

LANGUARD: LOW CITY

The Low City is named both for its position below High City and for the low-born status of the folk dwelling therein.



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ABOUT THIS BOOK

This chapter presents more details of Languard's Low City. Use it in conjunction with the base chapter, *Languard: City of Adventure*, to design exciting adventures for your players. Subsequent chapters will detail the balance of Languard, including its other wards. When complete, *Languard: City of Adventure* will be available in hardback and soft cover as well as a compiled PDF.

Each month that we release a new chapter for *Languard: City of Adventure*, we also release a new Languard Backdrop set in that ward. Members of our Patreon campaign also get an exclusive mini-eventure set in the city. You can learn more at patreon.com/ragingswanpress.

ABOUT LANGUARD BACKDROPS

You are a GM, and you are busy. You want to write your own adventures, but don't have the time to start from scratch. And you don't want to use commercial modules. You want to make your campaign your own.

That's where the Languard Backdrop line comes in! Each Languard Backdrop presents a fully fleshed-out and lovingly detailed self-contained locale ready to use as you see fit. Stock the backdrop with smugglers, cultists, thieves or whatever best suits your campaign, decide their back story, and gather your players.

ABOUT MINI-EVENTURES

Mini-Eventures are perfect for GMs and players who enjoy roleplaying or who crave a change of pace from their characters' normal adventurous doings.

Each Mini-Eventure brings to life a specific locale—for example, the Drunken Sailor tavern, the Orc's Head inn or Kardagg's Discount Emporium—and presents easy-to-use, flavoursome lists designed to facilitate play and bring the place to life in your players' imagination.

LOW CITY AT A GLANCE

The name given to the bulk of Languard sprawling south of the Svart, the Low City is home to most of the city's populace. (Some use the name "Low City" in a derogatory fashion to refer to everything south of the Svart.) The Low City is named both for its position below High City and for the low-born status of the folk dwelling therein.

The Low City is not the worst part of Languard—the Shambles and Fishshambles fight for that distinction if one ignores the Wrecks and its odious inhabitants.

Those who escape the Shambles or Fishshambles but lack the funds to dwell in the nicer part of Low City end up in the swath of buildings between Warrior's Way and the southern wall. Here, the buildings are more substantial than in the Shambles, and some are even of stone. The wealthiest inhabitant of Low City have their homes on Cheap Street, Cross Street and the eastern stretch of Warrior's Way. Most such folk own businesses catering to the great unwashed's needs; all with ambition dream of making enough money to escape the stink of Low City for life across the Svart.



NOTABLE LOW CITY LOCATIONS

G1 Low Gate: Low Gate is always busy, choked with many carts piled high with trade goods flowing into and out of the city.

G3 Traitor's Gate: "Decorated" with the remains of traitors to the crown, Traitor's Gate is well named.

L1 Low Market: A bustling market fills this muddy space.

L2 Vonya's Span: Of dwarven craft—and reputedly haunted—Vonya's Span is the only bridge spanning the Svart.

L3 The Scythe: The one-legged Arvo Outila runs this drinking den, which is famed for its music.

L4 Arlo's Stones: Sullen and consumed with jealousy and anger against anyone better off than himself, the jeweller Arlo Itkonen is a sycophant and frustrated social climber.

L5 The Mixing Pot: Hidden in the lower basement of a nameless tenement, here rich brews are shared in merry (but odd) company. In this drinking den, social class and wealth are irrelevant.

L6 The Orc's Head: Notorious throughout the duchy as the haunt of adventurers preparing to dare Gloamhold's depths, the Orc's Head is a place of tall tales and hard drinking. Decent folk rarely venture inside.

L7 Laukkanen's Collectors: Raimo Laukkanen is ostensibly a dealer in manure—his four carts trundle about Languard day and night collecting the leavings of horses, residents' night soil and other foul things. Not all as it first seems—Raimo is also a prolific and skilled fence and smuggler with extensive links to the Shadow Masks.

L8 Marja's House of Sighs: Famed through the city—and also known as the Moaning Halls—for the pleasures to be had therein, Marja's House of Sighs is a popular destination for those seeking respite from their troubles.

L9 Hannu's House of Healing: Location trumps reputation, particularly when most clients are visitors to the city. Hannu's House of Healing is one of the first buildings inside the Traitor's Gate, and it advertises well.

L10 The Last Chance: In sight of the corpses swinging from Traitor's Gate crouches a tavern with a deep, shadowy porch furnished with scarred tables and a sign bearing a grinning skull with a die between its teeth.

L11 Sentinel Apartments: A series of small, semi-uniform houses line a small cobblestone street that leads to a tall tenement building.

L12 The White Tower: Here dwell the Esoteric Fellowship—a rival wizards' guild to the Sagacious Masters of the Eldritch Nexus; most of its members have little magical skill or talent.

T1 Fane of the Waves Eternal: Here, Serat's worshippers commune with the ocean's eternal glory.

NOTABLE STREETS & ROADS

Cheap Street: Wide enough for two carts, Cheap Street is one of Languard's main thoroughfares. During the day, the street is always busy. The name of the street (unsubtly) alludes to the quality and cost of goods and services available here.

Cross Street: Cross Street is one of the busiest in Languard, as it handles much of the traffic going to and from the docks from Low City. Also known as Carter's Way, carts and wagons are a common sight here. Businesses on Cross Street cater to travellers; taverns, inns and cartwrights are common here as are provisioners, outfitters and suchlike.

Warrior's Way: Those entering the city through Low Gate (location G1) with business in Low City take Warrior's Way to reach the Low Market and Vonya's Span. While pickpockets lurk among the crowds, ready to escape back into the Shambles with their prizes, the chances of being mugged or murdered on Warrior's Way are low. The watch, from their barracks at Low Gate and Traitor's Gate, maintains a strong presence on Warrior's Way.

NOTABLE LOCATIONS BY TYPE

CATHEDRALS, CHURCHES, & TEMPLES

Locale	NAME	NOTES
T1	Fane of the Waves Eternal	Temple (Serat) ^{1,2,4}

INNS, TAVERNS & FESTHALLS

Locale	NAME	NOTES
L3	The Scythe	Tavern (music)
L5	The Mixing Pot	Tavern
L6	The Orc's Head	Inn (adventurers) ¹
L10	The Last Chance	Tavern

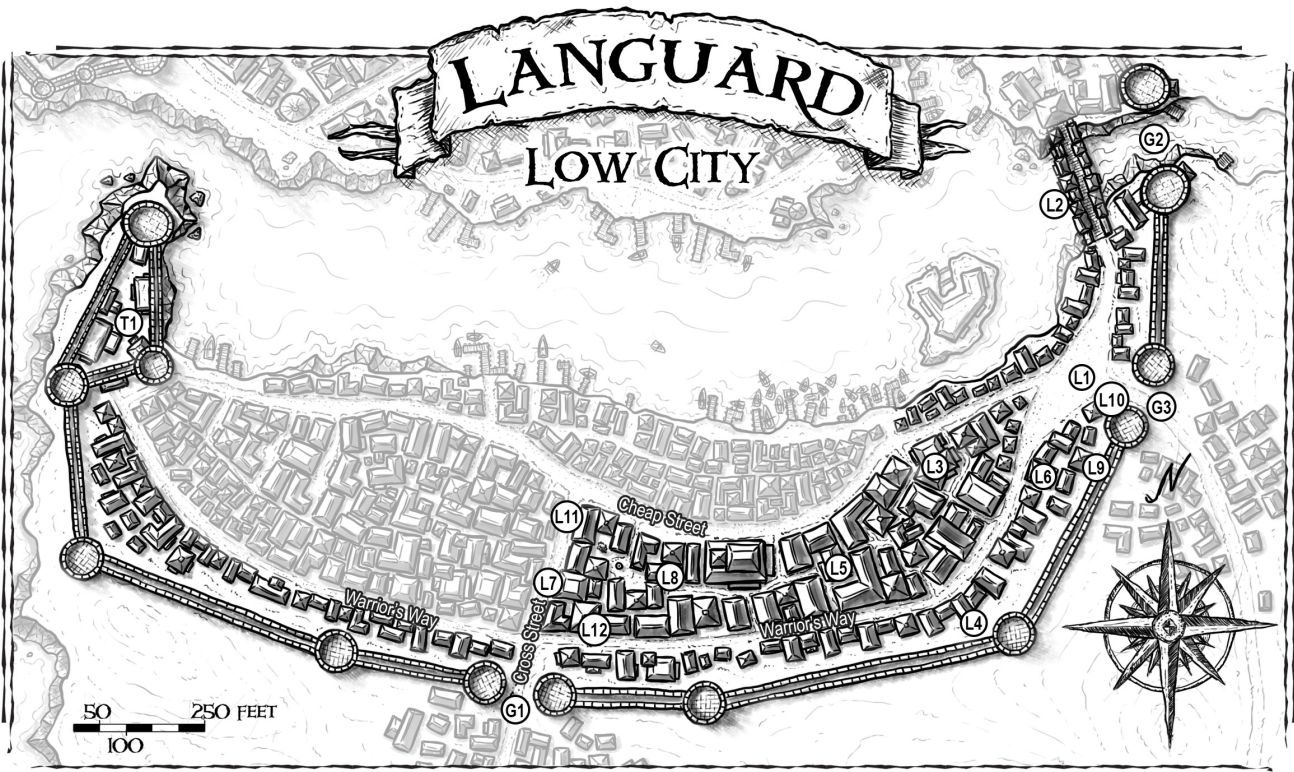
SHOPS, MARKETS AND SERVICES

Locale	NAME	NOTES
L1	Low Market	Market ^{1,2(?)}
L4	Arlo's Stones	Jeweller
L7	Laukkanen's Collectors	Dung collectors
L8	Marja's House of Sighs	Brothel
L9	Hannu's House of Healing	Healer ⁴

SAGES & WIZARDS

Locale	NAME	NOTES
L12	The White Tower	Minor wizard's guild ¹

1. This locale might be of interest to adventurers for one reason or another.
2. Magic items for sale can sometimes be found here.
3. Subterranean locale.
4. Offers healing services.



MINOR LOCALES IN LOW CITY

Low City features many notable and not-so-notable locales, such as shops, workshops, private homes and the like. Place minor locales wherever you deem appropriate.

1. **Grog's Grog:** Run by the half-orc Grog (N middle-aged male half-orc fighter 2), this dingy drinking den opens when the sun sinks below the horizon. Grog is a night-owl and is never seen by day. The common room smells of sweat, vomit, smoke and ale. Grog doesn't sell wine—that's for poncy elves and suchlike—and his customers don't truck with such things.
2. **Asikka's:** Stays open all night to cater for insomniacs and those preferring to be abroad at night. Asikka's seems to sell everything—everything cheap and low-quality, that is. This large shop fills an ill-lit cavernous warehouse whose shelves are piled high with everything a city dweller could want. Some believe the shop is a front for the Shadow Masks, and they'd be right.
3. **Rats and Parrots:** This lively tavern features nightly rat and dog fights and is home to a trio of elderly parrots purchased from a retired sea captain decades ago. The parrots are beloved of the locals and normally more than a little drunk. The parrots have a "colourful" vocabulary which they use loudly and often. Anyone hurting one of the trio is unlikely to escape this tavern without a fight.
4. **Keepers:** Keepers is a pawnbroker specialising in keeping items for long periods of time while charging relatively low interest rates. Much used by locals for its seemingly benign practices, Keepers is actually a cannily run business. Its owner, the elf, Felaern Naeven (NE male elf fighter 4/thief 5), takes the long-term view and knows he can earn much more money from long-term debt. In fact, some debts held by Keepers have been passed down through the generations. As a result, Felaern is fabulously wealthy (but hides it well). He revels in his local image as a kindly merchant, and he often laughs at his customers' expense.
5. **No Jobs:** Lights blaze at No Jobs through the night. Despite its name, shortened from No Job's Too Small, this business secures work for unskilled workers. Folk on a budget in need of cheap labour come to No Jobs at all times of the day and night. Small knots of workers lounge outside waiting for work. Some desperate souls literally sleep outside the shop. Only in the worst weather is the street outside deserted.
6. **Crumbled Towers:** Locally named Crumbled Towers for its faded and crumbled old-school grandeur, this large tenement building is semi-ruined. Currently under contested ownership, the situation within is chaotic. Many folk live at Crumbled Towers rent-free, and the place comes alive at night when all manner of nefarious folk come to conduct business.
7. **The Harpy's Nest:** This large premise is gloriously disorganised and abundantly stocked. Its windows are flung open to reveal the packed interior—shelves piled high with the mundane necessities of life in a city. This shop is busy.
8. **The Lady's Light:** Offering a vast array of candles, candlesticks and related items this chandlery is a popular shop. Its owner, Cecilia Valtari (LG old female human) is a devout Darlenite and several ornate wrought iron sun-decorations festoon her shop. Inside, the Lady's Light is hot and fragrant; Cecilia keeps many candles burning to showcase her work. She has a lucrative agreement with the clergy of the Watcher's Spire (location T4) to supply candles and the like.
9. **The Laughing Hydra:** A once beautiful, but now weatherworn, painting of a bard and a hydra marks this tavern. The hydra is depicted with all five heads thrown back, mouths wide open with mirth. The tavern's taproom is decorated with a riot of "authentic" adventurers' memorabilia. At the Laughing Hydra, the drinks are cheap and the atmosphere merry. Bards receive a warm welcome here.
10. **The Church Inn:** This inn was once a chapel dedicated to Melandia, the lesser goddess of fire, passion and love. Ironically, the chapel suffered a devastating fire several decades ago and fell into disuse. It's now a gloomy, quiet place where folk come to drink themselves insensate. The chapel's wide stone fire pit remains, and local legend speaks of its unknowable depth and of what lies buried amid the deep ash.
11. **The Flaming Anvil:** The clamour of metal on metal echoes from this blacksmith's workshop at all hours of the day. The owner, Ausk Tiera (N male half-orc fighter 2), is unpopular with his neighbours as a result. Still, Ausk's work is good and he is in much demand. The locals confidently assert he can fix almost anything. Always in need of extra coin, Ausk is happy to prioritise a wealthy adventurer's work over his more mundane tasks.
12. **Coin Alley:** Many tiny shops, little more than one-room family affairs, open onto this shadowed alleyway. The local shopkeepers pay the four survivors of a mercenary company a pittance to maintain order here and to deter shoplifters and troublemakers. Lanterns light the alley during the day. The shops on Coin Alley offer a wide range of mundane services, including a baker, a cobbler and the like. Vilutar Untamo (LG female human wizard 6) works from a cramped cellar shop that extends under the alley. In hiding from a powerful enemy, whom she won't name, she works as a scribe and fortuneteller.

FOLK OUT & ABOUT IN LOW CITY

While the characters are out and about in Low City, they may encounter one or more folk of interest.

1. **Vilppu Kokko** (CN male human thief 2) wanders the streets half-hoping for trouble and definitely hoping for a drink. Sadly, he is virtually penniless and thus, things are not going well. If the characters seem wealthy or naive, Vilppu offers to show them around—but such guiding is thirsty work...
2. **Auni Ihalempi** (N female human fighter 1) works at the Scythe (location L3). She patrols the streets looking for well-off customers to lure to the tavern; she gets a cut of what such customers spend and is very persuasive. She knows many people and hears lots of things; Auni, laden with street-smarts and contacts, is a useful person to know in Low City.
3. **Simo Himottu** (LN male human) works at the Father's Hall (location T2) and has dreams of one day joining the clergy as a cleric. Sadly, the boy is too cerebral for his "friends" and prone to bullying. When the characters encounter Simo, he is at the centre of a group of vicious street-children who are building themselves up to administer a savage and unnecessary beating.
4. **Lydia Kuningas** (CG female human ranger 2) hates being in Languard, but needs must. Her village—Woodridge—is beset by bandits, and Lydia is here to recruit mercenaries or adventurers to fight them off. The downside is this proud woodswoman has comparatively little coin to offer for the job; hence, she is in Low City looking for cheap mercenaries.
5. **Piri Tammi** (CN male human) fled to Languard from the plague-riddled village of Ashford. Unfortunately, for Piri, he did not flee quickly enough, and he is now quite ill. Reduced to begging on the street, he wears a baggy, concealing cloak and has a terrible, hacking cough. He tries to keep his distance from others but is desperate for coin—and a cure.
6. **Baril Ampuja** (NE female half-orc fighter 4) skulks about Low City, trying to look inconspicuous. Sadly, her lofty height and impressive physique make this difficult. Baril is a pirate from Deksport who fled here after a blood feud got out of hand. She has no plan beyond stealing enough to survive but does have a map purporting to show where a large pirate hoard is buried on a tidal island near the village of Hard Bay. She just needs a ship and a crew to help her retrieve the treasure.
7. **Helga Asikka** (CE female human wizard 5) plots to rescue her husband, Iisak Asikka (see "Whispers & Rumours #8). If she realises the party are also adventurers, she subtly sounds them out on joining her for her attempted rescue on Execution Day. (Her plan is to *fireball* the crowd as a distraction—she doesn't care who dies.) She thinks the party could make good patsies.

8. **Eeva Hirvi** (NG young female human thief 1) dreams of being an adventurer and of supporting her aged parents. The problem is she's afraid of the dark. If the party aren't going to Gloamhold, she tries to join them. If the party rebuff her, she sulks and spreads bad rumours about them and their trustworthiness.
9. **Juhani Ano** (LG male human cleric [Darlen] 3) searches Low City's busy streets for another acolyte struggling with the temptations of the flesh. Juhani is a fanatic and cleaves to the strictest interpretations of Darlen's teachings. He's in a bad mood and takes umbrage with one of the character's behaviour.
10. **Kauko Ihalempi** (N male human) sells bric-a-brac from a hand cart for his master, Heikki Ampuja. Heikki owns The Harpy's Nest ("Locales of Interest" #7) on Warrior's Way. He waxes lyrical about the shop's inventory—"everything you could possibly want". If the characters follow his recommendation to visit, they'll likely be sorely disappointed.
11. **Hilppa Mielo** (NG male human) aspires to be a great poet and has come to Low City to experience the lives of the peasant folk. The son of a wealthy merchant, he is naive and an easy mark for several bands of loitering thugs who have already spotted the well-dressed young man. Hilppa recognises the party as adventurers and follows them about in the hopes they'll do something heroic.
12. **Jaakko Ahti** (CN old male human) rants and raves from atop an empty barrel. He harangues the crowd about the inevitable end of the world and the coming time when "the stars are right". Jaakko is incurably insane and was once the servant of a wealthy merchant in High City. The merchant and her family dabble in occultism of the most dire sort, and Jaakko accidentally saw something that sent him mad. Unfortunately, he can't remember the name of the merchant he once served.



LOW CITY BY DAY

By day, Low City is a hive of activity. Comprising a large swath of the southern part of Languard, Low City houses much of the capital's population, and it is where many honest (and not so honest) artisans and merchants go about their business. The day's business begins as the sun's first rays caress the city's rooftops and ends when the sun drops below the Mottled Spire.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

While the characters are out and about in Low City during the day, one or more things from the list below may occur:

1. **The Crush:** The streets are filled with people. In some places, the crush is intense, and the party's progress slows to a crawl. Many of the other people on the street are distracted or irate.
2. **Curse the Wind:** A strong, northerly wind whistles through the streets, blowing up dust, leaves and rubbish. It tears at folks' clothes, and the temperature drops precipitously. Dark clouds, pregnant with rain, on the horizon rush toward Languard.
3. **Woman, Accosted:** An attractive woman, Lusía Vesivalo (CN female huma), wearing revealing clothes, lounges casually against a wall opposite a tavern. A drunk man staggers out of the tavern and across the road. She smiles widely at his approach, but he grabs her roughly by the arm before dragging her into an alley.
4. **Dogs:** Two stray dogs nose about in the mouth of a shadowy alley. Suddenly, both bolt into the busy street. A character wise in nature's ways can tell that something in the alley scared the dogs.
5. **The Watch, Aboard:** Four members of the watch patrol the street. Their equipment is threadbare, and their morale is low. Here to act as a deterrent, they only make the minimum effort to stop thievery and the like. None will risk their lives.
6. **Manure Cart:** A cart piled high with manure edges its way along the street. Anyone who can give the foul-smelling, filthy cart a wide berth.
7. **Broken Wagon:** A wagon blocks the street; it is missing one wheel, and traffic is snarled up both behind and in front. The teamster, Esko Toivio (N middle-aged male human), is vainly trying to reattach the wheel but cannot do it on his own. He is grateful for any help and relates one rumour from "Whispers & Rumours" in thanks.
8. **Stop, Thief:** Cries of "Stop Thief!" precede the sudden arrival of a skinny urchin clutching a loaf of bread. The young boy, Heikki Vaania (CN young male human thief 1), rushes past the party. Two members of the watch are in lacklustre pursuit.
9. **Drunken Warrior:** A drunken warrior, Joosef Uljas (N male human fighter 3), staggers into a character. He then vomits copiously. Joosef is morose. Just yesterday, a rival stole a treasure map from him. The map shows the location of a hidden hoard buried on one of Hard Bay's many nameless isles. If the characters seem sympathetic, Joosef offers to split the hoard with them if they help retrieve the map and find the treasure.
10. **To the Moaning Halls:** A street urchin, Edvard Ihamuoto (N young male human), approaches the party. He works for Marja Sianio, who owns Marja's House of Sighs (location L8). Edvard gets a copper for every customer he lures to the establishment. His knowledge of "adult matters" is surprisingly comprehensive, and his language is foul.
11. **Beggars:** Realising the characters are adventurers and, therefore, wealthy beyond the norm, a ragtag group of beggars gather about the party and follow them around, begging for aid and spare coins.
12. **Rakes:** Three men lounge outside a low-class tavern, swilling ale. All wear light armour and bear a rapier or short sword. They watch the passing townsfolk intensely. Perhaps they are bored, or perhaps they are waiting for their next victim to present themselves.
13. **Hustle and Bustle:** The street is alive with folk going about their business. Several street vendors hawk their wares filling handcarts, while beggars reach out their hands imploringly for spare coins. A few stray dogs dart about while, here and there, street children play in the mud and the shadows.
14. **Laughing Children:** Two laughing children, clad in ragged clothes, chase a mud-splattered mongrel through the streets.
15. **Staggering Labourers:** Two men stagger along carrying a large, battered and obviously empty barrel between them. They are swearing and cursing at each other, and other passersby must dodge out of their way.
16. **Odd-Looking Mud:** The reddish brown mud at the mouth of a narrow alley is slippery and viscous. Examination reveals that it is actually a mixture of blood, mud, and animal entrails.
17. **Dishevelled Cryer:** A middle-aged man wearing a rumpled tunic and carrying a handbell moves through the throng, shouting that the "famed and incomparable" halfling bard Dricolen Nimblefinger is playing at the Scythe tonight (location H9).
18. **Cart Unloading:** A cart is drawn up outside a shop, and workers are offloading heavy boxes and crates. The cart part-blocks the road.
19. **Dark Clouds:** A bank of dark clouds passes over the city, plunging the area into cold, deep shade.
20. **Chamberpot:** Without warning, someone empties a chamber pot into the street from a third-storey window. They aren't looking at what they are doing, and one of the characters could be deluged in foul-smelling waste.

LOW CITY BY NIGHT

Low City comes alive at night when its denizens down tools to eat, drink and rest. All manner of inns, taverns and the like serve coin-poor locals and visiting travellers. Thieves lurk in dark alleyways while heavily cowled nobles and merchants wander the streets in search of lowbrow entertainment. Opportunities and threats are rife in Low City after dark.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

While the characters are out and about in Low City at night, one or more things from the list below may occur:

1. **Busy:** The street is busy with folk engaged in nocturnal activities. Pickpockets work the area, and the characters may be targeted if they appear wealthy, gullible, or naive. Such crimes are opportunistic, and none of the local thieves wants to fight the characters.
2. **Shouted Argument:** The sounds of a shouted argument filter onto the street through an upper-storey window of a nearby house. A man and a woman seem to be arguing, and the sounds of things breaking and smashing soon join the shouting match.
3. **The Watch:** A large watch patrol—eight strong—drags a battered and bruised manacled man along the street. Dried blood mats the man's scalp and dirty leather armour. He is barely conscious.
4. **Stray Dog:** A mongrel puppy scavenges among the filth at the mouth of an alley. The dog is hungry and eagerly accepts any scraps of food. If treated well, it follows the party around.
5. **Lady of the Night:** A scantily clad woman leans against the wall at the mouth of an alley. She has a welcoming smile, but a closer look reveals her eyes are strangely glazed over. Nearby, a burly leather-clad tough keeps an eye on her.
6. **Suddenly Quiet:** The street is suddenly empty, as if Low City's denizens have sensed the presence of impending danger and made themselves scarce.
7. **Weird Lights:** The flickering lights of candles or lamps fill most nearby windows. One narrow garret window, however, is different. From within, strange flashes and swirls of muted colour leak into the night air. Clearly, some sorcery is afoot within the cramped attic.
8. **Band of Toughs & Rakes:** A small group of hard-looking men and women stand on a street corner. They talk in low voices and watch passersby. Several of the group are drinking from wine flasks; all are armed with rapier, short sword or the like.
9. **Beggars Begging:** Two cloaked figures slump against the wall. They hold out wooden bowls and beg passersby for spare coin. The beggars could be nothing more than they seem, informants for the Shadow Masks or the lookouts for a gang engaged in nearby criminal activity.
10. **On the Roof:** A dark shadow flits along the roofline overlooking the street. A perceptive character spots the figure leap across an alleyway. The figure slips and drops the bag they are carrying. It lands in the alley with a muted clatter. Characters investigating the bag find the thieves' loot—a few choice items could even set the heroes on the path to their next adventure.
11. **Strange Sounds:** A thumping sound followed by a groan and a clatter issues from a shadow-shrouded alley. Other passersby ignore the sound. This could be the sound of a mugging, or it could be a trap to lure a do-gooder into the shadowy alley.
12. **Hidden Horror:** As #5 in "What's Going On?", but there is no nearby tough to keep an eye on the lady. In fact, the lady of the night is dead—her body is the shell controlled by an intellect devourer seeking a more desirable host.
13. **Performing Bard:** A bard stands in a small circle of candles. He has a good voice and is singing softly to the crowd of folk gathered around him. A perceptive character spots several pickpockets working the crowd.
14. **Howling Dog:** The mournful howl of a dog reaches the characters' ears. The howling is coming from the depths of a nearby shadowy alleyway.
15. **Staggering Drunk:** A drunk, wearing filthy clothing, staggers along, singing quietly to himself. The man is a merry drunk, but one drink short of unconsciousness; he is essentially incoherent if engaged in conversation.
16. **Homeward Bound:** A weary peasant wends his way home through the murk. He carries a small sack over one shoulder. A stray dog sniffs through a pile of discarded rubbish nearby.
17. **Deep Shadows:** Here, the shadows are deep and dark—the buildings on either side of the alley practically touch their opposite number high above the street.
18. **Lurking Figures:** Shadowy figures lurk in the mouth of a nearby alley. If the characters obviously spot them, the lurkers slip away into the alley's deeper recesses. Any character observing the trio can easily determine that they are "lurking with intent".
19. **Desperate Fight:** A scream, followed by the brief clatter of blade on blade, echoes from a narrow and dingy side alley. If the characters investigate, they find a leather-clad man bleeding to death on the ground. The man's pouch is missing, and without help, he will surely die. (Depending on the man's identity and what the thieves stole from him, this could be the hook into the characters' next adventure.)
20. **Chamberpot:** Without warning, someone empties a chamber pot into the street from a third-storey window. They aren't looking at what they are doing, and one of the characters could be deluged in foul-smelling waste.

LOW CITY WHISPERS & RUMOURS

Characters out and about in Low City may overhear or learn some of the rumours (which may or may not be true) below:

1. **Bats:** Great swarms of bats have been seen flying over Low City of late. The common folk whisper of vampires or other dark, sorcerous doings, attracting the nocturnal hunters and wonder what this portends for their families.
2. **Low Market is the Place:** If you are looking for a bargain, Low Market (location L1) is the place. Overlooked treasures can sometimes be found among the market's bric-a-brac stalls. Every month or so, an adventurer claims to have found a minor magical item, treasure map or the like at the market.
3. **Haunted Bridge:** Vonya's Span (location L2) is haunted by the alcoholic spirit of the dwarf who built it long ago. Thrill-seekers and the like often hang around the bridge at night in hopes of catching sight of Vonya's spirit. Many theories circulate about why her spirit haunts the span; some—inevitably—speak of hidden passages in the bridge's piers and structure and of the lost, glittering treasures hidden therein.
4. **The Famed Dricolen Nimblefingers:** Dricolen Nimblefinger (N male middle-aged halfling) plays mid-week at the Scythe (location L3). There is no better singer in all Languard! (This is a controversial view—one held exclusively by the Scythe's regulars, who are bafflingly loyal to their beloved diminutive singer.)
5. **The Orc's Head:** Adventurers visit the Orc's Head (location L6) to meet more of their ilk. The place's proprietor is a retired adventurer who can tell his fair share of Gloamhold stories. The Orc's Head is a cheap, raucous place. Here, brawls are relatively commonplace—but rarely deadly.
6. **Executions:** One day every month, the normal commerce of Low Market is interrupted for Execution Day. Many see Execution Day as a public holiday, and hundreds converge on Low Market to witness the prisoners' final gruesome moments—pedlars sell their wares, beggars beg for coin, and an almost carnival-like atmosphere fills the air. It's a great day out!
7. **Missing Beggars:** There are fewer beggars about than normal. Some think this is a good thing, others wonder at their disappearance and worry about what it portends.
8. **Looking Forward to Execution Day:** Execution day this month should be a cracker. Adventurers have been busy, and captured several bandits who will meet their gruesome fate as entertainment for—and a warning to—the commonfolk. The adventurer Iisak Asikka (NE male human fighter 4) will also meet his doom. He killed two members of the watch, resisting arrest after a barroom brawl at the Orc's Head (location L6). The best place to watch the executions is from the porch of the Last Chance tavern (location L10).
9. **Sell Your Stones:** If you've got poor-quality jewellery or gems to sell, Arlo Itkonen at Arlo's Stones (location L4) is the person to see. He's tight and generally untrusting of others, but his gold is good.
10. **Strange Rituals:** Sometimes, the Esoteric Fellowship (location 12) enact strange and dramatic rituals atop their "tower". No one knows what this wizard's guild is up to, but their rituals are certainly a spectacle!
11. **Joining the Mixing Pot:** If you can find it and get in, the subterranean Mixing Pot (location L5) is a great place to drink and meet people from every walk of life. You have to be a member, though.
12. **Discreet Relaxation:** Marja's House of Sighs (location L8), also known as the Moaning Halls, is a fabulous, discreet place to relax. Many pleasures, legal and illegal, can be had therein.
13. **Brave Sailors:** Adventurers seeking a brave fisherfolk or sailor to transport them across Hard Bay to the ruins of Greystone village or Gloamhold's benighted depths often visit the Fane of the Waves Eternal (location T1) or the Fishshamble's Drunken Sailor tavern (location F2).
14. **Avoid the House of Healing:** If you value your health and life, avoid the House of Healing (location L9). Its owner, Hannu Aalto, is as likely to make matters worse as to heal you. Either way, he charges up front!
15. **Missing Bodies:** After an execution day, Traitor's Gate (location G3) is festooned with the remains of those punished for their crimes and those doomed to linger in agony until their vitality fails. Sometimes, body parts—or entire bodies—go missing. Some gossips blame macabre souvenir hunters, while others suspect necromancers or their minions.
16. **Easily-Bribed Guards:** Most of the guards at Low Gate (location G1) are easily bribed to look the other way. If you've got contraband to bring into the city, Low Gate is the best gate to use—unless its strict sergeant-at-arms is about; then, avoid the place like the plague!
17. **Plague:** Many people are looking unwell and coughing a lot at the moment. The plague might be in Languard, and if it is, Low City, Shambles and Fishshambles are the places it will savage the most.
18. **Shadow Masks are Everywhere:** Watch where and to whom you display your wealth in the Low City. The Shadow Masks have many agents and informants in the area. Many adventurers have had their possessions stolen—some are mugged after one too many ales, while others find their rooms ransacked after returning from a carouse.
19. **Getting Lost:** The Low City is somewhere you can easily lose yourself. It's also a dangerous place, but not as dangerous as the Shambles or the Wrecks.
20. **Ailing Stormlord:** Stormlord Taneli Eronen grows increasingly old and frail. He hasn't been seen outside the Fane of the Waves Eternal (location T1) for months. Rumour is that he'll soon take his last voyage.

NOTABLE LOW CITY LOCATIONS

G1: LOW GATE

Heavily garrisoned gate, but many on duty are easily bribed

Named for its proximity to the Low City and—not ironically—its elevation, Low Gate is the least, but widest, of Languard's gates. The rich and the powerful must have a spectacularly good reason to pass through this battered, traffic-choked portal, which is wide enough to fit two carts abreast.

Much of the traffic going to and from the docks via Cross Street flows through Low Gate. Cross Street is one of Languard's busiest—and for the unwary, most dangerous—thoroughfares. Here, the danger of being crushed beneath the wheels of a carelessly driven wagon is higher than anywhere else in the city.

Low Gate is heavily garrisoned, but the sad truth is that many of those on duty here are easily bribed, in the employ of the Shadow Masks or even fully-fledged members of the thieves' guild.

NOTABLE FOLK

- **Elina Keto, Sergeant-at-Arms** (LN female human fighter 3) oversees the day garrison and has chambers in Low Gate itself. Frustrated by the rampant toll evasion she is certain goes on at the gate, she is often exhausted as she insists on watching over as many transactions as possible. Several of her subordinates hate her—their extra pay suffers from her vigilance—and they plot against her.
- **Pia** (N female half-elf thief 1) hangs around Low Gate in hopes of casual work. She stands to profit by dint of her heritage; with the ability to see in the dark far better than any human, she often secures work as a night guard for merchants forced to store their goods in one of the nearby warehouses that rent space by the day. Inherently honest, this waif and stray is, however, easily distracted.
- **Teuvo Aalto** (N male human fighter 2/thief 1) believes society requires laws to function, but he is not a fan of authority. Part of Low Gate's night watch, Teuvo is easily bribed to look the other way as long as no law (beyond toll or tax evasion) is broken. He uses his bribes to support the operation of a small orphanage tucked away deep in the Shambles.

HOOKS

- **An Arresting Bribe:** As "Bribe Me", but if the characters pay the bribe, Elina Keto pounces and arrests both the party and the guard.
- **Bribe Me:** After a successful adventure, the party approaches the Low Gate laden with loot. A guard unsobly offers to look the other way and not investigate their goods too carefully in return for a small bribe.
- **Disturbance:** A small-time merchant has tried to sneak contraband goods through the gate. Caught by Elina Keto after he bribed another guard, the man makes a run for it. If the characters stop him, they earn Elina's thanks and, perhaps, her trust.

G3: TRAITOR'S GATE

Grisly reminders of the duke's authority decorate this gate

Named for the corpses—or bits of corpses—often hung from its parapets and walls, Traitor's Gate serves as a grisly reminder of the duke's absolute authority over the duchy. Those with nefarious intent—particularly smugglers and thieves—prefer to enter the city elsewhere.

Most people who enter Languard on foot do so through Traitor's Gate. Here, the Great South Road linking the city to the duchy proper merges with the hustle and bustle of the Low Market (a tangled confusion of stalls, pedestrians, wagons and roving pedlars).

Two towers and a stoutly reinforced gatehouse comprise Traitor's Gate. The towers—each fifty feet high—provide excellent views over the surrounding area and are always manned by vigilant watchers. Traitor's Gate is the busiest of Languard's gates and is thus the most heavily guarded. The guards here let the vast majority of visitors pass unmolested once they have paid the Gate Tax. Suspicious or aggressive individuals, however, face greater scrutiny and perhaps even an interview with Ennui Markku, the sergeant-at-arms, before being permitted entry.

Beggars and street urchins cluster just beyond Traitor's Gate, hoping for a coin from generous travellers or to—perhaps—secure work as a guide.

NOTABLE FOLK

- **Irja** (CN young female human thief 1) lingers at the gate in the hope of securing work as a guide. Grubby and skinny, she works for the Shadow Masks and marks those who might be worth mugging or robbing. Trapped in her life through a combination of poverty and misplaced loyalty to her handler, she is thinking of fleeing Languard to start a new life.
- **Onni Markku** (LN middle-aged male human fighter 2) delights in following the letter of the law—the more obscure the law, the better. A jobsworth, he revels in the power he has over those trying to enter the city. Onni has risen to the rank of Sergeant-at-Arms, not because of his social skills—in truth, he lacks all such skills—but through his almost unrivalled ability to levy taxes.

HOOKS

- **Disagreeable Sergeant:** Onni Markku takes a dislike to a character and subjects them to a rigorous search and interview. He has a good memory and bedevils the character whenever they again meet. The sergeant could be unwittingly in the employ of some sinister master or could just enjoy bringing adventurers down a peg or two.
- **Shadow Masks Trap:** One of the urchins working the gate is in the Shadow Masks' employ. He tries to manoeuvre the characters to a Shadow Mask haunt where they can be thoroughly robbed.

L1: LOW MARKET

Sprawling hodgepodge of stalls, rife with thievery

Sprawling across a swath of hard-packed earth (or cloying mud, depending on the season) Low Market is a hodgepodge of stalls, handcart vendors and wandering pedlars. Here, Languard's unwashed masses browse, shop and gossip. Many people work or visit Low Market; except during the most atrocious weather, the place is packed.

Unsurprisingly, thievery is rife in Low Market, and the Watch maintains a strong presence. Unfortunately, due to the crush of people in the market during the day, their efforts are often sadly unsuccessful. By local ordinance, all business in the market must be concluded by dusk; thus, once night has fallen, the place is seemingly empty. However, not all is as it seems, for many clandestine meetings are convened here at night; some come to drink, others are merely passing through, while some tented stalls host prostitutes; others become the temporary home of beggars and outcasts.

Low Market's stalls almost uniformly deal with the mundane things in life—food, drink, household wares, cloth and so on. Little of actual value is sold here, except—perhaps—among the bric-a-brac stalls whereon desperate folk sell whatever they can to make ends meet. Sometimes, unbeknownst to these folk, valuable items come into their possession, which they pass on for a pittance. Thus, adventurers often idly browse such stalls—stories (perhaps spread by the vendors)—are rife with lucky adventurers buying magic items here for almost nothing from clueless sellers.

NOTABLE FOLK

- **Asta Ojanen** (N female human thief 2) ostensibly sells weak wine to thirsty shoppers from the handcart she trundles through the crowds. She doesn't ply her thievish skills in the market—it's hard to make a quick getaway with a wheelbarrow. Instead, she deals in rumours, and for an extra silver, she can tell of minor events of local import. For gold, she might be able to relate more notable whispers of interest to adventurous types.
- **Riku Eerola** (LN male human) just purchased a rug for his home, but he stupidly neglected to get the merchant to include delivery in the price. Thus, now dangerously low on funds, he is forced to try to carry it home on his own. The rug is long and unwieldy; his passage through the crowds presages a chorus of shouting and swearing. Riku is angry—both with himself and the merchant who sold the rug. He's desperate for help but can't pay anything. He can, however, introduce the characters to his sister, Armi, a minor wizard (NG female human wizard 3).

HOOK

- **Adventures Abound:** Perhaps a character is pickpocketed or intervenes in a crime. Alternatively, they could purchase a fragment of a treasure map or a diary of an adventurer describing several delves into Gloamhold.

L2: VONYA'S SPAN

A ghostly alcoholic dwarf haunts Languard's only bridge

The only bridge spanning the Svart, Vonya's Span—or "the Span" as it is colloquially known—is a prominent city landmark. Comprising three great stone arches, it stands at the point where the Svart widens on its journey toward the sea. It marks the spot beyond which ocean-going vessels cannot pass.

A towering gatehouse stands at the bridge's northern end. This gate is shut in times of crisis or danger. Typically, however, it remains open but is always protected by the Watch, who maintain a small garrison here.

The bridge is 25 feet wide, but buildings cluster on both sides of the street, reducing the usable carriageway to barely 15 feet wide. Housing shops at street level and cantilevered out over the Svart for an extra ten feet or so, these buildings reach three stories or more into the air. A chokepoint, Vonya's Span is one of Languard's busiest streets. It is barely wide enough for two carts to pass side-by-side. Sometimes, traffic becomes snarled here, and chaos results.

Vonya's span is named for Vonya Madann—the alcoholic dwarven stonemason responsible for its construction. A companion of Arndul Nenonen—the wandering adventurer who founded Ashlar almost 600 years ago—she was as skilled as she was troubled. The bridge is of stout, dwarven design and construction. Although it is over four centuries old and one of the oldest structures in the city, it is in excellent condition. Despite this, some say the bridge is haunted by its architect's capricious shade. Vonya disappeared—tragically—one night while crossing the bridge. Local legend has it her ghost wanders the bridge on the anniversary of her disappearance—but as no-one can agree on the anniversary's actual date, any strange events on the bridge tend to get blamed on Vonya's restless spirit.

BUSINESSES ON THE SPAN

The businesses clustering on the Span are almost all uniformly successful and busy—the sheer volume of traffic on the bridge virtually guarantees this. Most deal with normal, mundane needs: refreshments, clothes, shoes and the like.

HOOKS

- **Carts Crash:** Two carts get entangled when something spooks one of the horses. The cargo from one of the carts—a cord or more of firewood—tumbles onto the bridge, further adding to the chaos and disruption. As the carters argue, the characters hear one of them blaming "the ghost" for their horse being spooked.
- **I Saw the Ghost:** One of the characters overhears two townsfolk chatting animatedly. One of the pair loudly proclaims that she saw Vonya's ghost just last night "in this very spot."
- **The Crush:** Crowds throng the bridge, slowing movement to a crawl. While waiting to move forward, one of the characters spots something interesting in a shop window. Could this lead to the group's next adventure?

L3: THE SCYTHE

Tavern renowned for its cheap drinks and music

A stylised sign of an oversized scythe cutting through an ankle spurting a ridiculous amount of blood marks this semi-reputable establishment. The one-legged Arvo Outila has run the Scythe for the last 15 years, buying the place after he suffered a horrendous accident on his farm. This is a place to drink (copiously) and listen to music.

The tavern has a narrow frontage but extends back a surprisingly long way. Steps lead down into the common room, which is dingy and often smoke-filled. A bar runs down one wall, and steps lead down to another large room. The lower common room is popular with those seeking privacy—illicit lovers, thieves planning their next job and perhaps adventurers plotting their next quest.

The Scythe is renowned for its live performances. The upper common room has a small stage which hosts performances, some of dubious quality, most evenings. Mid-week sees the “famed” halfling bard Dricolen Nimblefinger (N male middle-aged halfling) take to the stage. Bafflingly, Dricolen has a devoted following amongst the locals; when he performs, the Scythe is packed.

Many regulars drink at the Scythe. They include Berig Many-Belly (male dwarf), Calum (male human), Danil Farwander (female halfling), Elarik Swiftwind (male elf), Hard Armbreaker (male half-orc), Garrow (male human), Parg (young female half-orc) and Skaar (male half-orc).

TARIFF

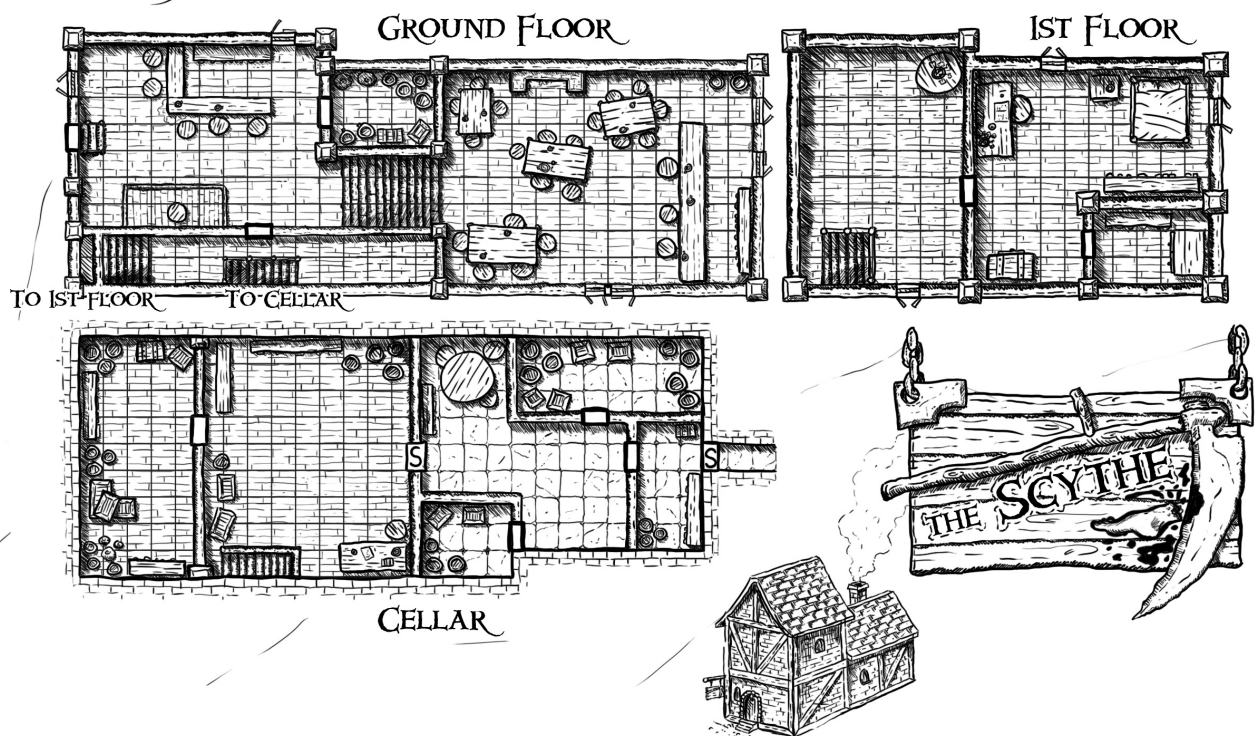
- **Drink:** Ale (flagon) 8 cp, spiced wine (flagon) 3 sp, wine (flagon) 2 sp.

NOTABLE FOLK

- **Anafa Goodwater** (NG female halfling thief 2) blames herself for her companions’ deaths—she is the only survivor of a disastrous expedition to Gloamhold. Yet young, Anafa has already retired from adventuring. She is cheerful and light-fingered but only pilfers a few coins from those too drunk to notice.
- **Arva Outila** (N old male human) hops dextrously about on his one leg. Arva owns the place and works most nights. He is long-haired and friendly but a little morose; when deep in his cups, he bemoans the accident that cost him his leg.
- **Delthur Elduum** (N male dwarf fighter 3) serves as the tavern’s only (occasionally needed) bouncer. He is immensely fat and is typically by the front door nursing a cup of spiced wine. He is surprisingly perceptive and intelligent for a dwarf and sees all that goes on.

HOOK

- **Dricolen Sings:** The unfeasibly popular Dricolen Nimblefingers is playing. The tavern is packed, and during one song, a character feels someone slipping a tiny hand into their coin pouch.



L4: ARLO'S STONES

Low-class jeweller with aspirations above his station

Sullen and consumed with jealousy and anger towards anyone better off than himself, the jeweller Arlo Itkonen is a sycophant and frustrated social climber. A fixture of Low City, his heavily fortified shop is often sought out by adventurers selling their low-value loot.

Arlo's Stones has been broken into repeatedly over the years. Every new break-in spurs Arlo to invest in more and more security. He constantly complains of the cost of maintaining "his defences" and is perhaps one of the least trusting souls an adventurer is ever likely to encounter.

Arlo's shop is on the ground floor of an old, narrow building overlooking Warrior's Way. He has a heavily protected salesroom, workshop and vault in the cellar. (Here also dwell his gnomish workers). Arlo lives on the second floor of the building; the third floor is empty and abandoned due to a roof that periodically leaks (and which Arlo cannot afford to repair).

Arlo employs two gnomes—sisters—Leneal and Ural to craft the tawdry jewellery he sells to Low City's denizens.

NOTABLE FOLK

- **Arlo Itkonen** (LN old male human) suffers from delusions of grandeur and is angry at his lot in life. He is a frustrated social climber, for folk of quality do not patronise his shop. He craves the attention of Languard's great and good, but instead must make do with adventurers selling their loot and poor folk difficult to separate from their scarce coin.
- **Leneal Owaen** (N female gnome thief 2) crafts jewellery and maintains the shop's locks and other defences. She is cheerful and loves city life—there is so much to see, do and "acquire". She doesn't steal from Arlo, though, as she knows it would anger Ural.
- **Ural Owaen** (N female gnome illusionist 2) loves, bafflingly, Arlo. A skilled gemcutter and jeweller, she could easily set up her own business. She can't be bothered with the nitty-gritty of running a business, though, and is content with her lot.

HOOKS

- **A Hard Bargain:** Adventurers off-loading loot discover Arlo drives a hard bargain and isn't interested in stones worth more than about 20 gp (mainly because he won't be able to sell them on).
- **Sell to Arlo:** While drinking with another adventurer, a character learns that Arlo's Stones is a good place to quickly sell low-quality gems and jewellery.
- **Thieving Gnome:** The characters witness Leneal committing a minor crime while they are out and about. If they follow her, she unwittingly leads them back to the shop (which might give the impression Arlo's Stones is a thieves' den).

L5: THE MIXING POT

Here, social class and wealth matter not

Hidden in the second basement of a nameless tenement, rich brews are shared in merry (but unusual) company. Here, finely dressed aristocrats rub shoulders with street urchins and scum. This is the Mixing Pot, where social class and wealth do not apply. While no self-respecting gentleman or lady would be seen in these halls, many newly wealthy seek a return to their roots, which only the Mixing Pot can bring.

The Mixing Pot is dark, smoky and crowded, but the immense tavern easily holds 200 people. For a venue of its size, however, it is strangely quiet. Little rises above the low murmur of talk and clatter of mugs. Loud entertainment would risk the clandestine nature of the tavern.

To the discerning eye, details set the Mixing Pot apart from other Low City taverns. Unmarked paintings line the walls, recognisable as masterpieces only to connoisseurs. The sconces are burnt silver instead of copper. The glassware is actually fine crystal. The wealth hidden in every corner thrills the rich and poor alike and only solidifies the tavern's aura of exclusivity to those "in the know".

TARIFF

- **Drink:** Thin ale 6 cp, thin wine (pitcher) or dark beer 3 sp.
- **Food:** Hearty meal (eel and eggs, cheese [fondue], cow ribs and bread) 1 gp, light meal (vegetables [fried] and chicken) 3 sp.
- **Membership:** Variable cost, depending on what the prospective member can afford.

NOTABLE FOLK

- **Emma Kurtti** (LE female human thief 3) brings criminals together for certain jobs. She sits in the corner, flanked by hired thugs, smoking a cigar.
- **Irma "The Stink"** (CN female human fighter 1) wandered into the Mixing Pot on the heels of a patron and hasn't wandered out since.
- **Joonas Filn** (CN male human) worked his way up from fisherman to owner of a small fleet of vessels. Though he lives in High City, he cannot stand snobbery.
- **Rikhard Laminen** (N male human) works as the head bartender. Once a charismatic butler for a wealthy family, Rikhard was recommended to the Mixing Pot by a well-connected friend.

HOOKS

- **Let Me In:** A born and raised socialite, Arlo Isotalo (CN middle-aged male human) with no ties to Low City wants to join Low City's most exclusive club. He'll pay virtually any price for membership, even if nobody wants him there.
- **Who Owns the Mixing Pot?** The identity of the Mixing Pot's mysterious owner is a matter of some conjecture among the regulars and is the subject of much discussion in the taproom.

L6: THE ORC'S HEAD

Famed inn popular with adventurers and their hangers-on

Cut from a chunk of local limestone and set above the inn's front door, the luridly carved face of an orc identifies this place as the infamous Orc's Head.

At the Orc's Head, the drink is cheap, the music loud, and the customers (often) drunk. It is a raucous place; brawls are not uncommon. Notorious throughout the duchy as the haunt of adventurers preparing to dare Gloamhold's depths, the Orc's Head is a place of tall tales and hard drinking. Decent, respectable folk rarely venture inside. The Shadow Masks dare to operate—cautiously—here, but, in the main, limit their activities to information gathering.

The tavern's proprietor, Einar Salonen, was once an adventurer. A giant of a man standing almost six and a half feet tall, Einar was a mighty warrior in his prime. Now, inactivity and too much drinking have robbed him of his physique. He is still strong, though, and it is a brave—or spectacularly drunk—customer who risks his ire.

TARIFF

- **Food & Drink:** Meal (cold sausages, hard cheese and bread) 3 sp, ale 4 cp, wine (pitcher) 2 sp.
- **Accommodation:** Two-bed chamber 10 sp/night, four-bed chamber 20 sp/night, taproom 2 sp/night.
- **Lifestyle:** Characters can enjoy a modest lifestyle (1 gp/day) sleeping in the taproom or a comfortable lifestyle (2 gp/day) sharing a room. A character taking a room for themselves doubles their lifestyle cost.

NOTABLE FOLK

- **Einar Salonen** (N middle-aged male human fighter 5) owns the Orc's Head. He is gregarious, welcoming and relaxed about his customers' "high spirits"; he doesn't mind the occasional brawl as long as no one is seriously hurt and nothing valuable is broken. He is popular with his customers but not beloved of the city watch, who see the Orc's Head as a perennial trouble spot.
- **Venla Salonen** (N middle-aged female human fighter 3) possesses a ready wit and sardonic eyes. This capable woman is the love of Einar's life; woe betide any who threaten or harass her, as Einar—and several regulars—immediately step in—not that she normally needs help.
- **Urdeanna Karle** (NG female gnome) runs the kitchen and is a good, but sadly too imaginative and experimental, cook. She loves the bustle of the Orc's Head. With long, bright blue hair, she is hard to miss.

HOOKS

- **Brawl!** A brawl breaks out, and many locals enthusiastically participate. (The fracas is cover for the theft of an adventuring group's map of their recent Gloamhold exploration.)
- **Meet Like-Minded Folk:** Those seeking to join or create an adventuring company often visit the Orc's Head.

L7: LAUKKANEN'S COLLECTORS

This dung collector is a skilled fence and smuggler

Raimo Laukkanen is ostensibly a dealer in manure—his four carts trundle about Languard day and night collecting the leavings of horses, residents' night soil and other foul things—but not all as it first seems. His workers—a dirty collection of foul-smelling, surly, and often shunned people—are collectively known as "Raimo's Shovelers."

Raimo is a prolific and skilled fence and smuggler with extensive links to the Shadow Masks and a whole range of other cads, scoundrels and brigands. His carts—piled high with manure, night soil and other stinking rubbish—are an excellent means of transporting illicit goods around the city. After all, who would willingly search such a cart?

Raimo owns a large building on Cross Street, which is the centre of his illegal operation. A secretly excavated—and extensive—hidden cellar holds the illicit goods under Raimo's protection and the Laukkanen's wealth. Additionally, several small chambers serve as bedchambers (or perhaps holding cells)—all have stout, lockable doors.

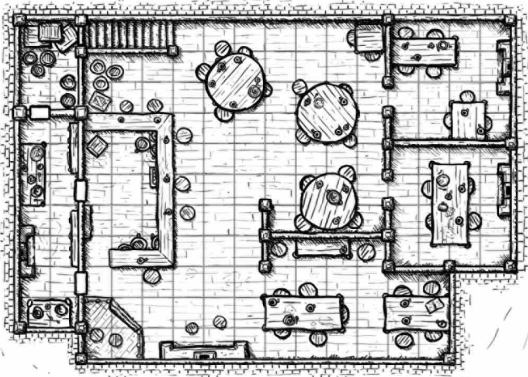
Raimo also owns walled compounds without the city walls near both Low Gate and Traitor's Gate; here he sells the legal proceeds of this trade to farmers and the like and sometimes passes smuggled goods to his contacts.

NOTABLE FOLK

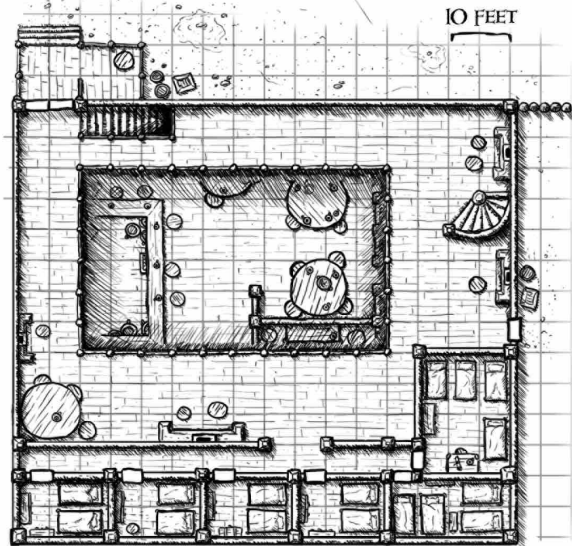
- **Raimo Laukkanen** (NE old male human thief 3) will transport anything in his carts if the price is right. This gnarled, hirsute old man is utterly without scruples. Crippled in a carting accident decades ago, Raimo is never without his heavy cane of polished mahogany—which he adeptly uses as a weapon if the need arises.
- **Terhi Laukkanen** (NE female human fighter 2/thief 1) possesses the necessary morals to work in the family business. She is Raimo's granddaughter and the only one of his progeny suitable for the work. Terhi is at home among the filth and squalor. Coarse of mouth, muscular, and often coated in grime and muck, she is sometimes mistaken for a man. She has her revenge—a savage beating or maliciously placed pile of manure—upon such foolish folk.

HOOKS

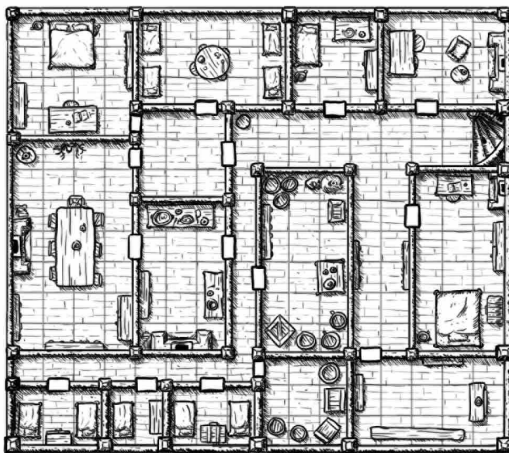
- **Badly Driven Cart:** Piled high with dung and trailed by a collector, a cart slowly rumbles toward the characters. The driver is disinclined to give way. If the characters force the matter, the carter begrudgingly eases around them. He won't be sorry if some dung is dislodged by the forced manoeuvre.
- **Thrown a Wheel:** One of Raimo's carts has lost a wheel; manure and other foul things have tipped onto the street. The two men are working hard to fix the wheel and clean up the mess. As a watch patrol approaches, their efforts reach almost (suspiciously) frantic levels.



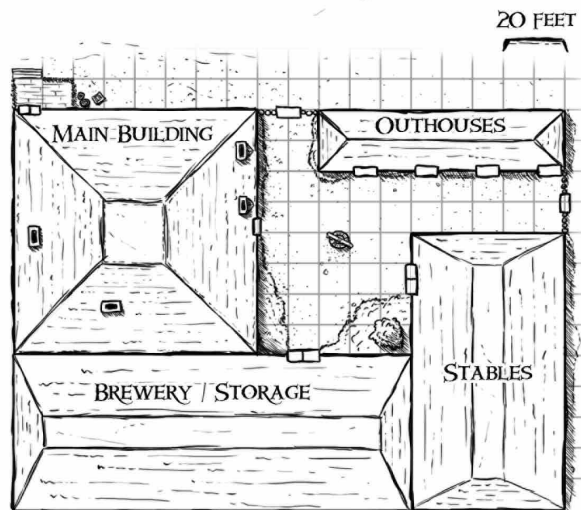
CELLAR / COMMON ROOM



GROUND FLOOR



UPPER FLOOR



OUTBUILDINGS

L8: MARJA'S HOUSE OF SIGHS

Popular destination for those seeking to "relax"

Famed through the city—and also known as the Moaning Halls—for the pleasures to be had under its roof, Marja's House of Sighs is a popular destination for those seeking respite from the day's hardships.

Comprising the entirety of a three-storey tenement building overlooking one of the many small lanes leading north from Warrior's Way, it is gaudily decorated with—now faded—semi-lurid murals. The paintings leave no doubt as to the services offered within. Marja lives in a personal apartment on the top floor, while the ground floor is given over to a series of lounges, bars and snugs. The middle floor comprises a maze of small passages and rooms decorated in a variety of styles and themes. Much of the Moaning Halls' business is conducted there.

Marja employs a multitude of urchins and street people to guide—or perhaps lure—customers to her door. Thus, those obviously with coin—and everyone assumes adventurers have gold to spare—are accosted by a succession of street folk when they are in the Moaning Hall's general vicinity.

NOTABLE FOLK

- **Marja Sianio** (N female half-elf wizard 2/thief 3) knows many of Languard's residents—she has a prodigious memory—but few people know the real Marja. Secretly the bastard offspring of a minor member of the Nenonen family, she masquerades as a human but is well aware of her true heritage. Her staff are loyal, and she, in turn, zealously watches out for their well-being. Rumours abound that Marja knows many embarrassing secrets about her customers.

HOOKS

- **Annoying Customer:** The characters befriend (perhaps in a nearby tavern) Aila Keto (CN female human), one of Marja's staff. They subsequently see her being harassed by a man swathed in a voluminous cloak. If they intervene, they earn her thanks and the ire of the man Einar Rantanen (NE middle-aged male human)—a wealthy artisan skilled in holding grudges, who does his best to badmouth Aila's rescuers.
- **Is He Here?** The characters seek some local expert, merchant or suchlike, and their enquiries lead them to the House of Sighs, where the man is "resting". Of course, Marja is delighted at the arrival of a group of wealthy adventurers and does her utmost to entice them into availing themselves of the house's services.
- **Pushy Street Child:** Prusi Valta (N young male human) tries to lure the characters to the Moaning Halls. This child of the streets is on a commission and won't take no for an answer. He's pushy and opinionated and in desperate need of silver. The characters will struggle to get rid of him.

L9: HANNU'S HOUSE OF HEALING

Charlatan of middling skill and few qualms

Location trumps reputation, particularly when most clients are from out of town. Hannu's House of Healing is one of the first buildings inside the Traitor's Gate, and it advertises well. Wounded visitors see the giant sign and stumble through the door in need of medical attention. Hannu himself is a charlatan of middling skill who overcharges for even the simplest procedures. If he has to amputate a hand, there's a good chance he'll keep the rings. If he sees rings, there's a good chance he'll amputate the hand.

Waiting Room: A hanging wooden alembic directs passers-by to the waiting room, a small, relatively clean space with half a dozen wooden chairs. In these cramped quarters, customers wait to be treated.

Operation Room: Compared to the waiting room, the operation room is filthy. A wooden platform, stained red and black from thousands of previous procedures, serves as an operating table. Rusty scalpels, chipped scissors, and recycled bandages sit in heaps or dirty jars around the room. One scent rises above all others—dreamweed, which Hannu uses to induce sleep in nearly all his patients. While the patients are insensate, he rifles through their gear.

Recovery Room: Upstairs, a dozen thin beds line the walls. Here, patients sleep off the dreamweed and recover from their traumatic surgery. The recovery room also doubles as an inn when business is slow.

NOTABLE FOLK

- **Hannu Aalto** (CE male human thief 4) came to Languard when he was young. He is a traveller from the south and apprenticed briefly with an alchemist until his master's untimely death. This setback prompted him to go into business for himself (his almost total lack of formal training seemingly no impediment to his work).
- **Reeta Meri** (CE female human fighter 2) works as Hannu's nurse and stands taller than all but the tallest man. She is a giant of a woman, broad and busty, with far too much makeup, a booming voice and a bizarre garbled accent.

HOOKS

- **Dead Adventurer's Journal:** An adventurer returned from Gloamhold did not survive Hannu's attention. However, her journal is full of notes on the dungeon. Hannu is willing to swap it for a favour—he's running low on dreamweed and needs someone to visit his supplier to get more.
- **I Lost My Ring:** A wealthy traveller visited Hannu but walked away without his family ring. Hannu denies he ever saw the jewellery, but the visitor is adamant.
- **Screaming in the House:** As the characters pass Hannu's House of Healing, muffled screams coming from within reach their ears. Oddly, no one else on the street pays any real attention to them.

L10: THE LAST CHANCE

Macabre tavern favoured by bounty hunters and the like

In sight of the corpses swinging from Traitor's Gate (location G3) crouches a tavern with a deep, shadowy porch furnished with scarred tables and a sign bearing a grinning skull with a die between its teeth. This is the Last Chance, owned by Jyry Mustonen, a thrifty ostler who cultivates (and perhaps thrives in) the tavern's grim atmosphere. Jyry starts macabre wagers about executions, discusses bounties with his regulars and supplies human knucklebones for games.

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

Bounty hunters and off-duty members of the watch are common among the Last Chance's patrons, making the tavern a surprisingly honest and safe establishment.

TARIFF

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

NOTABLE FOLK

- **Jyry Mustonen** (N middle-aged male human) earned enough money to buy the Last Chance through his skills as a (middling) brewer. He still brews but focuses more on running the Last Chance these days. Executions fascinate Jyry; he loves discussing (and betting on them) with his regulars.
- **Impi Jyrentytär** (N female half-elf thief 1) dresses all in black and entertains customers with her dry wit. The Last Chance's gloomy barmaid is a former street urchin who got her job at the tavern out of pity. She has a good eye for trouble and a steady work ethic.
- **Ruska Isotalo** (LN female human ranger 3) sees the Last Chance as her second home, and her tendency to help the staff and buy rounds has earned her much goodwill at the tavern. Ruska is a bounty hunter infamous for her brutal methods that carefully toe the line of the law. She loves her work and laughs loudly at the grim jokes circulating through the taproom. Ruska is bald, toweringly tall and covered in tattoos.

HOOK

- **Fancy a Bet?** A list of wanted criminals and their bounties is kept behind the bar for Jyry's wagers. Impi points out a bounty to the characters, hoping they'll collect quickly to win her a bet.

L11: SENTINEL APARTMENTS

Cheap rooms popular with adventurers and travellers alike

A series of small, semi-uniform houses line a small cobblestone street that leads to a tall tenement building. All the buildings on the street are a part of Sentinel Apartments and are rented out to an odd, ever-changing assortment of travellers, adventurers and city folk. Though the rooms are mediocre and sparsely furnished, rates are cheap, and the tenants are free to leave and rent erratically. Adventurers often choose to hole up in one of the apartments while they plan expeditions into Gloamhold, giving them plenty of time to gather the equipment and support they need.

Most of the apartment's tenants are regular travellers or merchants staying for a while in the capital.

TARIFF

- **Accommodation (per month):** One-room tenement apartment 5 gp; two-room tenement apartment 10 gp; house 15 gp.

NOTABLE FOLK

- **Ensio Meri** (CN male human thief 1) gossips incessantly, and he is an invaluable source of politics and current events. His affability and melodious voice make him popular, and he makes regular circuits of the duchy to sing in countless taverns. He rents an apartment here when he isn't travelling.
- **Kaste Lillonen** (NG female human ex-paladin 6) arrived in Languard about a year ago. She has few friends, lives in the cheapest tenement room and toils ceaselessly. Kaste was once a paladin but fell from grace when she took justice into her own hands, a deed for which she hates herself. She never speaks about her past but still owns and treasures a sacred sword (about which rumours are beginning to circulate).
- **Valio Oiva** (CE male dwarf thief 2) claims to be an experienced adventurer with extensive knowledge of Gloamhold. In truth, he is a coward who rarely ventures far in, but he knows how to navigate a few dangerous spots. He regularly visits these locations to check for dead explorers that he can loot for valuables.

HOOKS

- **Bloodstains:** When the characters secure lodgings at Sentinel Apartments, they discover relatively fresh bloodstains under a rug in one of the rooms.
- **Indiscrete Bard:** Some information is dangerous, but Ensio can't resist learning (and then sharing) juicy secrets. The Shadow Masks are looking to silence him, and Ensio is desperate for protection. He would make a very grateful contact in Languard.
- **Perfidious Scout:** Valio Oiva eagerly offers to guide the characters into Gloamhold but purposefully leads them into danger. He looks for any opportunity to get them in over their heads so he can scavenge their bodies.

L12: THE WHITE TOWER

Here dwells the Esoteric Fellowship

The White Tower is the fortress of the Esoteric Fellowship and where they store their trove of lore and mysticism. They stand in opposition to the Sagacious Masters of the Eldritch Nexus, decrying them as elitist and narrow-minded. However, the White Tower and the Fellowship are far less glamorous than they portray themselves. Their “tower” is an unremarkable two-storey building on Warrior’s Way, and most of their members possess little magical skill or talent.

Chamber of Gates: Just beyond the entrance is the Fellowship’s meeting area—a room filled with cushioned chairs, thick rugs and a massive round table painted with fanciful archways. Emerald fire crackles in the hearth, incense burns in candle holders, and knick-knacks fill the shelves.

Dawn Archive: A haphazard library and museum fill the second floor. Bookshelves, cupboards and scroll racks clutter the space in uneven rows. There is very little of value in the collections: the books are elementary or inaccurate, the scrolls are merely illustrations of somatic components, and the cupboards are filled with used wands and broken trinkets.

House of Air: A ladder leads to the building’s flat stone roof. An elaborately painted magic circle decorates the paves, and a few holes allow for curtains or canopies to be raised around it. The Fellowship stages dramatic ceremonies and rituals here when the mood strikes them.

NOTABLE FOLK

- **Magister of Tongues** (NE male elf wizard 3) leads the Esoteric Fellowship. Grand and handsome, he is the Esoteric Fellowship’s guiding force, though he pretends all members are equal. He is hungry for magic but lacks the skill to join the Sagacious Masters, so he has gathered their leavings and gullible apprentices to build up a power base.

Other members include Master Ichor (CN male human wizard 1), the fellowship’s alchemist who is more skilled with poison than magic, the Visionary (N female human wizard 1), a talented artist who made the Fellowship’s paintings, and the Keeper of Wisdom (N female human cleric [Morden] 1) who is attempting to master arcane and divine magic.

HOOKS

- **Join Us:** The Esoteric Fellowship eagerly recruits spellcasters and is in awe of anyone with even a little skill beyond the basics. Magister tries to persuade spellcasting characters to join and share their knowledge and resources.
- **Strange Music and Chanting:** The Esoteric Fellowship are performing one of their open-air rituals. The ritual is loud and involves discordant instruments along with mystical chantings. The sound travels for some distance and creates a spectacle—just as the Magister of Tongues had planned.

T1: FANE OF THE WAVES ETERNAL

Temple dedicated to the capricious Mistress of Storms

Overlooking the Svart’s estuary, the Fane of the Waves Eternal is dedicated to the Mistress of Storms (Serat, CN goddess of the sea, Storms and Voyages). Here, her numerous worshippers bathe in the daily high tides and give thanks for the sea’s unending bounty.

The Fane encompasses a thin spit of land riddled with sea caves and the like jutting out into the Svart’s estuary. Above ground, the faithful maintain a lighthouse and the other facilities one would expect in a temple. In the largest of the sea caves below, the clergy maintain several small docks exclusively for use by the temple’s flotilla of vessels. Other small sea caves feature cleverly designed tidal pools for the faithful to bathe in while worshipping their mistress.

NOTABLE FOLK

- **Anafa Wildthorn** (CN female half-elf druid 7) feels alive when sailing the ocean waves or exploring its depths in animal form. She is a capricious, wild soul drawn to the ocean from an early age. Increasingly drawn to Hard Bay’s dangerous waters, she has started visiting several of the islands therein.
- **Stormlord Taneli Eronen** (CN old male human druid 9) rarely goes beyond the fane’s bounds these days. A reclusive figure, he is now old and wizened but still leads daily services and is protective of his flock. He is growing increasingly worried about rumours of Dagon worship in the city. His mistress is opposed to Dagon and his fell worshippers, and he works subtly behind the scenes to thwart and stymie their growing influence.

HOOKS

- **Intrigued Priestess:** Anafa spots the characters as they cross Hard Bay and follows them in animal or fish form to see what they are doing. She could even come to their aid if they are overmatched by Hard Bay’s monstrous denizens or violent weather. She returns to her normal form once the danger is defeated and invites the characters to the fane.
- **Voyaging to Gloamhold:** Characters who worship Serat could come to the Stormlord’s notice after a few successful forays into Gloamhold’s depths. Tales of battles against Dagon’s cultists automatically pique Taneli’s interest. In such cases, he seeks the characters out to learn more about them.
- **We Need A Ship:** If the characters struggle to find a sailor brave enough to take them to Gloamhold—and crucially wait for them to return from their foray—they might visit the fane in search of such a redoubtable soul. Doing so may bring the characters to the attention of the fane’s clergy.

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