THE CARMINE HILLS

Lying south and west of Dunstone, the Carmine Hills have a long and bloody history. The banded red rocks which lend the craggy hills their name are rich in iron and copper, marking the area as especially valuable. The orcs of the western hills view the Carmine Hills as their sacred hunting grounds and have long contested Dunstone's control of the region. Some parts of the hills are heavily forested.

THE MOTTLED SPIRE

This huge chunk of granite glowers over Hard Bay's treacherous waters like an angry giant. Difficult to reach by land or sea, the Mottled Spire shelters Gloamhold deep within its bowels. A wind-blasted, desolate place, it has stubbornly resisted the pernicious encroachment of human civilisation and remains untamed despite various attempts to push the duchy's border north. The leavings of such

attempted colonisations—abandoned mines, ruined fortified manor houses and the like—dot the southern hills.

WHITE MOON COVE

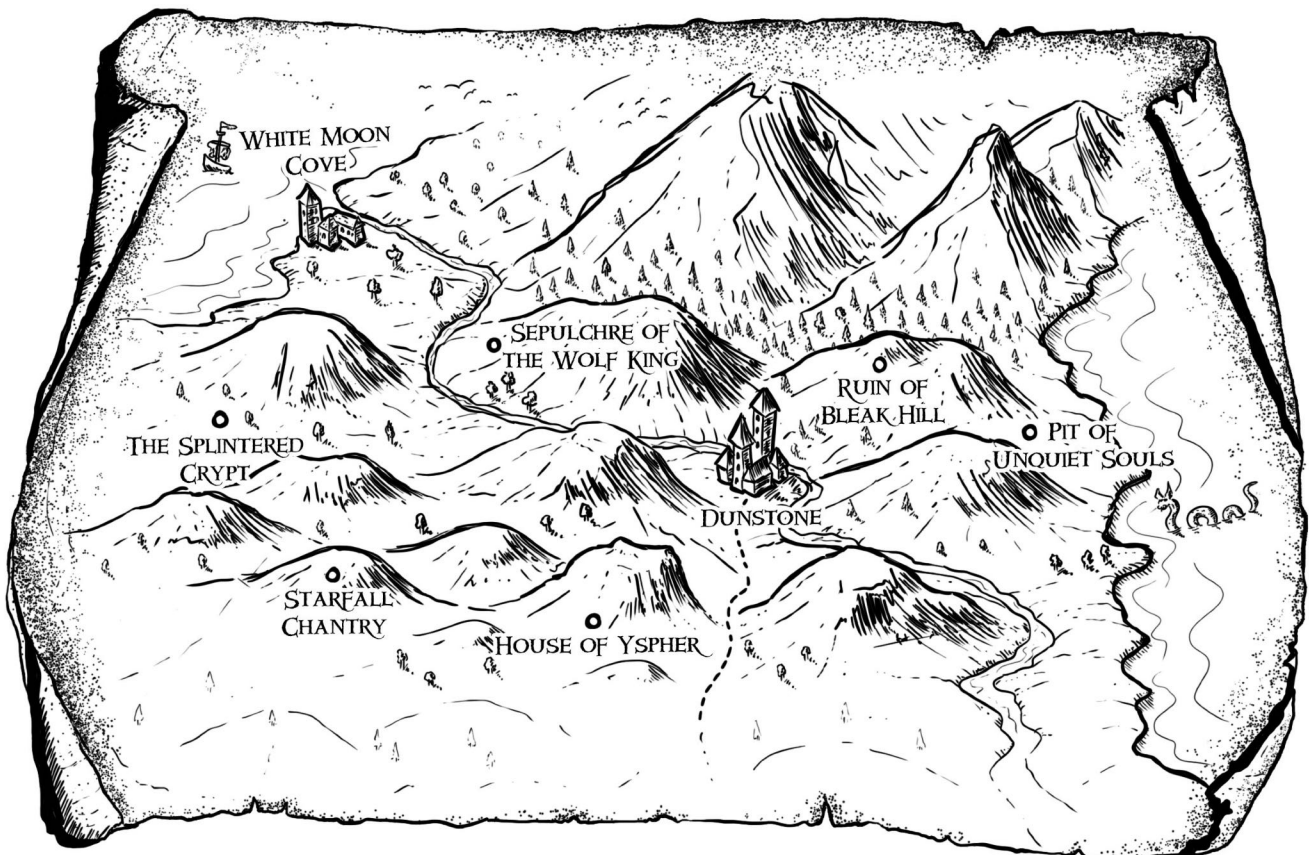
White Moon Cove is a small, respectable fishing village located in a sheltered cove that acts as an excellent, natural harbour. The inhabitants of this tight-knit community are relatively sober, hardworking and amiable fisherfolk, traders and other sturdy folk who make their living primarily from the sea. While fishing is the village's main industry, a few small farms dot the surrounding countryside.

During the day, fishing and other activities connected to the sea's many bounties occupy the villagers' time. White Moon Cove is a busy hub for trade. Because of this, the people of White Moon Cove live relatively well, despite their simple and generally rugged way of life. After a long workday, most people retire to their homes. Before heading home, many stop by the Sleeping Triton, for fellowship, laughter and a hearty meal.

The village holds a weekly market that attracts folk from other nearby smaller settlements and merchants from the town of Dunstone.

ADVENTURE LOCALES

Various sites of interest lie scattered throughout the area surrounding Dunstone. Your GM has more information regarding these locales.



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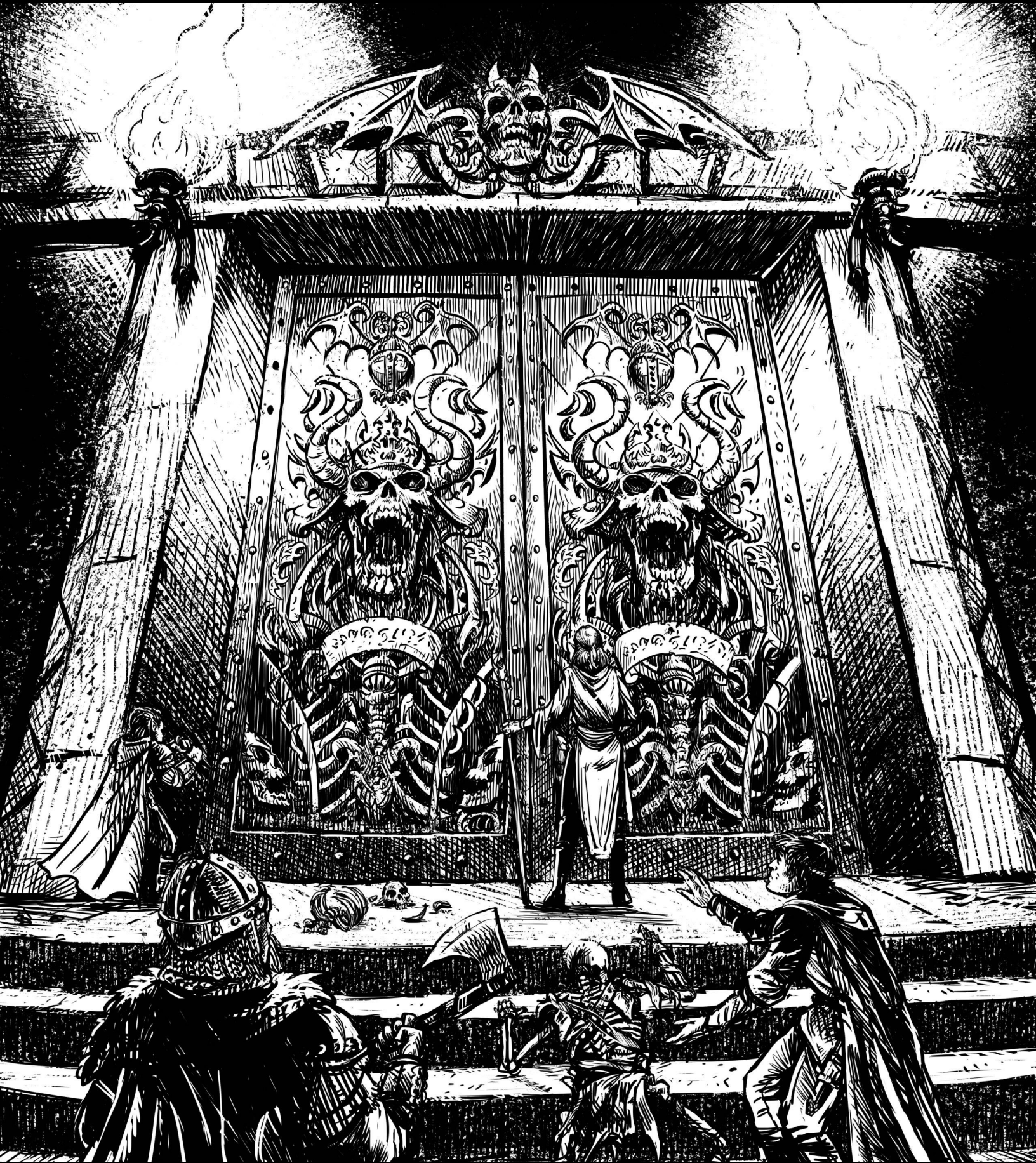
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