

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 1

FOREWORD...

This article is a collection of encounters contributed by a handful of Harniacs. Each submission has been edited to fit a common format. One of the most helpful aspects of the format used was that specific names and places have been omitted to protect the innocent and allow GMs to transplant the encounters to where ever they wish. Further development of locations and encounters are easily fleshed out on the framework provided. Those kingdoms without the common titles used, most notably Orbaal and Tharda, have equivalents that can easily be determined.

Hârñ Encounters is system independent and can also be used by those not playing a Harnic campaign. Simply replace the religions, creatures, and titles with the appropriate equivalents of the world used.

Obviously this document is for GMs only! This article contains spoilers and secrets. If you are a player, do not continue reading. But feel free to send your GM this way. Should you decide to read on anyway, we will know. We always do. And your PC will suffer for it...

THE ENCOUNTERS...

Each encounter begins with a situation that introduces the PCs to an encounter. The articles assume that the PCs are foot loose and fancy-free sorts. If an encounter is used where the PCs live, the GM should determine what further background information they may have. The article will continue on to describe what the PCs will know or what they will be told. Much like in real life, they will often times not know the full story. The final paragraphs will describe what is really going on behind the scenes, filling the GM in on the rest of the details of the story. Note some encounter types would fit logically into other setting types.

Finally, each encounter will have numbered bullets describing the effects of certain PC actions during the course of the adventure. This list is neither inclusive nor sequential. They are simply "if - then" statements that describe likely PC actions and outcomes of those actions. They are presented in a logical and likely (to this GM) order of events, however. There are other PC actions that will affect the outcome of the story; good ol' GMing will have to deal with other actions the PCs may take.

Enjoy,

Aaron Kavli

COASTAL ENCOUNTERS

Ghostship...

As the PCs walk along the sandy shores of Harn's oceans (or as they look from the deck of their ship) a decrepit, rotting ship comes into view only a few hundred yards away. No one actually does not see the ship appear, nor can anyone remember seeing it come from a distance. They just simply seem to notice it.

The ship is a huge, ancient looking Ivinian dragonship. Its sails are torn and moldy, planks show obvious signs of rot, and holes can be seen in the hull. No one can be seen on the deck however. The area around the ship seems very still and somehow darker. After a few minutes a thick, chilly fog begins to materialize around the PCs.

The party finds themselves suddenly on the deck of the ship, though they remember no sense of movement. They can only see a calm ocean for about 100 feet from the ship (though the seas within the fog can range from still to gale force), and then a dense wall of fog. The deck now has people, most of which are chained to the oars. Everyone looks near death, with open sores and empty eyes, groaning in pain and fear. A large, muscled man wearing a black hood walks down the centerboard, lashing them with a cruel looking scourge. The bloody wounds from the oarsmen seem to quickly heal, leaving fresh scars within minutes. Sometimes the end of the whip seems to disappear into thin air, accompanied by a distant "crack" and scream of pain. He does not speak. A single door stands unsupported at the bow.

A fetid smelling man in filthy rags approaches them. He introduces himself simply as the quartermaster. The quartermaster explains they are now crewmen of the good ship Brundsving, making its way to Hepenolis. Captain Harsgaard brooks no breaches of discipline and any attempts to escape are futile, pointing out the heretofore unnoticed ball and chain shackled to the PCs' feet (everyone shackled is at half move and dodge). He warns them that dereliction of duty will result in instant lashing by the hoodsman, who sees all. The quartermaster gives them each a set of rusted, nearly unusable tools and tells them to get to work. He also expresses his sympathies to them, as they are figuratively and literally in the same boat.

The PCs have had the misfortune of being impressed by magical forces into the crew of a haunted ship. The Brundsving disappeared in a storm during the Rape of Thay in 705 TR, though only a PC with an Ivinian background would possibly recognize the name. The storm caused a dimensional rip and flung the ship into the area between time and space. Harsgaard made a deal with the "Lords between worlds" that would allow him to live.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 2

In return for their aid, Harsgaard and his ship would bring people aboard to have their life force slowly drained away. He was to do this for 100 years, and he would become immune to the touch of injury and age. The good captain soon found out that his lords have a difference sense of time. While it has only been some 15 years since its been lost on Harn, the Brundsving has been slipping between worlds for four centuries.

The Brundsving is perpetually stuck in a dimension between worlds, appearing only when Harsgaard is to bring new victims to the ship. Victims slowly die as their essence and body are drained. No one's work has any lasting effect, even the oarsmen's' rowing doesn't move the ship. It is simply the pain brought about by the captive's endless toil and torture that is needed by Harsgaard to fulfill his bargain.

Time has no meaning on the Brundsving. When the ship comes out of its dimensional hole, it appears in any number of times, places, or worlds. Ancient and alien landscapes will suddenly appear as the fog lifts. After about 10 minutes the fog will surround the ship again, and new hapless victims find themselves on deck and shackled. To those on board, it seems the ship appears in a real world every two weeks. In the regular time line, the ship may appear thousands of years apart on various worlds.

The ship is also dimensionally incoherent. Below deck areas are much larger than the hull should allow and is an endless maze of doors and hallways. Each door opens into a short passageway with three other doors, one in each wall. To find anyplace in the ship requires intent; meaning the PCs must be looking for someone or someplace in particular. One must also pass through three passageways, and always take the right hand door, to reach their destination. Randomly opening doors, or not opening the right door, will never lead anywhere but to another passageway. Few know of this, and most victims become lost in the maze of doors.

The only way to escape the ship is to kill Harsgaard permanently. This is not easy however; any wound he receives is instantly healed the following turn, including fatal ones, and he carries massive war axe that he is a master with. His only weakness is seawater. Any location doused in seawater loses its ability to heal until it dries, which is why is never on deck during rough

seas. This is of course a secret, and only known by the captain and the hoodsman.

The only way to get back home is with the help of Maar the Navigator. This unimpressive, slight man is very elderly and has gained the ability to navigate between times and worlds. As the overlap with normal vision and dimensional vision was driving him mad, Maar put out his own eyes. He is able to bring the Brundsving to any time or place. If the PCs manage to overcome the hoodsman and Harsgaard and free themselves, they will not know when or where they are jumping ship.

The hoodsman is actually a demon servant placed on board to make sure there is enough pain and suffering. He is immune to all damage, including magical damage, due to his utterly alien and dimensional form. The only way to harm him is to cut his scourge, which he tucks away if attacked. Severing the non-enchanted scourge robs him of all his power, leaving him weak and mortal.

There are dozens, if not hundreds, of cursed victims on the ship. Most are helplessly lost in the innards of the hull and many are also completely mad. Some may help the PCs, some may attack them, and others will simply ignore them. They can be encountered every time a door is opened. Despite the span of times, cultures, and worlds of the captured crew, everyone seems to be able to understand each other. Very few of the original crew, including Maar, Harsgaard, the quartermaster, and the hoodsman, are still alive. No food or water is ever provided. Victims constantly feel great thirst and hunger, but don't die from it.

1) If the PCs decide to accept their fate, they will slowly weaken and die. It will seem like 6 months to them.

2) If the PCs spend more than 10 minutes not doing hard work, the hoodsman's scourge will appear from nowhere and lash the slackers.



HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 3

The pain is excruciating, and the wounds are severe, but they heal quickly.

3) If the PCs try to remove their shackles, they will find no lock to pick, rivet to break, or anyway to slip out of them, except amputation. The only way out is through the key, held by the hoodsman.

4) If the PCs try to jump overboard, they will drown if they haven't removed the ball and chain. Assuming they have escaped the shackles, PCs will be able to swim. If they jump while the ship is between worlds, no matter how hard or long they swim, they will get no further from the Brundsving. They will have to either climb back on board or drown. If they jump while in a reality, they will be left there when the ship leaves (wherever that may be...) if Harsgaard has been killed. If Harsgaard is still alive, they will simply be brought back to the ship again by the fog when the ship leaves reality.

5) If the PCs befriend the quartermaster, they will find him reluctant but helpful, though he has lost all hope. He will answer basic questions, and if asked directly about the maze of doors, will them how to navigate it.

6) If the PCs try to attack the hoodsman or Harsgaard without being prepared, they will likely get beaten easily. They will usually not be killed however, as this reduces their suffering. PCs who have tried to exploit one of their weaknesses, and failed, will be killed however.

7) If the PCs ask the crew about ways to escape, sooner or later they will find relatively sane and helpful people. The GM should make this a frustrating and dangerous chore, as many are insane, murderous, cannibals driven mad by their imprisonment and torture and others are simply vegetables. Each friendly person should only have one useful bit of information and will likely not volunteer much. The PCs need to ask somewhat specific questions to get usable answers. Things PCs can learn include (not in any order): what happens if they jump overboard, mention of Maar the Navigator, Harsgaard's aversion to salt water, how to navigate the maze (especially useful if the PCs didn't find out before getting lost), that they won't starve to death, the hoodsman has the key to their shackles, the history of the ship and the curse, and anything else the GM deems useful or interesting.

8) If the PCs find Maar the Navigator and ask for his help, he will agree if they help him. He has decided that he wants eyes again, and the PCs must bring him a severed head with appropriate eyes he can use. Maar doesn't describe what appropriate is, and no matter what the first severed head isn't good enough. Once he has received the right severed head (GM's discretion), Maar agrees to guide them home if Harsgaard is killed. He will also explain the nature of the hoodsman (Maar can see his true form) and his scourge.

9) If the PCs manage to destroy the scourge, the hoodsman will be easy to finish off. The key can only be found if the hoodsman is killed; his body turns to mist and blows away, leaving a featureless, silver bar. Touching this to the shackles will unlock them. The PCs are likely to be swarmed by the oarsmen, who want to be set free, if they see this happen.

10) If the PCs can somehow get Harsgaard wet with sea water (the more the better), he will be mortal and possible to defeat. Even when vulnerable and wearing no armor, the captain is incredibly strong and skilled with his war axe; he will be a formidable foe and even freed crewman will not help fight him. Should the PCs kill him, the ship immediately returns to a reality (as determined by the GM), but otherwise stays the same; it still slowly drains the life of those on board. Many of the victims will immediately try to jump overboard, regardless of their shackles or the environment.

11) If the PCs have struck a deal with Maar, and have killed the captain, he will keep true to his word and drop the PCs off at exactly the same place and time as when they were picked up. The GM will have to work out the details for PCs who wish to be left at a different place or time. Maar no longer cares about mortal affairs or the crew, and will only take others to their home if asked directly. Once the PCs are returned, the Brundsving simply vanishes.

Foreign Shores...

As the PCs travel along the coast, they come across a ship beached on the sandy shore. One of the masts shows scorch marks, and a gouge runs along the starboard side of hull. Several sailors are busy chopping trees and making planks of them. Another group of men, dressed richly in foreign styles, sit using crates as tables and seats. Three fresh graves can be seen near the tree line.

When the PCs are discovered, the sailors and rich men draw swords, axes, and clubs. When these foreigners realize the PCs aren't their attackers, they will cautiously approach. One of the richly dressed men speaks to the PCs in Karejjan. No one in the crew speaks Harnic or any local language, though he and some other crewman speak very basic Azeryani and Ivinian.

If none of the PCs speak Karejjan (quite possible), the man will struggle through speaking to the PCs with gestures. The rich man tries to explain they were attacked at sea and hit some rocks as they tried to hug the shoreline. He is willing to pay in silver or goods for fresh food and water and a new sail. As the PCs are obviously local, and the crewmen are not exactly sure where they are.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 4

The man is an independently wealthy trader, and owner of the beached ship. He is from the Karejian city of Levelis and set forth with cargo for Shorkyne when they were set upon by an Ivinian pirate ship. It chased them for several days, cutting them off and forcing the merchant vessel to try to back track. This led them to the shores of Harn, where they ran aground trying to flee the Vikings in the night. During the wreck a fire broke out and destroyed the main sail and mast. The crewmen are capable of making new planks and mast from the nearby forest, but their food stores were wrecked and they have no spare sail. They do have a good number of sponges, dyed silk, and other trade goods, and about 5,000d in foreign silver and usury notes.

The Ivinians lost them, for now, but the merchant is now stranded with his valuable cargo. The merchant offers 2d per person per day that work to forage for the crewmen, as the small crew is busy fixing the ship. Providing a sail is worth 50d per person.

1) If the PCs refuse to help (or don't understand), the Ivinians will find the shipwrecked crew, starving and thirsty, before they can get their ship repaired.

2) If the PCs attack or rob the crew, they will fight with the weapons they have (mostly axes and clubs, with a few swords). There are about 12 crewman and merchants who will fight fanatically, as they have nowhere to run.

3) If the PCs agree to seek food, anyone with survival or hunting skills will be able to find ample supplies in the nearby wilderness. Several game animals can be caught, and a freshwater stream is less than a day's walk. If water is found, a handful of sailors will be pulled from their duties to haul 2 large casks to the stream and back.

4) If the PCs are willing to trek to a nearby settlement that can produce the fabric for a sail, or better yet has a shipyard that can make sails, two of the merchants will accompany the PCs.

Using gestures as best they can, they will explain the size of the sail, or the total area of fabric, with the PCs aid. The party may encounter a bit of discomfort from the locals dealing with the foreigners.

5) If the PCs are not able to resolve the sail issue within a week, the Ivinians (who have been looking for their pray) will find the merchant ship and attack the next morning. The merchant crew will fight as best they can, but there are two-dozen Ivinian raiders. Clever PCs might be able to lure the Ivinian ship over the rocks or set another ambush. The merchant will offer each PC 100d if they help defend his cargo, and survive. It will be a tough fight, but with the help of the crew, a winnable one.

Prince Adrift...

As the PCs walk or sail along the coasts of Harn, they find a weather beaten pinda drifting just off the beach. With relative ease the free-floating boat can be reached. It has one unconscious occupant and is flooding from its cracked hull.

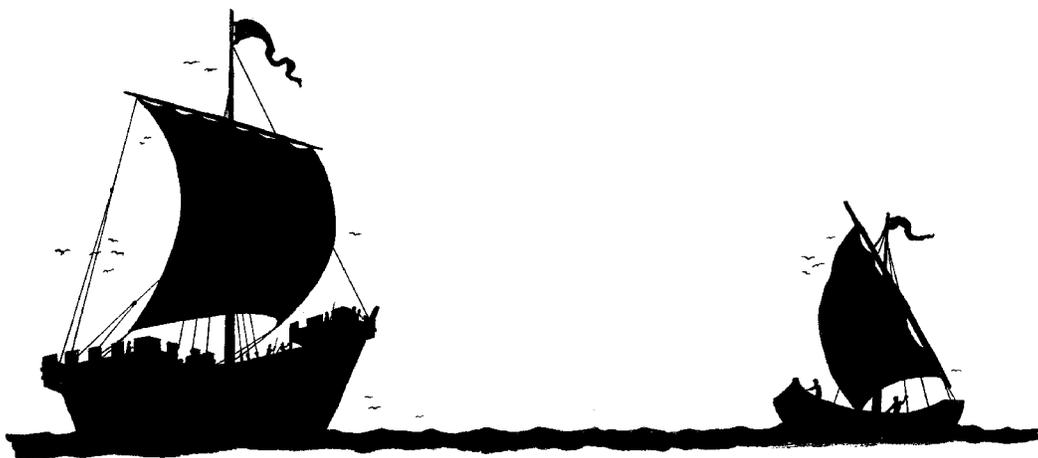
The richly dressed, but bedraggled, adolescent opens his eyes when the PCs reach the boat. He is quite frantic and fearful, crying for the PCs not to hurt him.

The boy is the son of a distant baron. He was on a local boat, having asked his father if he could go on a sail while the baron took care of some business. The baron has made some powerful noble enemies, and one of his vassals hired another ship to catch the boy's ship to kill him.

The attack went fairly well as planned, but a storm had started brewing just before the battle started. The boy's guard put him on the pinda and held off the attackers, dying in the process. The boy's pinda was lost to the vassal's men, as the storm grew worse. He has been adrift for 2 days. His father's keep is about 5 days walk from the beach.

To ensure the boy's death, the vassal killed the rest of the crew and set the ship aflame. He has also been looking for the boy, and is only a day away from the broken pinda. The vassal now has 6 armed soldiers with him.

1) If the PCs ignore the boy, the vassal will find the boy and kill him there on the beach the next day.



HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 5

2) If the PCs aid the boy and offer comfort, he will tell them about the attack, but has no idea of who did it. He simply asks the PCs take him home, where he assures them his father will pay.

3) If the PCs travel the open roads, the vassal and his men will overtake them. They are a bit bedraggled and beaten from the recent fight. He will try to convince the PCs and the boy he was sent by the baron to look for the boy.

4) If the PCs hand over the boy, the vassal will immediately murder him and the men will attack the PCs. They need the PCs dead to prevent the truth from getting out.

5) If the PCs question the vassal suspiciously, he will try to convince them. Should the PCs not believe him, he and his men will attack.

6) If the PCs hide their tracks, or travel off the main trails, the vassal will lose their trail. He will head straight to the baron's keep at full speed and set up a subtle perimeter to intercept the boy in case he makes it back.

7) If the PCs are slow to return and haven't defeated the vassal, they will be spotted as they approach the keep. 5 armed men disguised, as brigands will attack them.

8) If the PCs return quickly, or are careful approaching the keep, or have killed the vassal, they will manage to get the boy home safely. After a tear-filled reunion, the baron will offer his hospitality, perhaps even offering employment, as well as a 200d reward each. Telling the baron about the vassal's treachery will result in his family being declared traitor. Some will be executed, and the rest will be stripped of their lands.

9) If the PCs found the boy while traveling by sea, they will have to convince the captain to return to the port the boy left from. They will encounter the vassal's vessel and he will try to convince them he's there to save him. If he convinces the PCs, he will launch an attack while the boy is being loaded over. If he is not believed, he will launch an attack when he realizes they aren't going to hand the boy over.

The Angry Seas...

As the PCs walk across the beach, they come across a party of men who are busily working on a fallen tree and collecting gathered foods into barrels. On the beach is a pinda, and some distance from the shore is a battered looking nivik.

A large, frowning man directs them. While he wears no livery, the man wears a signet ring and broadsword. The man holds himself and acts like a noble, despite his disheveled appearance.

Upon seeing the PCs, the noble approaches and greets them in a friendly manner. He introduces himself as lord-captain of the ship. He and his men are hunting down a savage sea monster that is responsible for killing many of his friends and villagers. They have just fought the monster and wounded it. But it damaged their ship in return, killed some of the crew, and destroyed their rations. The noble wants to catch up with the wounded beast while it is still hurt. He needs men to fight the beast and help with the ship, and is willing to pay 200d to each PC upon their return to his home. The other sailors seem quiet on the matter.

The leader is a knight bachelor from the closest kingdom, but is not the legal captain of the ship. The knight's son was recently killed by a particularly aggressive whale while sailing in the local waters. The knight hired a ship captain to chase down the whale. After one battle and foul weather, the captain wished to return home. But the knight was intent on killing the beast. The argument escalated until the knight slew the captain. With his skill he subdued the other dissenters and ordered them to pursue the whale. They found the whale, wounded it with bow and spear, but it rammed their ship again, forcing them to land for food and repairs.

The knight is obsessed with killing the whale, and rules with an iron fist. He will follow and fight the beast with no fear, or consideration for his or his crew's safety. Should the whale be killed however, he honors his debts.

1) If the PCs refuse, the knight will try to commandeer them in the name of his king. Should this not be persuasive, the knight will not pursue the matter as he wishes to avoid a crew mutiny should he end up fighting the PCs.

2) If the PCs accept, the knight will give them some chores to help while the sailors finish their repairs. After another day, the pinda will push out to the ship. They will sail for four days before finding the whale, sailing blindly through storms and uncharted waters if need be.

3) If the PCs ask the reticent crew about the captain, they will be utterly ignored if the knight is nearby (which is often as the ship is small and the knight doesn't want the PCs to know the truth). Should the PCs get a sailor while alone, he will only hint at the knight's doings. Most of the sailors have accepted their new captain with resignation. He is a noble and the captain "is him what runs the crew." Very persuasive or clever PCs may draw more of the story out.

4) If the PCs watch the knight closely, they will notice he hardly ever leaves his post, constantly scanning the waters. When not actively talking to someone, the knight mutters angrily to himself, threatening all manners of diabolical ends to the beast.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 6

Observant PCs may notice the look of a madman in the knight's eyes when muttering as such.

5) If the PCs challenge the knight's authority (such as sailing into a massive storm or through rocky waters at night), he will inform them he is captain. Further protests lead to calls of coward, and finally an extra 100d when they return. Should none of this work, the knight will attack the PCs if they try to countermand him. The sailors will not help, afraid of the repercussions.

6) If the PCs stay on the ship long enough to find the whale (about 4 days), the knight will order the ship to attack. It is a monstrous sized beast, but still has wounds from the previous fight. The enraged bull whale will repeatedly ram the ship until the fight is over. The knight will attack with spear and bow, and order all able hands to do the same. Crewman knocked into the water will be knocked about by the whale as it thrashes.

7) If the PCs survive, the ship will return to its home port. If the knight survived, the PCs will receive their payment and the knight's thanks. If the knight died, they will not get paid. Convincing PCs, with help from greedy witnesses, may be able to get some money from the knight's family however.

Pirates...

As the PCs travel along the coast, in the distance they see a couple plumes of smoke. As they get closer they find the plumes of smoke are issuing from several burning cottages of a small village. Off the coast some hundred yards they can see an anchored viking and on the coast are two pinda's pulled onto the shore.

The town is being plundered by a group of seamen who have decided to try their hand at piracy. The captain and most of the crew are wanted for stealing a valuable cargo and warrants have been issued in most local ports and Seamans' Guild halls. Becoming desperate, they decided to grab some booty and supplies before running to a distant port in Lythia.

The would-be pirates however were unprepared for the resistance they encountered. The local fishermen and the ward of the village (manor knight, bailiff, etc.) did not simply run away as the pirates had planned. While the pirates did eventually kill and drive off the defenders, they lost half of their number (including the captain). Now the surviving pirates are having their way with the village. All but a few unfortunates have fled into the woods.

1) If the PCs wisely hide, they will be able to watch the pirates finish having their way with the village before loading the pindas and returning to their ship.

2) If the PCs are clever enough, they can probably defeat the pirates who are currently scattered in groups of 3 or 4 (for a total of about 12 pirates remaining).

3) If the PCs blatantly attack, giving enough warning, the pirates will gather together. While not overly skilled, the pirates are not foolish and use cover and the few bows they have.

4) If the PCs try to take the leadership of the captain, one PC will have to fight the current leader (the second mate) in a knife fight. If victorious, the remaining pirates will happily accept someone with leadership ability. Of course the PCs will now be considered among those who attacked the village.

5) If the PCs manage to defeat the pirates, they will become local heroes and paid 100d each by the surviving manor house nobles. They will also be offered positions as men-at-arms or manor staff until the nobles can replace their lost fighters.

HIGHWAY ENCOUNTERS

The Taxman Cometh...

As the PCs make their way along a rough, kingdom highway they come upon a well dressed man accompanied by two armed men. The man halts the PCs and explains to them that he is an official tax collector for lord so-and-so. The two men in tabards lean lazily on their spears watching the PCs.

The tax collector is actually a charlatan. He and his companions are actually out of work members of the Thespian's Guild. They are very skilled at playing the part. There are some discrepancies that might be noticed. The tax collector speaks the jargon and a vague blather of local 'legalese'. The charlatans will however not stand to fight, fleeing at the first sign of violence.

1) If the PCs pay the toll, they will be cheated and allowed to pass.

2) If the PCs try to talk their way out of paying, it will be hard as the treacherous troubadours are unwilling to give up the coins. They will threaten legal recourse and the wrath of their lord. PCs who argue for about 30 minutes or more, will finally aggravate the men enough to let them pass.

3) If the PCs run or sneak past the actors, they will chase the PCs for a short while before giving up the chase.

4) If the PCs study the men closely, they will notice several inconsistencies (with the proper skill rolls).

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 7

The tabards they wear do not belong to any local lords, their legal explanations are vague and inaccurate, and their weapons are good quality, stage forgeries.

5) If the PCs confront the men about any noticed inconsistencies, the actors will say they simply don't know what they are talking about. Pressing the matter to the point of open conflict, or threat thereof, will cause the men to flee.

6) If the PCs attack, the men will try to flee, offering to pay the PCs to not hurt them if captured. They will admit to their scheme, even offering the PCs part of the cut if they wish to join (the actors have extra tabards). The actors will pay 65d for their release, but will be worth 100d if the PCs drag them back to the nearest authorities.

The Runaway...

As the PCs are plodding along the highways of Harn, they come across a ragged man napping along side the road. As they get close to him, his eyes pop open and he stares fearfully at them and plead with them not to take him back. When the PCs explain that they don't know what he's talking about, he explains he has escaped from his master. He claims his master is brutal and he has been running from bounty hunters for several days. Bruises, scars, and his ragged appearance seem to verify his story. He asks the PCs for help, even if it's just a few scraps of food. The slave/serf will ask to travel (or camp with them if close to dusk). He is utterly harmless, and irritating in his gratitude.

Whether the slave's master was truly unkind (relatively speaking) is hard to determine, but he has sent out bounty hunters. These men are not particularly brutal, but are dedicated and only one day behind the slave. Unless the party heads into the wilderness without the slave, they will encounter the bounty hunters as well.

1) If the PCs tell him to bugger off, the slave will nod sadly and move on. He will be captured the following day.

2) If the PCs meet the bounty hunters, they will ask if they have seen the slave.

3) If the PCs point out where he was, or hand him over, the bounty hunters will meet them again at a later date and give the PCs 10d for their help.

4) If the PCs say they didn't see the slave, or misdirect the bounty hunters, the slave will have escaped and that's all that will come of it.

5) If the PCs offer the slave refuge or allow him to travel with them, the PCs will encounter the bounty hunters the next day. Careful PCs will notice them coming down the road before the bounty hunters notice them.

Unless the slave is successfully hidden from them, the bounty hunters will offer 10d for the slave or demand and threaten the PCs if they refuse.

6) If the PCs challenge the bounty hunters (3 armed thugs), they will threaten and try to forcefully take the slave if the PCs aren't well armed. If the PCs are well armed, the bounty hunters will offer 25d (part of the reward money). If the PCs refuse, the bounty hunters will creep along behind the PCs and try to abduct the slave at an opportune time. They are tough men, but not interested in an armed conflict unless actually attacked.

7) If the PCs hide the slave as the bounty hunters approach, or misdirect the hunters, the hunters will realize what has happened the next day and will come back seeking the PCs a few day later. If the slave is still with them, the PCs will be in the same situation above (challenging the bounty hunters, # 5). If the slave has left, the bounty hunters will demand the 100d they have lost. If the PCs are well armed, the bounty hunters will try to ambush them at night and generally cause them trouble until the bounty hunters get wounded. If the PCs seem weak, the bounty hunters will try to take what they can by force.

Warden's Worry...

The dusty roads of the kingdom bring the PCs into contact with a somewhat frustrated looking noble and his teen-aged son. After the noble assesses the PCs are not being bandits, he introduces himself as a knight of the realm.

The knight has a risky job opportunity if the PCs are willing. He explains that he has tracked down a notorious brigand (one the PCs might have heard of), but he has joined a sizable group of bandits. Their camp is just a few miles away, but the knight has no men to take the camp. The knight has recently used up his courtly favors and has fallen out of favor with his peers. He would like the PCs to either help him assault the camp (if the party is well armed), have them sneak into the camp, or hire on as bandits themselves. The bandits know the knight, or he would try it himself. He offers to split the 500d bounty with them. The brigand is wanted dead or alive.

1) If the PCs refuse, the knight will call them cowards but not hinder them. They will later hear tell of a knight and his son being held captive for ransom (which could be used to revisit this encounter).

2) If the PCs agree to an assault, the knight will lead them in and lead the assault. The party will have to overcome a group of about 10 bandits. While lightly armored they are crafty and skilled at arms.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 8



3) If the PCs try to sneak into camp, they will have great difficulty spotting the man, even with a description. They will also have a hard time actually sneaking past the guards, who are relaxed but not stupid. Finally they will have to kill or capture the brigand without being seen.

4) If the PCs attempt to hire on, they will have to convince the bandits they are really interested (rich looking PCs will not be believed) and that they know how to use weapons. Sooner or later, they will get the chance to get alone with the brigand. While well known and liked by the bandits, their prey holds no special position in the group.

5) If the PCs manage to get the brigand or his head, the knight will escort them to the nearest keep or castle to collect. Being redeemed by the capture, the knight will look favorably to the PCs and split the reward as promised.

The Pious, The Wayward...

On a remote kingdom highway, the PCs overtake a group of 4 Peonian monks plodding along with a large handcart. The monks' looks rather travel worn, and the handcart appears to contain a casket shaped box covered loosely with a canvas tarp.

The brothers appear rather apprehensive at the arrival of the PCs, and get even more nervous if the PCs look at or inquire about the contents of the cart (giving the impression they are trying to hide something).

While not hiding anything of real value, the monks are in fear of their safety. Only a few days ago they lost their escort. The Laranian knight who was escorting them suc-

cumbed to a sudden illness three nights ago. His men-at-arms tried to convince the monks they needed to return. When the monks refused, the men-at-arms returned home. The brothers are concerned the PCs might be brigands come to steal their treasure (they have almost no money, but that is not what they fear losing).

In the cart is a nicely crafted, reasonably ornate but simple casket that holds the remains of the most famous and beloved brothers of their chapel. He was a scholar of renown for his wisdom and compassion. He died just over a week ago and in accordance with his wishes, his

brothers are carrying him back to be buried in the village of his birth. The village is along the PCs route (if they are intending on following the highway for any distance).

1) If the PCs leave the monks to their fate, they will make it to the village safely.

2) If the PCs decide to rob the monks (maybe they don't like Peonians, or are, gods forbid, actually brigands), the monks will put up no fight and willingly give them the 12d they have.

3) If the PCs agree to accompany the brothers, it will add about a day to their travel time as the cart is rather heavy and ornery. The monks will be unable to offer any monetary reward, but will be eternally grateful and offer to house and feed them if they stay in the destination village.

Caravan to the Torch...

As the PCs travel along a highway, they come across the ransacked and now smoldering remains of a small caravan of 3 to 5 wagons. Scattered about the scene are several dead bodies, obviously victims of a brutal fight. There are no females among the dead. The carthorses have also been slain, and an observant PC will notice there are no riding horses among the dead beasts.

A quick body count suggests that there may well be survivors, but it's impossible to tell for certain. Further searching will reveal that the attackers were very brutal and headed into the woods. The wounds indicate the attackers used swords, spears, axes, and crossbows. A skilled tracker could estimate there were at least a dozen attackers, and they left with one or more captives.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 9

The attackers are a group of mercenaries, recently cheated out of their pay by a local lord. They have now turned to brigandry, and the caravan is the unfortunate first victim. There are now 13 of them, and they are hardened, well equipped veterans. They have made off with four female captives and two horses.

1) If the PCs ignore the incident, the brigands will become relatively well known as their bloody exploits become bolder. They may grow in size and eventually come back upon the PCs at a later date.

2) If the PCs report the incident to the authorities, they will be hired to help track down and apprehend the brigands. The brigands are fleeing, and it will be at least several days to return with the authorities. Even if they aren't caught this time around, the law at least knows about them and will begin patrols.

3) If the PCs follow the brigands (which will be relatively easy), it will take three days to catch them as they are trying to get as far from the scene as possible. Arrangements are up the PCs if they wish to try to free the captives. The brigands are a tough lot, so stealth would be the best bet. If successful, the father of one woman will pay 350d for her return.

A Dying Request...

As the PCs are traveling, they happen upon the grievously wounded body of a well-armored knight of the realm. He is sitting sprawled, with his back against a tree, bleeding from several wounds. His horse lies dead nearby, impaled by two spears. While several men have obviously attacked him, the knight has made them pay dearly for it. The dead bodies of four, conspicuously unidentified, soldiers are strewn about.

When the knight notices the PCs, he will weakly motion to them. When they approach, the knight charges them with the delivery of a letter to the nearest Baron, Earl, or important personage. He weakly motions to a pouch on his belt, and finishes with "Deliver it, or many will die. Fail, and I shall collect from beyond, I swear by my soul to it!" The last exertion will cause the knight to lapse into unconsciousness and he will finally succumb to his wounds several minutes later.

In the pouch is a letter from the aforementioned Baron's/Earl's (whom is the liege of the knight) mistress. It betrays her affair with a rival noble, and plans for some unspecified skullduggery.



The letter could alternately have plans for some other manner of elicit plotting or warning at the GM's discretion.

1) If the PCs do not deliver the message, they will hear some time later about the Baron/Earl losing a great deal of money in a disastrous financial venture, or losing several men in a failed expedition of some sort.

2) If the PCs take the letter to the mistress or lord, they will arrange a meeting outside of town where the PCs will be given 1000d promissory note for their silence. Several soldiers will then ambush them. The note is worthless.

3) If the PCs make their way to the baron's keep, they will have a hard time getting an audience as the man is very busy. They will have to ask for an audience for at least a week before meeting him, though they will not know how long it will actually take.

4) If the PCs speak openly of the knight's death, no one will believe them. But soon after a page will summon them. The page will lead them to an inner part of the keep and leave.

5) If the PCs follow the page, they will be led into an ambush by some of the rival lord's men (the lord himself will not be there). Assuming the PCs manage to survive, they will be arrested and have their gear stripped. The lord will manage to get into their things and takes the note. The PCs have a hard trial coming.

6) If the PCs wait patiently, word of the knight's death will come some days later. The keep is buzzing with the news, and it seems the baron will be unavailable for some time.

7) If the PCs discreetly insist they know of the knight's death to one of the baron's trusted men (up to the GM) after the news reaches the keep, they will be granted an audience with the baron.

8) If the PCs can convince the baron they had nothing to do with his friend's death, easily done by presenting the note, he will give his thanks, a reward of 50d each, and issue warrants for the arrest of his lover and the lord. The lord has made himself scarce since news of the death reached the keep.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 10

9) If the PCs leave the town within a week, the desperate lord will attack them. He will however be alone, as his men and lands have been seized. The lord will otherwise be found after the week.

10) If the PCs defeat the lord and bring him to the keep, they will be paid a sum of 100d, and offered the baron's hospitality (if not his company) for their troubles.

The Healing Lass...

The PCs decide to take a short respite from their travels on the road; their destination is still some distance away. As they look for a shaded place to rest, they notice a small figure in a beige cloak resting against a tree who apparently has had the same idea.

If they approach closer, the figure wakes and stands up suddenly. It is a female Reslava (Peonian mendicant priestess), and her simple trappings and garb will identify her as such to those familiar with the Peonian church.

She will greet them warmly, and if the PCs don't appear overtly hostile, she will inquire if they are headed her direction (which they are...). She will chat with them while they rest. Despite her somewhat threadbare clothing and plain accoutrements, her devastating beauty is impossible to miss.

1) If the PCs refuse viciously or seem threatening, she will try to politely go her own way.

2) If the PCs refuse to allow her to travel, but are kind about it, she will follow them at a distance anyway. She will sing Peonian hymns in a lovely voice the whole time. She will still offer her aid from behind should any situations come up.

3) If the PCs are friendly in return and allow her to accompany them, she will offer what aid she can to any injured or ill characters. She will also flirt endlessly during the trip with the male members of the party. The Reslava's flirtation is totally innocent; she is celibate after all. Her actions may cause some PCs to doubt her membership in the church. If accused of not acting like, or not being, what she claims, the woman will curb her flirtation and pout.

4) If the PCs try to harm or rob she will try to flee, but cannot really defend herself. If left alive, she will eventually make it to her destination and report the event to the authorities along with any names and the PCs description she knows.

RIVER ENCOUNTERS

Getting of the Hook...

As the PCs are walking along the bank, they come across a man deep in thought. He is dressed simply, and by his trappings looks to be a fisherman. He is staring at a large, unfamiliar, brightly colored dead fish floats in front of him in a water bucket. The man seems quite worried about something. A small boat is pulled ashore nearby.

When the fisherman notices the PCs, he starts and tries to run. He realizes that the PCs are not the people he's afraid of and then sit back down (if the PCs aren't hostile). As long as the PCs do not attack him or try to take his boat, the fisherman simply sits worrying over the fish.

The fisherman is from a relatively nearby village. He has caught a fish believed to magical by village tradition in his net, and didn't notice until the fish had already died. By tradition, if anyone but the eldest villager catches the lucky fish, they must toss it back alive or the whole village will suffer. The fisherman is afraid of being beaten, or worse, when if the villagers find out. He has been hiding for two days and is in more trouble than he believes.

The night before the fisherman left, one of the young village women was assaulted. She didn't get a good look at the attacker. A popular and lovely woman is the daughter of the village beadle, and the villagers are in an uproar. They have falsely concluded that since the fisherman is nowhere to be found, he must be the culprit. A group of 10 villagers with clubs, pitchforks, and knives has set out to look for the fisherman. It is left to the GM to determine who actually attacked the girl.

1) If the PCs ignore the fisherman, the villagers will find him. When they find out he's killed the fish, as well as attacked the girl, they will beat him to death.

2) If the PCs inquire as to what seems to be bothering the fisherman, he will tell them the story and explain his fears. The fisherman asks if the PCs will help him. He has little to offer, and simply hopes for their good will.

3) If the PCs agree, the fisherman will ask them to travel to his village and see if the villagers are angry with him. On the trip to the village, they will encounter the mob. The mob will ask if they've seen the fisherman.

4) If the PCs tell the mob where the fisherman is, they will march to the location and kill him.

5) If the PCs misdirect the mob, or say they haven't seen the fisherman, the mob will not find the fisherman and return to the village later in the day.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 11

6) If the PCs protect the fisherman, the mob quickly loses interest in fighting, but insists the fisherman be brought back to the lord for trial. Once the fisherman realizes they don't care about the fish (he won't mention it though, and keeps it hidden in his boat in the bucket) he will agree. Once the cool headed lord holds the trial, he will declare the fisherman innocent. The fisher's wife gives witness he was with her that evening, repairing his boat. The fisherman has also been known to leave for a day or so when fishing. The fisherman is still worried about the fish however and still asks for the PCs help.

7) If the PCs innocently ask about the magical fish, any villager will proudly boast about it; how it protects the village and how no one but the elder can catch it without hexing them all. No one seems worried as the elder seldom fishes and calls such ideas silly superstition.

8) If the PCs discreetly inform the elder of the fisherman's ordeal, he will offer to "catch" the fish for a price. The elder claims to have "outgrown such childish stories and tom-fool tales." The price is the PCs must do a full day's work on the elder's cottage and garden, as he "is getting old, after all and all that fishing tires a man out", and the fisherman must provide one fish from each of his catches to the elder for the next three years.

9) If the PCs do the required work (the fisherman easily agrees to the elder's terms), the elder will take the now somewhat ripe fish and make a large spectacle of the catch. The village will be quite happy and holds a celebration, and the fisherman is off the hook, so to speak.

The Wrecking Crew...

As the PCs travel down the banks of one of Harn's rivers, they come across a small cargo boat tied to the shore. On the deck are five men shouting at each other, apparently arguing about the river ahead. The two main shouters look to be a merchant who is arguing that his goods need to be delivered in time to catch a local caravan at the destination, and the boat captain who says the river ahead is haunted and they need to drag the boat on shore to avoid it. The merchant's apprentice claims they don't have that much time, while the captain's son claims they

certainly won't get there on time if the river spirit kills everyone. A simple looking worker merely nods his head at each person as they make their point.

When the crew notices the PCs, everyone falls silent, except the laborer who shouts a friendly greeting. The merchant and captain quickly begin whispering to each other. There is some quiet arguing and shaking of heads, but finally the merchant speaks to the PCs.

The merchant explains that the superstitious crew refuses to continue down the river, as they were hired to do. The captain breaks in claiming they'll get down the river, but need to avoid the river spirit, which has claimed three boats since last spring. The merchant interrupts and says that he'll pay the PC's 10d (he can be talked up to 20d with some serious bargaining) each if they walk the bank ahead of them and scout for "evil, boat eating spirits." The captain has agreed to this, but won't send his own to do so. The captain quickly mentions that "Angnon's Well" has been a known haunt for generations among those who actually know the river. The merchant waves the comment away with his hand and asks the PCs if they are interested.

Angnon's Well has in fact claimed three boats since last spring. But this is due to a small band of bandits that have been operating in the area. They have set up a series of spiked logs under the water, attached to a series of ropes and pulleys. When a boat approaches, they pull ropes from the shore, which raises the spiked points into the hull of the boats.



HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 12

Often this is not enough to actually pierce the hull, but it is usually enough to swamp or trap the victim vessel. Then they attack with bows, murder the crew, and catch what cargo they can. They picked the area known as Angnon's Well due to its reputation, hoping the superstitious river crews will attribute any missing ships to the haunted area. There are five bandits armed with short-bows and shortswords. They have no armor, but are tough fighters.

Unbeknownst to the bandits however, Angnon's Well does have a well-earned reputation. A malicious and ancient undine (water elemental) does live there in the river. It goes through phases of inactivity, hibernation, and active mischief. The undine has just recently awoken from hibernation last month, and is still in torpor. Any action that takes place will awaken it fully, and the undine will look for victims.

1) If the PCs refuse the offer, the crew will begin bickering again. The PCs may find that the boat never made it to its destination. At the GM's option, the PCs may run into the bandits anyway if they're heading that direction.

2) If the PCs agree, the captain tells them Angnon's Well is about an hour down river by foot. They are to go past it, and come back to meet the boat before the boat will cross it. They must also accompany the boat through Angnon's Well, receiving their pay once the boat is past.

3) If the PCs tread down river, the bandits will ignore them unless the PCs find the river trap or spot them. The bandits know about the boat, and don't want to give away their position. The bandits will attack with bows from cover however, if the PCs do discover anything.

4) If the PCs defeat the bandits and return to the boat, the captain will nod his head and offer the PCs a ride on the boat until they are past Angnon's Well if they like. He will match their pace if the PCs prefer to walk.

5) If the PCs didn't notice the logs or the bandits, the trap is sprung and arrows fly from the bushes. It will be a tough fight. The boat becomes trapped until the logs are cut free and its hull is cracked, though can finish the journey with constant bailing.

6) If the PCs accompany the boat through the Well after battling the bandits (regardless of if or when the bandits are defeated), the water will come alive and try to swamp the boat. The undine will try to snatch people from the deck or shore and pull them into the river to drown. The undine catches the boat, and must be defeated before the boat can go free.

7) If the PCs manage to help save the boat, they will get their pay once the Well has been passed, and will get an extra 20d bonus each for their efforts.

River Raiders...

As the PCs travel along the banks of one of Harn's rivers, they come across a small river boat. It is upright, but filled with water and some of the planks have been cracked. Only one oar can be seen. A quick search of the boat will reveal a single, cracked arrow shaft buried in the side of the boat. Nothing of value can be seen.

As the PCs are looking about, two young lads in their teen years jump from the nearby underbrush. Wielding simple clubs made from heavy branches, the two clumsily attack, screaming, "Where's my father!" Once any of the boys are hurt, threatened, or subdued, a crossbow bolt will fly from the wilderness and plant its self in the boat.

A moment later a middle-aged woman will step forward, brandishing the small crossbow. She orders the PCs to let her sons be, and tells her sons to come to her. The mother and sons begin arguing as to whether or the PCs are the ones who attacked the father. The mother believes the PCs are not river pirates; the hot-blooded boys are ready to take on the PCs.

The boat belongs to the father of the boys, and has been missing for some days now. The father was hired by a queer old man to take him down river to investigate the location of a possible Earthmaster site, as described in an ancient text. They were set upon by a group of brigands that have been hiding in the area, living off the land. The brigands have set up camp on a small island in the river that they access with a stolen fishing boat. When they saw the father and scholar, the brigands loaded up the boat and attacked. They currently have the men captive, trying to decide if they can ransom them to someone.

The family followed the river to look for the boat. Their village lord searched, but not very far and refused to send anyone with them. They haven't found their father, but the boys have seen where the brigands are hiding. Not able to take the brigands, they lay in ambush hoping the bandits would return.

1) If the PCs flee, they will be allowed to go as the arguing continues. The brigands decide that no viable ransom can be collected and kill the two men.

2) If the PCs speak reasonably to the mother, she can be convinced the PCs are not responsible. The woman will lower her crossbow and smack her sons into submission.

3) If the PCs inquire as to what has happened, the woman will explain about her missing husband. With great hope in her face, she asks the brave PCs if they can help her. She has little to offer but her thanks and prayers.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 13

4) If the PCs agree to help, the two boys will use makeshift repairs to their father's boat and offer to get the PCs to the small island. They are not skilled fighters, but are more than capable of navigating the river.

5) If the PCs manage to get to the island, they will have to face 8 scruffy looking brigands. They are not well armed but do have at least one bow. PCs approaching openly will be spotted and fired on before they reach the bank. More careful PCs may be able to make it at night or use cover to sneak onto the island.

RURAL ENCOUNTERS

That Which Ales You...

As the PCs wander about the village, a group of men begin talking about the burning of the warlock last week. One mentions how efficient the men from the local fighting order/sheriff's guard were at rooting the man out and saving the village. Another mentions how just the other day another fellow died of the same sickness the warlock had killed with before, and perhaps the soldiers weren't as thorough as thought. When the villagers notice the PCs, they begin speaking of more mundane things, such as how the inn's bitter brew tastes a bit sour these days and how anyone could stomach it anyway is a mystery.

Later that evening as the PCs carry on about their business, cries are heard, accompanied by thundering hooves. The call is made for everyone to come to the village common, even the lord. Assembled in the common is a full company of soldiers and five mounted knights.

The knight commander stands in his stirrups and announces the entire village is under investigation for witchcraft. There is reason to believe that the warlock must have had accomplices and they will be found. No one is to leave the village, and those who try will be assumed to be running from justice, and executed summarily. Anyone caught walking about after sunset will be arrested and questioned. This curfew is to last until the last of the warlock's accomplices have been rooted out.

The soldiers set up watch in two shifts, and four crossbowmen immediately begin killing all the dogs and cats in the village in case they are familiars and the source of the curse.

This affair started when a villager got into an argument with one of the village officers. After giving him the "evil eye", the officer developed severe cramps and died a few days later. The villager, already unpopular, was then rumored to be a warlock. The knight commander heard the tale and came to investigate. As another villager died of the same cramps after reportedly speaking with the warlock, the knight commander had the man burned as for witchcraft. News of the more recent deaths reached the commander and he has come to flush out the inimical powers cursing the village. The commander is very zealous in his efforts, and any sort of dissent is likely to have fatal repercussions.

The source of the deaths is quite mundane however. The inn sells a type of very bitter "specialty" brew ale. The large casket currently has a rotting rat in it, which is starting to decay and has tainted the ale with disease. The innkeep's brew is not particularly popular, so the disease hasn't spread drastically.

The village becomes tense, as everyone is on watch for queer goings on. They become fearful to the point of willingly reporting suspicious neighbors, and even trumping up charges against others to save themselves. After three days of intense intimidation and interrogation of the villagers, two of the soldiers die of the cramps, and the soldiers begin kicking in doors and searching cottages forcefully. A family is killed by soldiers that night, as they try to flee the terrifying inquisition.

1) If the PCs sit idle, about eight more villagers will die (perhaps even a PC if any partake of the bitter brew) before the inquisition is solved. Five will be from the illness; the rest will be for raising the commander's suspicion or ire.

2) If the PCs try to flee, they will likely be caught by the alert soldiers unless the whole party is very skilled at stealth or have a clever plan. Those caught will be executed as promised. Those who escape will be hunted down for a time.

3) If the PCs investigate the warlock, they will find that most folk didn't like him very much, and will be happy to tell them why. Some however show uncertainty as to whether he was a warlock or not. Asking too many questions will raise the suspicion of the soldiers however.



HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 14

4) If the PCs begin inquiring about those who have died from this curse, sooner or later someone will fondly remember how much the departed loved the inn's bitter ale, though most can't stand the stuff. This should not be made an overt hint, but someone else will likely make a similar comment about another victim eventually.

5) If the PCs ask the innkeeper about his bitter ale, he'll offer them some as people don't seem to be drinking it much anymore. He won't however let the PCs into his ale cellar to see, unless they threaten to report him to the inquisitors. Threatening him with violence will cause the innkeeper to summon the soldiers, leaving the PCs to answer some very difficult and potentially fatal questions.

6) If the PCs examine the bitter ale barrel, they will find it smells rotten. Breaking it open will reveal the decayed rat. The innkeeper will insist he didn't know anything about it, and will offer them 100d to keep quiet and he'll get rid of the rotten ale.

7) If the PCs remain quiet about the ale, the village will suffer about two more weeks of the soldiers. When no one else dies, the commander assumes he's wiped out the warlock's apprentices and leaves.

8) If the PCs approach the knight and inform him there is no witch craft, only rotten ale, the commander doesn't believe them. In fact, he insists that they are trying to deceive him and prevent him from finding the true culprits. He will arrest the PCs and put them to the question, which could be ultimately deadly to them. The GM should consider dropping a hint or two that the commander *knows* for certain some sort of black magic is involved, and won't believe anything less.

9) If the PCs tell the knight that a familiar (a couple of cats can still be found around the village), or they finger an innocent person, has placed a bewitched and poisoned rat in the ale, the commander will believe them if presented with the culprit. The PCs should be careful transporting the familiar however, as it will be suspicious if they are found trying to hide or carry it. The knight will keep his men in the village for a few days after the familiar is ritually burned to make sure the curse is gone, before leaving. He will be impressed by the PCs and offer them 40d each in reward for thwarting evil.

Ring of Woe...

As the PCs travel near the edge of the village, they come across an older man, weeping silently by the edge of the road. When the man notices their approach, he tries to straighten himself up and apologizes for his outburst. The man explains that he has traveled far to return a family heirloom to his wife's grave.

But he is finding it hard to approach the cemetery, as memories of his wife come welling to the surface.

The man pulls out an expensive looking, jeweled ring and asks the PCs to look at its finery. He claims his wife's grandfather many years ago and feels that she can't rest properly without it. He would be grateful if the PCs would help escort an old man to the grave of his long dead wife.

The ring was actually made by the man's wife many years ago. She was a powerful Shek-P'var and gave the ring to him when she realized he was having several affairs. The man has lived a long time, under the curse of the ring. He was finally informed a few weeks ago that the ring brought bad luck to him (which he can attest to heartily) by a village wise woman. The only way to be rid of the curse is to give it freely to someone who asks for it. Then the curse is transferred to the new owner. The man lives far away, traveling such a distance in hopes the dupes won't find him and seek vengeance. His wife's grave is actually in the man's home village.

The only way to rid the owner of the curse is to trick someone into accepting the ring or to return it to its creator. The latter solution is a fact the wise woman didn't know. GM's may allow a high-level dispel to work as well, but what fun is that.

The ring is simple, but well crafted, with a small amethyst stone. Around the stone are the words "Return to Me", in Emela, using the Khruni script. It will fetch about 35d if sold.

The ring's curse has two aspects. The first is that all skill or ability rolls made by the owner suffer a secret, minor ability (-5% or -1 as appropriate). It may be quite a while before the cursed person even notices. The second part of the curse is that the ring will always return to the owner at midnight if not properly handed disposed of as described above. The owner does not have to be wearing the ring to be affected.

1) If the PCs refuse, the man begins weeping again, waving the PCs away so he can be alone in his sorrow.

2) If the PCs accept, the man brightens up and starts to mention how he wished he could read the writing on the ring. He will constantly, but subtly, mentions the writing on the ring, and how he wishes he could read what it said.

3) If the PCs ask for the ring (so they can read it for him most likely, though he'll handily hand it over for any reason), the man will hand it over. Once he has given it over, he wants nothing more to do with it. He will try to sneak off if possible, but will never offer to take the ring back. The man offers the ring to the PCs as a reward, claiming they can use it more than he can. It just has too many bad memories for him.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 15

4) If the PCs force the ring back on the man, he will not object, knowing that it will get back to the PC. He will thank the PCs for helping an old man, and part with them as fast as possible.

5) If the PCs asked for the ring, the one who took it will find it in his belongings the next morning. No matter what they do, unless they fool someone into asking for it and don't ask for it back. This can lead to some criminal charges if the PCs sell the ring and it is found in their possession.

6) If the PCs are not able to read the writing, they will have to ask around for someone who recognizes it. The most likely candidates are going to be literate priests of Larani or Peoni (it is their church language) or a skilled scholar.

7) If the PCs figure out what needs to be done (by either figuring out the writing or some other esoteric means), it will be a task to find the man again. He made no mention of where he lived, but it is logical he lived somewhere in the region of where they met him. Once in the right village though, he is easily found. The man will tell them where his wife is buried, but will refuse to accept the ring under any circumstances.

8) If the PCs bury the ring with the dead wife, the curse will be lifted. Digging up her grave could be an adventure in itself, as people tend to not like grave robbers.

A White Hand in a Velvet Glove...

As the PCs are walking about a relatively secluded part of the village, they are approached by two young men. The men are peddlers who have been in town for about a week, a fact the PCs may know about depending on how long they have been in the village.

The men explain they are peddlers but a bit more as well. They are also representatives of the Mercantylers' Guild, here to investigate reports of guild violations. One of the village merchants has been reported to be purchasing goods from non-guild sources.

They have been sent to gather proof, but the merchant has grown suspicious of them and has stopped all activity while they are around. The peddlers want the PCs to discreetly watch the man. They need to know if he is receiving any deliveries, and what is in them. After two weeks of gathering the information, the PCs are to tell the peddlers. The peddlers will be camped some miles from the village.

The peddlers are actually there to investigate if guild rules are being violated, but for a different guild.

They are members of the Order of the White Hand, sent to determine if the merchant in question, who is actually a Shek-P'var, is going renegade. A passing Shenava stopped in to visit, and overheard the merchant discussing the price of training with someone he knew to be of a different chantry.

Later investigating, the shenava asked at the chantry and found that indeed no permission was asked. The two peddlers are here to see if the discussed payment, supposedly to arrive soon, is paid. If so, that is enough proof for them that the merchant is improperly sharing his lore. The specific item of concern is a shipment of very valuable and aged liquor. The bottles have a small star emblem at the neck, and have minor enchantments to prevent spoilage. The star is the emblem of a long dead Shek-P'var, and the merchant wants to study the enchantments. They will not tell the PCs this, to prevent them from falsely claiming to have seen it.

As the merchant has been warned before and made some enemies in the chantry, the chantry masters have given the peddlers permission to immediately declare him renegade if they find proof. The merchant did however become suspicious, and has ordered the payment to be delayed until the peddlers left. The peddlers were cautious about asking any of the villagers to work for them for fear of a villager that is a friend of the merchant blowing their cover. The merchant is a moderately skilled Savoryan, who has been able to ward himself against any arcane scrying.

1) If the PCs refuse, the peddlers will try hiring a local villager to help them. He is caught, ensorcelled, and manages to kill the unsuspecting peddlers a week later. The merchant leaves town and the villager remembers nothing of the affair.

2) If the PCs accept, they will be paid 10d each for simply watching and reporting any deliveries, and 50d each if they can provide a list of what is delivered. They reiterate the importance of not raising the merchant's suspicion.

3) If the PCs attempt to sneak into the merchant's home without some magical aid, they will trigger a ward that will alert him of the attempt. The merchant will know the PCs are involved and will not accept any deliveries.

4) If the PCs inquire too much (GM's discretion) about the merchant to other villagers, or do anything else that draws undue attention to themselves, word will get back to the merchant that "those fella's been asking about ye..." The merchant will become suspicious and not accept any deliveries.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 16

5) If the PCs simply, and discreetly, watch the merchant, they will find he gets three deliveries over the course of two weeks. The first will be a farmer with a cart full of vegetables. The second will be a simple boy carrying a large, covered wicker basket. The third will be a trapper with a bundle of furs over his shoulder.

6) If the PCs investigate the farmer, they will find he is a local villager who will speak freely. The merchant likes his garden vegetables and pays well for them.

7) If the PCs investigate the boy, they can follow him into the local inn where he asks directions to the merchant. He won't show anyone his goods or answer any questions besides that he has a delivery. However the boy is simple and could be easily distracted long enough to peek under the cloth, revealing 5 glass bottles with stars near the top.

8) If the PCs investigate the trapper, they will find he is not local, but is known to the villagers. He has some furs and herbs he plans on selling to the merchant, and will admit so freely. Should the PCs manage to sneak a look into the furs, they will only find furs and herbs.

9) If the PCs tell the peddlers about the deliveries with no details, they will be thanked with exasperated sighs, paid, and sent on their way.

10) If the PCs describe the bottles delivered, they will be paid 50d each and thanked. The next day the merchant is found mindlessly babbling in terror and curled up on the floor of his home. He will not get better. The bottles, some other items from the home, and the peddlers are nowhere to be found.

To Sing a Dirty Song...

As the PCs enjoy supper at the village inn, a wandering bard enters and speaks with the innkeeper shortly. After some obvious negotiations, the bard smiles and draws forth a small lyre from his bags. He is very talented, singing all manner of songs in a rich voice. After several songs, he bows amidst enthusiastic applause and collects a few coins from the patrons and dinner from the innkeeper.



The bard sits near the PCs as he catches his breath and eats. He is quite friendly and charming, and strikes up conversation with the PCs about just about anything (this would be a good time for the GM to introduce any other campaign hints or rumors). The bard is remarkably good company, and even buys the PCs a round of drinks. At the behest of the gathered villagers, the bard gets up and strums a few more tunes.

The lord appears then, having heard of the bard, to have a listen. With a special flourish the bard plays a song for the lord, claiming it is a local tune that he's sure will be enjoyed.

It is a somewhat bawdy song, and after a few verses the red faced lord storms from the inn. With a quizzical look on his face, the bard shrugs and continues for the rest of the patrons. A few minutes later the lord returns with the beadle and a yeoman. The bard is arrested for playing such filthy and subversive lyrics, and then claiming them to be local songs. Obviously such a song could only be from the depraved city! The bard is locked away in whatever facility the lord has available. With subdued disappointment, the villagers finish the evening in silence.

The next day one of the lord's maids summons the PCs. The bard has asked to speak with them for help against the charges. The lord has agreed, and demands the PCs speak to him, even if they decide not to help.

The bard explains that indeed the song has its roots in the area, though it is a lesser-heard tune. The lord fully claims no such tune has passed his ears, thus it cannot be a local tune. Surely none of his people would ever sing such a song.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 17

The bard asks the PCs to find some proof of the song, for the sentence will be a painful flogging and confiscation of his valuables. The bard is not able to pay overly well, but will surely work something out to pay them back.

The truth of the matter is pretty much as seen. The song is local, but the somewhat prudish and uptight lord has never heard it. Most likely because people know him better than to sing it while he's around, but the lord has never been known for his musical likes.

1) If the PCs refuse, the bard will be able to plead out of the lashing, but will have his instrument confiscated and escorted out of town.

2) If the PCs agree, the bard teaches them to sing and hum the song so they know it well enough to ask about it. With many eloquent thanks, the bard sends them to find someone local who has heard the song before last night.

3) If the PCs ask about the village, they will find hints and clues that others have heard the song in one form or another. But no one will openly defend the bard as they know the lord too well and don't wish to incur his wrath, or be forced to repeat the song in his presence.

4) If the PCs are able to convince the innkeeper, he will deny knowing the song, but that he's sure that it sounds like something in the next village he may have heard.

5) If the PCs go to the next village, they will have to sing the song over and over again until they find the local innkeeper, who recognizes the tune. This is a good start, but not overly helpful as many songs use the same tune. He claims to remember hearing it from a spinster in a nearby village (not the starting village).

6) If the PCs buy food and drink, the innkeeper will give the PCs the name of the spinster. To get him to leave his inn to go to the bard's trial will cost 10d.

7) If the PCs travel to the spinster's village, they will be able to find her easy enough. She is however quite too busy trying to get her favored cat out of a large tree. The spinster has little time to speak to the PCs, or apparently the ability to get her cat.

8) If the PCs can get up the tall, tangled tree and get the cat safely down, the spinster will happily sing the song along with them. If they help her finish up some suddenly needed and labor-intensive chores, she will agree to go to the trial.

9) If the PCs get the spinster and innkeeper to appear at the trial, they will sing the song (not knowing the lord very well...) and admit they have heard it for many years, though not often. The lord truculently argues about the origin of the song, but agrees to let the minstrel free if he comes up with words more to his liking.

The bard is very grateful, and offers what ever little aid he can, including traveling with them for a time if the PCs wish.

From Horses to Hogs...

As the PCs do their business, the village reeve approaches them. He asks them if they'll help him, or at least listen to his problem. No one else in the village will help him, and he's too close to the problem to help.

The reeve tells the party about a villager, a new villein that came to the village just two years ago. The villein is a snobbish and arrogant man, and somewhat lazy. The villein is also very confrontational and treats everyone else in the village like they're scum. The reeve has no proof but feels he may be stealing seeds and other things from the others in the village.

The reeve has complained to the lord, but the lord has told him to leave the villein alone. Other villagers have complained as well, which the reeve also reported to the lord, but the lord finally told him to drop them matter and leave the villein alone.

The reeve feels the new villein is blackmailing his lord, who is usually a fair and decent man. The reeve cannot leave, and no one in the village is willing to go against the lord. But the new villein is really causing some troubles and the lord's few talks with him seem to have no effect. The reeve has managed to convince the other villagers to help chip in for 50d worth of goods (food, tools, clothes etc.) to anyone who can find out what the villein has on the lord.

The villein is actually a dispossessed knight of the nearest large city. He fought a duel over a lady who had been slandered and assaulted by his opponent. Even though he won, the slanderer was from a prominent family and very well connected. The slanderer's family convinced others that the knight had cheated, and actually committed murder instead of fighting a duel. After losing a contrived trial, the knight fled and has gone into hiding. He called in a favor with his old friend the village lord, and is now living the life of a peasant. The knight has a bounty of 1000d on his head, which will be eagerly collected by misinformed knights, relatives, bounty hunters, and the Lia-Kavair.

1) If the PCs refuse to help, the villein will make them miserable for some time, before finally getting into a fight with the village beadle. The villein ends up killing the beadle and flees.

2) If the PCs accept, the reeve will inform them that most of the villagers will help them conspicuously. They do not wish to earn the ire of the lord.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 18

3) If the PCs ask the villagers about the villain, they will know little except that he is an ass. One may comment on the fact that the villain talks like a scholar or at least a city person.

4) If the PCs carefully observe or speak to the villain, they will find the villagers are right. He is an arrogant, lazy, ass. He will provide no useful information to the PCs, and will go as far as to threaten them if they don't stop asking questions. Careful PCs will notice that the villain constantly wears a small pendant with a heraldic device on it.

5) If the PCs ask the lord about the villain, he will make it clear in no uncertain terms that it is none of their affair. If they pester him about the innocent villain again, the PCs will be flogged and ejected from the village.

6) If the PCs are skilled in heraldry, or ask a herald about the villain's device, they will recognize it as belonging to a noble family that resides in the nearest city.

7) If the PCs ask about the device in the city, they will be told it belongs to the family of the lady who was fought over. A few coins or beers spread about will reveal that a knight murdered a prominent noble over a lady of that family. Further questioning will reveal the murdering knight fled and has a 1000d bounty on his head from the family of the slain noble. Someone in the noble or military community of the city will be able to describe what the knight looked like.

8) If the PCs ask the lady about the fight, she will explain that the knight was defending her honor and won the duel fairly. The corrupt family had false charges placed and the knight had no choice but to leave. She will offer no description of the man, and doesn't want him to be hurt. The lady, truthfully, does not know where he hides.

9) If the PCs return to the city after finding out the information about the knight, they will be followed by a small group of Lia-Kavair, who found out about their questioning. They are trying to follow the PCs to where the knight is hiding. While stealthy, the assassins are not woodsmen and careful PCs may notice them. The Lia-Kavair will try to force the PCs to tell them, but will try to flee if they are losing any fight. Survivors will try to shadow the PCs again.

10) If the PCs return to the village without noticing or stopping the assassins, the villain will be found headless the following morning.

11) If the PCs confront the villain or the manor lord with the information, the villain will state he is tired of running and leaves his fate to the PCs.

12) If the PCs decide to take the villain back to the city, he will go proudly but silently, with no resistance. The PCs will be paid their 1000d, and the knight will be executed before the weeping lady.

13) If the PCs agree to keep the secret, they have the thanks of the lord and villain. The villain, coming so close to being turned in changes his ways and starts to make amends with the rest of the village. The reeve will make his payment, as the PCs obviously did something to make the villain change his ways.

Bull Play...

As the PCs wander about the village watching busy preparations for an upcoming festival, they see young men (one a cottar and the other a villain) get into scuffle. It is short and consists more of flying words than fists, but a small crowd has gathered by the time the two storm off in separate directions. The crowd can be heard muttering about how competitive the two have been getting about the upcoming "bull slap."

Some time later the villain approaches the PCs and asks if they'll help him. He explains the upcoming event is very important to his family, but his son has recently been injured and can't compete. The villain isn't as spry as he once was, and has no real hope of beating the young cottar.

The villain goes on to explain the bull slap is a competition where two competitors compete to see who can slap the enraged village bull. The competitors are chosen by the reeve, though last year's winner always has the right to compete again if he likes. The bull is riled up and the slappers are given a bucket of paint (which must be kept at a predetermined point, not carried) and who ever gets the most prints on the backside, flanks, or back after five minutes, wins. Being trampled or gored doesn't count against the competitors, but it can certainly impair them! The lord presents the winner with a small sack of 10d. He doesn't care about the money; its family honor the villain claims is important.

The villain offers the PCs 40d if they can either sabotage the cottar, convince him to lose, or beat him in the actual competition (as representatives of the family). They shouldn't do anything that runs the risk of the lord canceling the event. The slap starts in three days. The PCs will only get their money if the villain wins.

The reason for the villain's desperate actions is simple. Some years ago he and the manor lord made a wager. If the villain's family won the bull slap three years in a row, the lord would forgive all rent for a ten year. The lord was rather drunk at the time, drunk enough in fact to sign a document for the villain stating the agreement was valid.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 19

Oddly enough, the villain's son has won the last two, but recently broke his leg. He is reluctant to let the news get out, afraid the lord will cancel the competition this year to keep from having to pay up.

The villain is past his prime and is struggling to meet his rent; especially now with his injured son. As the son's leg may not heal properly, the villain realizes this is his last, best chance to collect from the lord's wager.

1) If the PCs refuse, the villain will nod and leave. He loses the upcoming event and ends up going broke a few years later.

2) If the PCs overtly threaten the cottar with physical harm, or actually harm him, he immediately reports them to the lord. The lord will arrest them and allow the cottar to pick anyone he likes to take his place in the slap.

3) If the PCs arrange an "accident" for the cottar, and don't get caught, his wife will have to do the bull slap. The villain will then compete and win.

4) If the PCs kill the cottar, and don't get caught, the event will be cancelled for mourning.

5) If the PCs subtly threaten, or simply harass the cottar long enough, he will realize the villain hired them. The cottar states if its so important, he'll let the villain win, if he gets the money. The villain will agree to these terms.

6) If one of the PCs act as the villain's slapper, they'll find the cottar to be a tough, but beatable opponent. The cottar plays relatively fair, with only the occasional shove. Rough housing is acceptable, but any form of other skull-duggery will have to be very clever with the whole village watching.

7) If the villain loses, he will not want to pay the PCs. He might be intimidated or convinced with great difficulty at the GM's option.

8) If the villain (or PCs by proxy) wins, he will live up to what ever deal he's made to the PCs and cottar. He will then present the agreement to the surprised lord. The lord will initially balk at such evidence, but the villain will demand his right to hearing the case in the next moot. The outcome will depend on the GM; a fair lord will reluctantly agree while a repressive one will simply not count it as a valid agreement. The prologue could be an adventure in and of its self.

The Mad Woodsman...

As the PCs try to enjoy a simple morning meal at the village inn, a cry for help comes up from outside. The villagers, and presumably the PCs, follow the cry to its source. One of the villagers stands outside a cottage, crying and vomiting.

Just inside the doorway a bloody body can be seen lying in a puddle of blood. It has been hacked apart and mutilated in a horrid fashion.

The lord is summoned and quickly mounts search parties. The PCs will be conscripted into one of the parties.

The search party will last until nightfall before returning home. The body is prepared for burial by the appropriate villagers (most likely clergy), and the village yeomen are activated to patrol the village that night. The lord makes an offer of 50d for the head of the murderer, and some proof.

The next morning another cry is heard. This time by the mother of two teenage boys who have gone missing. There is no signs of violence, but her boys weren't in the cottage when she awoke and are nowhere to be seen. With the assumption that the boys have been murdered too, the lord raises the bounty to 100d, and sends out search parties again. There is some quiet speculation that perhaps it was the boys, who may not have been murdered. The PCs are implored by the lord and the mother to help find the vicious killer.

The murders are being committed by the village woodward, using his wood axe. He doesn't know he's doing it though. About a week ago a heavy rain revealed an ancient burial mound where the boys, now missing, often played. They explored the small chamber. The woodward found them and chased them out, and they were happy to leave the spooky place. The woodward however stayed, drawn in by some mysterious sounds. The front of the mound collapsed, trapping the woodward in. It took two days of digging, totally in the dark, hearing insane and corrupting whispering, before he was able to free himself. The woodward was not willing to speak of his ordeal, but he commonly spent a few days at a time in the forest so was not missed. The boys didn't speak of it either; afraid they'd get in trouble. They have hidden now, thinking they have released a shade from the mound, and will be blamed for it.

During his terrifying stay in the dark, possibly haunted but certainly creepy, burial mound, the woodward lost his mind. He became schizophrenic, developing a psychopathic, cannibalistic alter ego that emerges in the dark and is responsible for the recent murders. While not an overly skilled warrior, when madness takes him the woodward is fearless and blood thirsty. He will not stop unless killed.

1) If the PCs don't help, the murders will continue as described bellow, and the PCs might find themselves victims!

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 20

2) If the PCs don't stop the woodsman before the next night (its quite likely they won't) a family in an outlying cottage is chopped to pieces. The lord raises the bounty to 200d and activates some of the militia for nighttime patrols.

3) If the PCs ask the villager responsible for preparing the bodies for burial for details, he will be very reluctant to discuss it. If convinced, the villager will inform them the body had deep wounds bite marks in the flesh, and not to tell anyone else.

4) If the PCs talk to some of the village children, they will be able to find out all the locations the missing boys are known to play. Many children won't want to tell on their friends, and will be rather uncooperative. But persistent and convincing PCs will eventually succeed.

5) If the PCs ask the villagers about hints or clues, they will get nowhere. The only real clues will be small, hard to find drops of blood in the woodward's home that can only be found with a careful search. He will not have an explanation, except that everyone does get cuts and scrapes. His axe and clothes are usually washed, or too grungy, to spot any obvious blood.

6) If the PCs don't stop the woodsmen three nights after the first murder, one of the yeomen on patrol will be murdered. The bounty is raised to 500d.

7) If the PCs manage to find the boys, they will tell the PCs about what happened, sadly explaining they didn't mean to release the demon. They don't know the woodward was trapped. The boys will return home to relieved mother.

8) If the PCs specifically watch the woodward at night, they will see him leave the cottage with his axe. He stalks off towards a nearby cottage to commit foul murder.

9) If the PCs confront the woodsman about being the murderer (doing so in the day will bring forth his alter ego), he will flee to the burial mound. If the opportunity presents its self he will use his woodland skills, to set ambushes. Once in the mound the woodsman will fight fearlessly until one side is killed. Note that any attempts to dispel magic or exorcise spirits will fail, as it is a mental condition. At the GM's option, he could open up a winding maze and play cat and mouse with the PCs, setting ambushes. Who knows what else may haunt the mound...

10) If the PCs manage to defeat the woodsman, they will be paid whatever bounty the lord has offered and become local heroes. If the man is brought in alive, he is very confused and horrified the next morning, but is executed anyway.

Shadows from the Past...

As the PCs carry on through the village, a page from the manor summons them to the lord's house. At the manor, a very angry lord informs them that a few days ago a wayfarer murdered a villager. The wayfarer is currently locked up, but somehow got word the PCs were here and asked to speak with them.

The lord leads the party to the wayfarer, who turns out to be an old time acquaintance (or familiar NPC) of one of the PCs. The man respectfully asks to be allowed to speak to the party alone, and the lord leaves. The wayfarer explains that he didn't commit the murder, and that he is simply a convenient scapegoat. He knows who the murderer is, but would end up in just as much trouble if he told the lord how he knows. He begs the PCs to help an old friend out, and prove it was the other man. This other man happens to be the village beadle.

He refuses to explain how he knows, but insists that he does. The PCs should just trust the wayfarer and slay the beadle. The wayfarer provides no further information until pressed later on.

The murder was actually committed by the village beadle, who is a Navehan priest. The victim was found with a single dagger plunged into his back. The beadle also recognized the wayfarer and stole his dagger to commit the murder. This was simply a convenient way to get the lord to kill the wayfarer, who is wanted dead by the Navehans. Setting him up saves his cover, gets rid of a man the beadle didn't like, and rids the church of the betrayer.

While he has been undercover in the village for almost a decade, the beadle is just as devout as ever. A skilled assassin and disciplined priest, he has happily adopted the role of a hardworking, Peonian villager. In fact he is so trusted that he was able to gain the lord's trust enough to be offered the office of beadle.

Whether or not the wayfarer truly knows the PCs is up to the GM, though it gives them a good reason to help if he is actually an acquaintance. The wayfarer knows of the beadle's Navehan connection, not only because of the manner of the murder, but because he was also once in the Navehan church. The wayfarer remembers seeing the beadle about 12 years ago at a ritual. The wayfarer committed a murder as part of a church ritual, but found himself unable to stomach it. It bothered him so much that he fled the church under pain of death. To keep his secret, he has traveled from place to place, earning bread as best he can, never staying in one place too long.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 21

The wayfarer is very reluctant to tell the PCs of his background, and certainly won't admit it to the lord or any of the villagers. Should he be forced to admit the truth however, he will do so, knowing full well it means his death at the hands of the lord or the Navehan beadle.

1) If the PCs deny knowing the wayfarer, or refuse or are unable to help him, the man is flogged, found guilty, and executed. The beadle however remains undercover for years to come, not committing any murders or anything else for his cult.

2) If the PCs agree to help, the wayfarer will caution them to make haste, but to be careful as well. The beadle is a dangerous killer and crafty as well, with the power of the dark god himself.

3) If the PCs investigate the beadle's cottage, they will find absolutely no clues that points out he is the murderer.

4) If the PCs ask the villagers about the beadle, they will mention how good a man he is, how hard he works, and how fair he is as the beadle. Some will also mention the fact that the beadle arrived about 10 years ago. Such inquiries will get back to the beadle as he is popular, but he will take no action against the PCs.

5) If the PCs ask the beadle about the wayfarer's accusation, or about any involvement, the beadle will amiably deny any knowledge of either. He will not let anything slip. The beadle will however subtly try to find out what the PCs know about the murder.

6) If the PCs mention to the beadle that the wayfarer suspects the beadle, the wayfarer will "escape" that evening. No trace can be found of him, as the beadle has murdered him carefully hidden the body.

7) If the PCs accuse the wayfarer of making up stories and refuse to help him anymore, he will beg them to listen. He tells of his Navehan involvement many years ago. He sounds earnest in his confession, and confident in his confession. The wayfarer asks the PCs to keep the secret and trust him, as he is no longer part of the church. He is willing to accept his certain death as penance for his crimes.

8) If the PCs attack the beadle and are caught, they will be wanted for assault or murder if caught. They will not be able to find any proof of the beadle's involvement, and any attempt to prove it will be futile. They will lose any trial, unless one of the PCs is a very, very persuasive orator. Even if they escape execution, the villagers will not welcome the PCs, as no one will believe of the beadle's involvement in the church.

9) If the PCs kill the beadle and are not caught, the lord can be convinced that the same person that committed the original murder killed the beadle. This obviously can't be the wayfarer (or the PCs if they weren't present for the first murder) and the lord will agree to release him, though he is no longer welcome in the village.

10) If the PCs help the wayfarer escape, their involvement will be obvious to the lord and they will become wanted for aiding a murderer escape. The PCs and wayfarer will be tried in absentia and declared outlaw.

11) If the PCs try to accuse the beadle of being Navehan, none will believe them. Laughing in friendly manner, the beadle will wave as the PCs are exiled from the village.

12) If the PCs ever mention to the lord or villagers that the wayfarer has admitted to once being Navehan, the wayfarer will immediately be burned to death. Given the accusation of murder, and the loathing of Navehans, the PCs will not be able to stop the execution without physically helping him escape.

A Friendly Camp...

While traipsing through the woods the smell of cooking wafts from the trees. Upon investigating, the PCs find three of men cooking up some venison and bean stew. After an initial grab for weapons, the poachers size up the PCs. If they are not apparently nobles or retainers for the local lord, they will relax and engage in some friendly chit-chat. If the PCs are noble or retainers, they will grab their weapons and flee into the woods.

The poachers turn out to be very friendly men and offer up some good food. After a pleasant meal and bawdy conversation, the local lord, his squire, his game warden, and two men-at-arms interrupt the fun. They look very serious about the trespass.

1) If the PCs try to flee they, along with the poachers, will be hunted down. The lord's game warden is an excellent tracker and knows every inch of the local land. It will be hard to escape, but if the PCs can flee until nightfall they can probably get away.

2) If the PCs fight the lord and his men, they will do it alone; the poachers will flee into the woods. The lord and his men are tough, skilled opponents.

3) If the PCs surrender without a fight, the lord and his men will surround the camp before the poachers can flee and escort all of them to his property. Everyone will be held for a few days before court. The lord is a reasonable, if tough minded, man. The PCs should be able to convince him they didn't know the men were poachers. They will be given a small fine and a stern warning about repeating such lawlessness.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 22

Regardless of PC action, any of the poachers captured will have their hand severed, as they are repeat offenders.

4) If the PCs fled and were caught, they will be held and convicted of a first offense. Depending on their demeanor, they will be flogged, fined and possibly branded or mutilated (in the form of a severed hand).

5) If the PCs fought the lord's men and were captured, they will be charged with felony assault of a noble and poaching. Without a gifted lawyer or very convincing argument, the PCs and poachers will be hanged.

Noble Tempers Flare...

As the PCs travel, they come upon two knights and their parties arguing over a deer pierced by two arrows. One of the knights is a local lord, and the other is visiting relative. The two have had a long-standing feud. Unfortunately their wives, in the spirit of forced cooperation, brow beat them into a friendly hunt.

Now both have shot the deer and have gotten into a heated dispute over who actually killed it. The two sides (lord, squire, and hunter, vs. relative, 2 men-at-arms) have squared off on each side of the corpse as the two nobles sling curses and accusations at each other. Events from the past are brought up and tempers flair. After several minutes of shouting, they draw their swords and a fight ensues.

Unless the PCs make themselves overtly known, they will remain unseen for the duration of the argument and ensuing fight. The fight is quick and brutal, resulting in the lord, squire, hunter, and one of the relative's men-at-arms being cut down. As the gravity of what just happened sinks into the relative's mind, he panics and orders the man-at-arms to finish off the wounded squire. The two survivors then run off.

1) If the PCs simply look at each other wide-eyed and walk away (sometimes it is best not to meddle in the affairs of dragons or nobles...), they will hear of the incident at a later date concerning an attack by brigands.

2) If the PCs try to intervene during the argument or during the fight, the knights will stop fighting and cool down. The PCs are in for a serious talking to full of threats, insults, and the occasional cuffing. Otherwise things will end peacefully and the deer will be forgotten.

3) If the PCs search the scene after the survivors have left, they will find the lord is actually still alive, unconscious and bleeding seriously. Left to himself, the lord will soon die from his wounds.

4) If the PCs give useful treatment, the lord will survive. After a few days of rest, he will lead the PCs to his manor where the relative has told everyone they were attacked by brigands. The lord will have the man arrested and send for his liege or his legal representative to await trial. The PCs will be forced to remain for the month it takes, and will be treated very well by the lord. Not only is he appreciative of their aid, but he needs them for the moot as witnesses.

5) If the PCs stay for the trial and give convincing testimony, the relative will be found guilty and stripped of title. He will be found dead some months later...

6) If the PCs sneak away before trial, the relative is able to use his own influence to reduce his punishment to a severe fine. The wounded lord will be very angry with the PCs, but is tempered by their saving of his life.

Malicious Migrants...

As the PCs sleep, they are awoken by the cry of "FIRE!." They can see a cottage in the distance is in flames and many villagers scramble to help as they can. When its over, the cottage is in ruins but the family and their animals manage to get out. People talk for awhile, about how fires do happen and they should be more careful. Few listen to the protests of the family that nothing was lit, but the villagers return to sleep.

The next night, the cry of "FIRE!" goes up again. Among a similar scene, the family is able to escape, though not unscathed. The shepherd's son, known for his wild imagination, claims to have seen a group of men dancing around the cottage before it caught on fire. No one believes him though, claiming it was simply an accident and that he shouldn't be telling stories of ghosts and bugaboos. Again everyone returns to sleep.



HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 23

The fires are being started by a small group of cultists who worship an ancient tribal demon named Emminesh. It is a small cult made up of a single family who has carried on the tradition for generations. Through whatever means, the leader has received visions leading him to try to sacrifice innocents to the flame. They live in a remote home of a nearby village.

The cultists are in the area in the guise of migrant workers. The village has been hiring workers from nearby villages. These cultists have been sleeping outside of the village, and have set up a small shrine to their demon there.

1) If the PCs don't investigate, people will wait until a third home is burned before becoming suspicious. After the fourth home is put to the torch, and two children are killed, the lord begins questioning the migrants before ceasing to allow them to work. The fires will continue however, until the watch catches the cultists as they try to set a fifth home ablaze.

2) If the PCs speak to the shepherd's son, he will admit he's told some tales before. He is quite earnest in his claim however. He was not able to see any details of the vandals.

3) If the PCs closely examine the ruins of any of the cottages, they will find some evidence of the cultists. There will be some hard to spot etchings of odd symbols on some stones and the dirt, though most will have been trampled.

4) If the PCs talk the migrant workers, that aren't cultists, they will point out that they all come from a single village. They don't recognize the cultists if asked. Talking to the cultists results only in lies from them.

5) If the PCs follow the cultists after they finish working for the day, they will be able to follow them back to their camp if reasonably stealthy. If detected, the cultists will try to mislead the PCs, or even openly confront them.

6) If the PCs find the cultists camp, they will see the altar, bloody from sacrificed animals, and dark robes. Once the cultists know their secret is out, they will try to kill the PCs.

7) If the PCs tell the lord about the cultists and lead the way to the camp, the cultists will stand no chance against the knight and his men-at-arms. The PCs will be gifted 30d each for their efforts.

A Stranger Brings Strange Happenings...

As the PCs talk to folk around the village or in the tavern, it soon becomes apparent they are rather upset about a certain old man who has brought with him a curse or is responsible himself the goings on. Livestock have been killed, strange noises are heard in the night, and unfamiliar spoor has been found.

An unfortunate cartographer has become the suspected culprit. This elderly man is a bit odd and solitary, renting a room in the local inn. But he is innocent of everything, except of perhaps being scatter brained. Suddenly uproar erupts as a farmer brings his wounded child to the village, both claiming they were attacked by a flying demon. A mob quickly gathers, and bodily forces the (now bruised and bloody) cartographer to the local manor. The lord, eager to calm the crowd and suspicious of the old man himself, tosses the cartographer in the stocks/cellar/gaol. He will be hanged for witchcraft in one week.

What has really happened is that a recent storm felled a great oak that was the home of a family of yelgri. They have now taken up residence in a small cave complex near the village. They are responsible for the recent attacks.



1) If the PCs let the situation handle its self, the lord will find the cartographer guilty and hang him. The attacks will not stop, and the lord will eventually gather his men and search the woods. After a death in the village, the yelgri will eventually be wiped out. The cartographer's death will be rationalized as proper, as he obviously summoned them.

2) If the PCs blindly search the woods, they will find no clues as flying creatures leave no tracks on the ground.

3) If the PCs petition respectfully enough, they will be allowed to speak with the cartographer. The old man is utterly baffled and bewildered. Focused questioning will bring the man to mention the great oak some miles away.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 24

He knows it was blown over as he had used it as a landmark, and got lost once when he couldn't see it.

4) If the PCs head out to the tree, careful examination of the fallen oak will reveal odd marks in the branches, including the remnants of a large nest.

5) If the PCs set up night watches, after a night or two they will hear the odd calls of the yelgri. The nighttime visitors will flee from any approach, but observant PCs will be able to note which direction they fled in the air.

6) If the PCs follow the yelgri's line of flight, they will encounter the caves (on a successful searching roll). Spoor can be found near the entrance, including a large nest like structure in the mouth. The cave holds 4 yelgri who will try to flee if the PCs approach. Defeating them or destroying the yelgri's nest or fouling the cave will cause them to move further away, taking the village out of their hunting range.

7) If the PCs bring the existence of the yelgri to the lord's attention it will be relatively easy to convince him to release the cartographer, especially if they bring back proof. The cartographer will show his appreciation by giving them a map. The location and utility of the map is up to the GM.

Rumble of the Rabble...

As the PCs walk through a village, they notice their is no one in the commons, shops, or working the fields. As they wonder where the villagers are, the roar of a crowd can be heard in the distance. Upon further investigation, the PCs come upon two large crowds of serfs and farmers (even women and children) shouting at each other. There are more there than would probably account for the village.

There are a couple of people between the crowds, obviously trying to keep the peace. But their shouts are drowned out by the others and they are generally being ignored. Most of the serfs are wielding various farm implements, but a few yeomen have armored up and the occasional spear and bow can be seen in the mob.

The crowds are from two neighboring villages that have a long history of bad blood, both between the villagers and the lords. Recently the daughter of one of the villages' (GM's choice) reeves was raped while gathering in the woods. When the lord mounted a search party, they found a small group of boys from the other village out wandering. The lord immediately arrested them and had them flogged before returning them. Unfortunately they were innocent (who did it remains a mystery).

The other lord then rode with his men and confronted the first lord. From there it has escalated between the two villages over the last several months. It got so bad it came to the notice of the local earl/baron who has dispatched his seneschal to arrange arbitration to settle the matter.

The arbitration has taken longer than expected and while the lords have been away, the villages have gathered intent on a fight. The efforts of the beadles and some others are the only thing barely keeping the peace.

1) If the PCs ask one of the calmer peasants (probably a wife), they will get the gist of the story though it will be rather skewed depending on which village the person is from.

2) If the PCs are of a sizable force and well armed, or are noble, they may be able to back down both mobs. However they will be hard pressed to do so; if they are not intimidating enough they will be ignored or might even cause tempers to flare.

3) If the PCs try to find out where the lords' negotiations are, they will find that most don't know where it's actually being held. After asking/harassing enough people, they will be informed that one of the lord's squires was sent back from the negotiations and is currently in the middle trying to stop the fight. He's afraid to leave the chaos to its own so hasn't gone to get the lords. Being very distracted, it is hard to his attention.

4) If the PCs manage to get the squire's attention (most likely by screaming in his face repeatedly), he will explain he wishes to leave and summon the lords to stop the madness.

5) If the PCs are well armed and look intimidating, the squire will ask them to try to keep the mobs apart while he summons the lords.

6) If the PCs are not well armed or object to staying between the mobs, the squire will reluctantly give the group the location of the lords meeting. The squire asks they be quick about getting them here.

7) If the PCs are quick enough, they will find the lords' encampment in enough time to explain the situation before a fight does break out. The lords and seneschal shall ride back and with a bit of difficulty and head thumping will manage to avoid the fight. The PCs will be given hospitality for a time, and the seneschal may find them useful and trustworthy for future assignments. The incident has emphasized the need to end the rivalry.

8) If the PCs do not intervene, or their efforts fail, the fighting will start in about half an hour. It will be messy and crude, resulting in several injuries and a handful of deaths. But it will be over quickly; the serfs are not skilled fighters and most will run off when injured.

9) If the peasant mobs end up fighting and deaths are suffered, the full ramifications will not be felt for a day or so until the lords return to their respective villages. When they learn of what transpired, they will each gather (over adamant objections by the seneschal) their squires, men-at-arms, and willing militia to meet again in the field. This battle will be far bloodier and deadlier, causing several deaths and injuries but no real resolution. Both lords will be brought to court by their lieges, fined heavily, and if either are bailiffs they will immediately be removed from office. While obviously not the PCs fault, a spiteful lord may decide to try to hold them responsible at a later date, especially if the party is hapless or helpless.

There and Back Again...

The PCs witness a slow procession through the village they are in. It is obviously a Peonian funeral procession. The mood is somber and the hymns are interspersed with the occasional sobbing. The shroud-covered body is being carried on a stretcher, and is surrounded by relatives.

The young man died two days ago after succumbing to an unknown illness. The PCs may know this if they have been in the village for a short time before, they may know the circumstance, otherwise they can find out after the events about to unfold. If they try to ask someone in the procession, they will get angry looks and attitudes about their rude behavior.

What has happened is the man was out gathering wood some days ago and came across some mushrooms. He mistakenly identified the poisoned mushrooms and ate one. Later that night, he began vomiting, slipped into a coma, and died.

More accurately, he didn't die. But he was so close to death and unresponsive, he was mistakenly pronounced dead by the village priest.

To the consternation of all, the body suddenly lets out a cry, sits up and pulls the shroud from its face. The stretcher-bearers drop him, several people pass out, and the rest scatter in a cacophony of gasps and screams.

The man slowly stands and looks about confused, muttering incomprehensibly. Suddenly an alarmed murmur spread through the crowd, carrying words like "demon", "morvrus", "wraith", and "possessed." As the man looks about, the murmur grows louder and louder until someone finally yells "Burn the undead!" The man is still confused, but starts to shamble clumsily away. The serfs jump out of the way, and the man manages to make it into the nearby fields and woods.

After the villagers, stare at the woods for a while, they begin clamoring for the lord to hunt down and burn the man, who has obviously been possessed by "spirits of a dire nature." When the priest quietly agrees, the lord calls his men at arms and yeomen. Several villagers also grab up what they can to chase down the fiend.

1) If the PCs do nothing, or join in the hunt (he did after all come back to life), the man will not escape long. Nor will he live long. He will be bound, his mouth gagged, and tossed upon a hastily built pyre. Prayers will echo as the flames are lit.

2) If the PCs accompany the hunters and try to persuade them to spare the man, they will be shouted at and roughed up some. With a particularly convincing or pleasurable argument, the PCs may be able to get the lord to lock up the man for now, instead of killing him outright. Most villagers will be rather upset with the PCs.

3) If the PCs manage to find the man before the lord's men, he will surrender to them if given half a chance. The man will explain about the mushroom if allowed.

4) If the PCs try to lead the man to freedom, the lord's hunters will still be tracking them down.

5) If the PCs are found with the man, he will be burned and the PCs will be arrested for witchcraft (consorting with demons). They will be held until a trial starts, which will be an adventure in and of its self. Especially since their main witness is dead, again.

6) If the PCs bring the man back to the village or lord's party, they will most likely be able to convince the lord to arrest the man instead of killing him outright. If they can tell the man's story with some bit of credibility, they may be able to convince the lord there was no supernatural occurrence.

7) If the PCs can convince the priest to admit he may have made a mistake, convincing the village and lord the man is (or was) not possessed will be much easier. It will take some brow beating, and the only way to convince the priest to admit the possibility of such a grievous mistake is to appeal to his spiritual side and pity for the man. Explaining how leading villagers to murder the innocent, and how unjust his death would be, will be very convincing.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 26

The Grasping Ghost...

As the PCs are eating in a village, several worried men start discussion. They speak of missing people, and the latest one from last night, the woodward's son. Every so often a younger child will wander into a nearby marshy (or swift river or dense forest) area and be lost, but 5 have disappeared in the last 4 months. All but the latest were adults.

Search parties led by the lord have turned up nothing. Everyone has been ordered to stay away from the marsh, but two have gone missing since that decree was made. The villagers are beginning to worry and a free hold family has already left.

The spirit of a young child who innocently wandered into the marsh last year and died is causing the disappearances. About 4 months ago, the scared spirit began calling out to family and friends. This telepathic link is tenuous, but always manifests at night. These people awake in the night and wander to the area where the child died, and unfortunately they have all drown in the same place. All the people summoned have been friends and family (father, 2 cousins, and 2 friends). The child is not trying to kill them, he only wants to be taken home.

1) If the PCs move on without getting involved, several other people will go missing. The place will soon become known as being cursed, and life will generally be bad for the villagers.

2) If the PCs ask the lord about what they found, he will say nothing and seem a bit defensive about the PCs questioning his competence. If they ask others involved, they will hear about the tracker. The tracker will admit the only thing they found each time were the tracks, when they could find them, all led to end of the marsh.

3) If the PCs perform, or bring in a priest, to perform an exorcism, it will only be successful if performed near the boy's resting place (which is not too far into the marsh). It will destroy the boy's spirit, which is weak and frightened.

4) If the PCs wait around and set up a careful watch (one that preferably includes the path to the marsh), they will catch one of the boy's brothers wandering towards his death after four or five days. If they allow him to go to spot, they will be able to pull him free safely. The brother will

then remember the dead boy's plea for help, stating the boy died there. Some work with reasonable safety gear will allow the PCs to pull forth the boy and the other missing people. Burying the boy's body in town will end his haunting. If the PCs wake the brother before he leads them to the "dying place", he will wake up and not remember a thing. They will have to wait for two weeks for the next event, which will again be the brother.

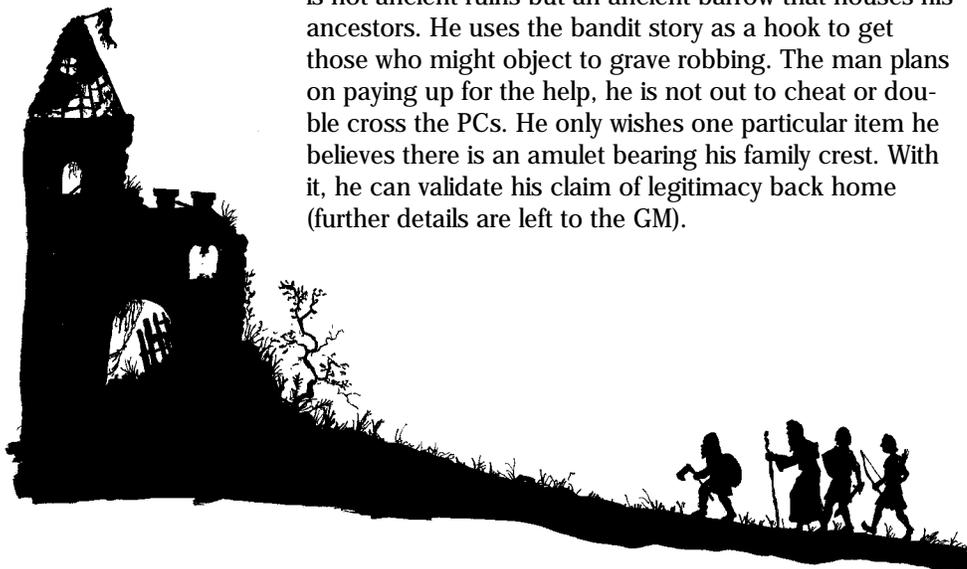
Adventure for Hire...

As the PCs enjoy a quiet meal in a popular, local tavern a group of 3 strangers enter. They are bedraggled, shabby, and somewhat odiferous. They pause a moment to take in the crowd before approaching the PCs. They politely introduce themselves, speaking in a dialect that indicates they "aren't from around these parts." They may speak to other, more wealthy looking people first if any are there. None will accept the offer.

One speaks to the PCs, starting with niceties and small talk. Assuming the PCs are at least cordial (the man is polite after all), he will guide the conversation towards his plight.

He explains that two days north lays some hidden ruins that he is in search of. He knows almost exactly where it is, and the ruins are supposedly where a bandit hid his booty before meeting an untimely end. The problem is however that they are utterly broke and have no supplies. They are also unfamiliar with the area. The offer is if the PCs can provide supplies (especially food, tonight hopefully), they will get a 1/4 share to split amongst themselves of the treasure found.

The man is pretty much telling the truth, except that it is not ancient ruins but an ancient barrow that houses his ancestors. He uses the bandit story as a hook to get those who might object to grave robbing. The man plans on paying up for the help, he is not out to cheat or double cross the PCs. He only wishes one particular item he believes there is an amulet bearing his family crest. With it, he can validate his claim of legitimacy back home (further details are left to the GM).



1) If the PCs decline, the man will smile in resignation, and wish them a good night. He will still ask anyone he can, possibly making a fool of himself, or even turning to stealing food.

2) If the PCs accept, the men will gratefully slurp down their dinner and will meet them again in the morning (they plan on sleeping outside unless the PCs pay for a room for them, which will make them happy). In the morning, they will set off. It is up to the GM to decide if any encounters along the way are appropriate (such as local barbarians or gargun). Once at the site, the men will begin digging into a hill of some sort. Under the dirt are some wood and stone supports and after about 6 hours digging (4 if the PCs help) they will break into the structure that is now obviously a grave.

3) If the PCs have a problem with grave robbing, or question the man about him lying, he will explain the story and plead with them not to hinder him. If the PCs try to stop him, or threaten him he and his men will go and wait for the PCs to leave the site before coming back and finishing up. If the PCs leave a guard (while the others fetch the authorities) or don't look to be leaving after a few days, the men will try to attack at night. They don't wish to hurt the PCs, just subdue them so they can get the amulet.

4) If the PCs don't interfere, the man will find his amulet. For payment, he will take a silver armband from the grave and give it to the PCs (worth about 100d), and another for himself (to pay for the return trip). He doesn't want to loot the grave and will cover up the grave with as little disturbance as possible.

Crooked Cookery...

The village the PCs are in is hosting a large meeting of the Mangai. Over the last several days, several important Mangai members have arrived, and some more are due in the next two days. Several peddlers have come to town, various merchants are displaying their best wares, and the lord of the village has declared a small festival (since his peasants are distracted anyway) on the day of the meeting.

The PCs come across a large, unattractive woman who until recently has worked in the inn as a cook (and a damn fine one, which the PCs might know). She is sitting by herself and sobbing. If the PCs speak with her and ask what is wrong she will tell them.

The lady was preparing to make a fine meal for the Mangai, using an old family recipe. She was hoping to get an offer from one of the rich merchants to be a personal cook.

Unfortunately, a friend of hers who she had been teaching to cook stole the recipe and the sample meant for the innkeeper. The younger, attractive lass took the cook's job with a "bared leg and a stolen recipe." The innkeeper refused to listen to her story, allured by the pretty girl and her food.

The cook believes (correctly) that the young girl cannot prepare the recipe without her written recipe. But the innkeeper won't allow the cook in the building.

1) If the PCs don't decide to help, the cook will live a miserable life as she has to marry a local bum. The girl will be asked to come back with a wealthy merchant as a cook/concubine.

2) If the PCs decide to try to steal the recipe, they will have to get it from the girl. She always keeps it with her. The only ways to get it from her is to pick pocket it, steal it from her room (a wealthy, attractive looking PC might be able to seduce her...), or get it the night she is cooking it. If caught, the girl and innkeeper will be able to get the lord to arrest the PCs as it is a very important event. To get it the night of the feast, the PCs will have to cause a distraction of some sort and get into the kitchen.

3) If the PCs manage to ruin the ingredients (pretending to be a delivery person or sneaking into the kitchen) or change the recipe on the girl's paper (entailing getting and returning the paper unnoticed!) the meal will be ruined and the girl and innkeeper disgraced. The girl will be fired and the cook re-hired, but the Mangai will be too displeased to offer anything.

4) If the PCs help the cook prepare the feast outside of the inn (they will have to help her pay for the ingredients, about 5d) in conjunction with ruining the girl's meal, they will be able to rush to the 'rescue'. The innkeeper, stunned by how bad the girl's meal was, will happily allow the cook to bring in her feast. The girl will be disgraced, and a wealthy usurer will offer the cook a position in his household. The cook will offer the PCs 10d (her advance payment), but has nothing else to offer but a free meal and her appreciation.

Lucky Lucae...

As the PCs walk past the village square, the local lord can be heard screaming at the gathered crowd, stopping every now and then to slap the reeve across the face. The lord's face is red with rage, and spittle flies about as he screams. The gist of the lord's ire is that Lucae his chicken is missing. The reeve let the chicken out on accident. He knows that someone has his chicken and if it's not returned everyone in the village will be "lashed, taxed, and slashed" until Lucae is returned. Anyone responsible for harming the chicken will be hanged!

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 28

It will seem odd for a lord to become upset about a chicken (most of the villagers seem very puzzled), but inquiries to the reeve or other village officer will be answered. Lucae is the lord's lucky chicken, and he believes the chicken can predict the future. A village mongrel had gotten into the pen where the lord kept Lucae. When the reeve opened the pen to save the chicken, it escaped. By the time the reeve had wrestled the ornery dog away and remembered about the chicken, Lucae had gone.

Unfortunately, Lucae had mixed with the chickens of a local cottar. In preparation for his small birthday feast, the cottar's wife selected an older chicken (Lucae was rather old) and killed it. Lucae is currently in her pot. She was at the gathering and while she can't remember what the chicken looked like exactly, but she suspects (correctly) that she has killed the lord's lucky chicken.

1) If the PCs don't do anything, the villagers will be made to suffer the lord's wrath for several days before the wife finally admits to her mistake. The lord does not actually hang anyone due to pleas from his own wife, but both the reeve and the woman are flogged severely, and the reeve is removed from office.

2) If the PCs offer to help the reeve and other village officers (or are well liked in the village), they will be included in the search for Lucae. There is little that can be done except a door-to-door search. No one will know anything, not even what the chicken looked like.

3) If the PCs continue to the cottar's home (which is not too far from the manor and full of chickens), they might smell cooking chicken. Even if they don't, all but the most oblivious will notice the wife is very nervous and upset when asked about the chicken.

4) If the PCs press the matter, the wife will crack and admit what she's done.

5) If the PCs turn her in, the results of #1 above will apply, except the PCs will be gifted 50d for a reward. If the town beadle finds out about the cottar's wife, he will urge telling the lord straight away.

6) If the PCs try to fool the lord, it will actually be easier than one might think. However, they do not know what the chicken looks like. The reeve and wife do not remember exactly either and the few who do (servants, etc) will only give a general description, as they were not allowed near it. Only the lord and the lady are allowed (which the reeve will know).

7) If the PCs approach the lady of the manor discretely, she will agree to help them since she doesn't wish anyone hanged. The mark the lord will remember is a dark, mottled feather under the left wing. If the PCs get the lady's help, find an *old* chicken, and use dye or paint on the one feather, the lord will be fooled.

The PCs will be paid 75d for returning Lucae, and will have the gratitude of the lord, lady, cottar, and reeve.

A Friend Scorned...

The PCs have stopped in for a meal at the village tavern. Conversation of the patrons turns to strange happenings. A farmer woke this morning to find one of his sheep with its throat slit. Some time before that, strange symbols had been marked on his door in blood. A week before that, he and his wife awoke to find a shadowy demon staring in the window at them. The man must be cursed, the patrons agree.

The village reeve will come in during the discussion. He will listen for a moment, before announcing he will give his best cow to whom ever will figure out what is going on. He is reluctant to speak to the lord about it, as the lord is very harsh when dealing with "silly, peasant superstition." The rest of the village of course has already determined the man and his family is cursed or possessed and are not willing to investigate further.

A former village member who was exiled for thievery is actually haunting the farmer. He was exiled 5 years ago when caught by the farmer and turned in for stealing grain from the miller. The thief was a good friend then, and has returned to take his revenge. He is living in a small copse of trees outside the village where the farmer and he used to sneak off to drink and talk.

1) If the PCs do not get involved, that night the farmer's roof catches fire. He and his wife escape, but no one will allow them to sleep with them. The farmer spends the whole day repairing his roof. The family will soon become outcasts in the village.

2) If the PCs accept, the reeve will offer them his cow (which can be traded for something else from a merchant if the PCs so desire). He will then introduce them to the farmer. Asking questions of the man and his wife will reveal little more than what they heard in the tavern.

3) If the PCs post a watch near the man's cottage (before or after the fire), nothing further will happen to the cottage as long as a guard is present. The thief is very observant, careful, and familiar with the village, and will notice any but the most cleverly hidden guard.

4) If the PCs ask others in the village, they are in for a frustrating time. Most of the others will have a high opinion of the farmer, but have no information or interest in getting involved with the cursed man. The only real clue will be found if the miller is asked.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 29

He is saddened by the man's situation, mentioning how he caught the person stealing his grain and turned him in even though they were friends. If questioned about it, the miller will relate the story of the thievery.

5) If the PCs ask the farmer about the thief, he will tell them about the man and the event. If asked, the farmer will show them where the thief lived (the cottage has been taken down since then) and tell them about the copse of trees in a regretful, offhand manner.

6) If the PCs search the copse, they will find the thief. He will try to run, but will be easy to catch. He will not fight back, but will surrender with much vitriol and bad-mouthing of the PCs and the farmer. If turned over to the reeve, the reeve will bring him to the lord and the PCs will get the lord's thanks and their very own cow.

Rain Wash...

The PCs come across (or have spent several days helping out in) a village that has recently suffered heavy flooding. Severe rain has been pouring for several days, which finally caused a flash flood. Just as suddenly as it started, the rain has stopped. Now everyone is busy trying to save the fields, repair cottages, save animals and so forth. There is plenty of work to be done.

One of the local merchants approaches the PCs, asking for their help. Her store was badly flooded and several items were washed away. She has recovered everything of importance, except for one pack. The backpack contained several small, wooden sculptures and floated away during the flood. She and her apprentices have to quickly dry out her goods and clean the shop or she will lose many of her goods to rot. She will pay 20d to each PC if they can find her pack.

1) If the PCs decline (there are after all many others who need help), the merchant shall never get her pack. She understands however, and will hold no ill will towards the PCs.

2) If the PCs accept, they are in for a daunting task. They know the direction the flood went, and while it wasn't particularly deep, the floodwaters were fast. There is a good chance the pack got hung on something. Of course, it didn't, but the PCs can hope.

3) If the PCs follow the flood's path for at least a full day, they will be in the area the pack has made it to, a small gully. Observant PCs will notice what appears to be a small cave that has several inches of debris and flotsam (mostly branches) at its mouth. The cave is at the bottom of the small gully. The gully is full of debris carried by the recent flood.

4) If the PCs search the gully, several small items from the village (tools, cutlery, some clothes etc.) can be found with relative ease; but no backpack to be found. The PCs may determine the pack is in the cave (which it is).

5) If the PCs decide to search the cave, they will have to clear out the mouth of the cave, which will take about 2 man-hours. The cave is slippery, full of mud, and cramped but relatively easy to navigate with a light source. Several more items from the village can be found in the cave. About 35' into the cave, they will find the half buried pack. Between the muck and debris, it actually takes a good bit of effort to free the pack.

6) If the PCs examine the whole cave complex closely, they will find markings (ancient Jarin) in the cave, near an area of wall that has partially collapsed. It is an ancient tomb and the recent flood washed away part of the man-made wall (just stacked rocks really). Breaking the rest of the wall is very easy, and the 8 skeletons in the small tomb have all been washed into a jumbled pile of bones. There is little of value in the tomb, and it is covered in faded markings.

Log Jam...

The PCs come across a remote village that has recently had a group of timberwrights take up residence. While the novelty of the guild's appearance having mostly died off in the village, three visiting timberwrights at the inn have warranted some talk. They have been asking for some volunteers as guards, but the lord has greatly discouraged it. When the timberwrights see the PCs, obviously strangers probably not under order of the lord, they will make the same offer; 25d for performing guard duty for about three weeks. Payment to be collected at the end of the three weeks, with extra pay should they take longer than 3 weeks.

The guild got word of a copse of rare white, Harnic oak and after paying the dues and fees to the Mangai, Timberwrights' Guild, and local lord they have set up camp about 1 league from the village proper.

Three of these timberwrights have come to the village for supplies and are staying the night in the inn before returning the next day. They were also there to speak to the lord about securing some guards as they have found two of their own dead. Both were found away from the camp, crushed under logs. But the lord wasn't interested in helping the guild. He told the "rich guildsmen" to hire their own mercenaries. But there are no villagers who are willing or able to act as mercenaries, and those who might have been willing the local lord has dissuaded.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 30



The two suspicious deaths were indeed murders, committed by a radical Siemite hermit. He believes the copse of trees is a holy grove of Siem (whether or not that's true is up to the GM).

1) If the PCs show an interest in hiring on with the timberwrights, they will be taken to the camp the next day. After meeting the work leader, the PCs will be charged with doing guard duty and making short range patrols so the timberwrights can spend more time working.

2) If the PCs accept, they will be given space to live and set to their duties. The work leader is a tough but fair man, and will expect the PCs to be constantly on guard, though he will let them set their schedule. Of the most importance are the tool shed and living quarters. After three nights, one of the workers fails to come home. No one remembers seeing him leave or knows where he is. Seeking him at night will provide no results. Later in the night, a tree can be heard crashing in the woods.

3) If the PCs search the direction the tree was heard (they will have better luck in the morning), they will find the missing man under the tree, his arms and legs sticking from under the fallen trunk. Investigating the body will reveal rope marks around the wrists and ankles where he was tied to the tree before it was felled. A very skilled physician, with a detailed examination, may determine (at a large penalty) the man was actually killed by a blunt blow to the head. Due to the damage done by the tree, this will be very hard to discern. There are no tracks to be found.

4) If the PCs take more intense measures, such as disallowing separation from the guards, or insisting workers always travel in at least threes, the Siemite will be forced to try to sneak into camp at night. The hermit is skilled at stealth, preferring to club his victim unaware, or use his sling if he feels he cannot get close enough. While skilled in stealth, he is not particularly bright and will fall for cleverly laid ambushes and traps.

Otherwise, the killing will continue at the rate of about one every three days. After the fifth death, the work leader will scrub the project and leave with what oak they have managed to gather. The PCs will be paid 10d at most.

5) If the PCs manage to speak to the hermit in earnest, he will explain his actions and about the holy grove. He will accuse the PCs of helping the rapacious destroyers kill the sacred forest.

6) If the PCs confront the timberwrights and threaten them to leave the tree alone (simple talk will not work), the guild will pack up and leave as the men are not prepared for an armed fight. The guild will however return some months later with a small company of professional mercenaries, and will be all too happy to rid the world of the hermit and PCs. The PCs will have gained a friend in the hermit who will teach them the ways of Siem (at least his version), and an enemy in the local Timberwrights' Guild.

7) If the PCs manage to kill or capture the hermit, the killings will stop and the job will be completed (three extra days of work per man lost) and the PCs paid accordingly. Should the hermit only be captured, then released after the trees have been harvested, he will follow the PCs for some time and try to kill them one by one as they travel.

Good Constable, Bad Constable...

A local merchant who has had some trouble with his shipments approaches the PCs. The last two were stopped and ransacked by the same, masked brigands. Each PC is offered 10d if they guard the next shipment and another 20d if the shipment it makes it through.

The merchant is well known in a nearby town or city for his goods, and often takes specialty orders, sometimes getting very backlogged.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 31

As such he must organize short trips carrying expensive goods. He has an expensive shipment to a wealthy and influential member of the Mangai, and he is worried. He would like the PCs to help ensure its safe delivery. The local lord has been rather niggardly in dealing with the problem, since no one else has reported any trouble. The lord did assign his squire to search the area and investigate, but nothing was found.

That squire and two of his men-at-arms are in fact carrying out the raids. The squire has taken a disliking to the merchant due to a past exchange of words. He has no desire to actually kill or injure the merchant or his workers, only to cause the man trouble.

1) If the PCs refuse, the shipment will be stolen and the merchant's apprentice and daughter will end up riding back to town, without their clothes!

2) If the PCs accept, they will be paid their 10d each and given lodgings for the night, so they can be well rested for the journey the next day. The merchant cannot go himself as he has another item due shortly. His apprentice and eldest daughter will drive the cart. The cart will be attacked a league from the village by three masked men. To prevent being recognized, the men are using simple spears and no armor, expecting no resistance. Not expecting the PCs or any fight, they will flee once one has been significantly wounded.

3) If the PCs make it to the town with the goods undamaged, the apprentice will finish the business and return the next day. There will be no sign of the bandits and they will receive any extra pay promised.

4) If the PCs report the matter to the lord, a careful PC will notice the squire or guards have wounds matching those delivered to the bandits. The lord will not hear any accusations and forceful PCs will find themselves unwelcome or worse.

5) If the PCs report the wounds to the merchant, he will ask them to deliver a message to the same mangai member they delivered the goods to for another 10d each.

6) If the PCs take the note to the Mangai member, they will be given another note the next day to return. The merchant will thank them. Should the PCs remain for the next few weeks, they will notice a few messengers enter and leave the lord's manor and the squire will be quietly moved out of the village to serve someone else.

Witch's Itch...

As the PCs sit in the inn or gathered in the village common, one of the villagers comes into the discussion, cursing the local physician/herbalist/apothecary/wise woman by all the gods and spirits he can think of. Rolling up his sleeves, a severe rash of boils and hives can be seen running up past his elbows. He relates the story of how she refused to sell him some medicine and he called her a name.

Another relates how the same thing has happened to two other villagers; each had reportedly had some sort of argument with the herbalist of late and later showed up with a similar rash in the last week. The obvious conclusion is she is casting inimical curses! Soon the stories are taken to the reeve, who agrees with the growing mob's conclusion.

The reeve quickly takes the matter to the manor lord. Being a devout Laranian (or other appropriate faith), the lord quickly storms from his manor and hauls the woman away. When the village beadle shows up with the same burning rash the next day he describes how he had searched her shop and must have activated the same curse, immediate action is demanded!

The "witch" is quite innocent. All of the victims are victim of a rare plant known as Kerry Moss, a relative of the poisonous Shorinda plant. They approached the woman asking to buy a love potion she is known to make for an upcoming festival. She has been somewhat busy of late preparing a shipment she recently purchased and hasn't had time to gather the ingredients. Tired of being persecuted, she finally told the victims where to find the required herbs. Unfortunately her directions were faulty and each found them selves looking for the berries in bushes that had Kerry Moss within them. This mild poison contact is what has caused the severe rashes. The beadle got his rash from roughly handling the woman's supplies, and himself making contact with some Kerry Moss.

1) If the PCs decide not to get involved, the woman will be tested. She will be dunked, tortured, and interrogated (often publicly), proclaiming her innocence the entire time. After two days, she is hanged publicly from the manor walls after receiving no support in the short trial.

2) If the PCs openly object, they will be shouted down at every turn. If they persist too much, they will find rotten vegetables or worse hurled at them, eventually being arrested for obvious duplicity with the witch (especially if they are strangers in the village).

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 32

3) If the PCs speak to the victims about the exact series of events all of them, except the one whose story got the whole thing started, will tell exaggerated stories involving the "witch" speaking arcane words, waving wands, and so on. The instigator feels guilty for starting the whole thing and if pressed will describe his trip to the woods and admit the woman performed no obvious spells. If the PCs then ask the others if they too went looking for the love berries, they will admit it but see no connection.

4) If the PCs get directions from the victims, they will find the place easily. A skilled herbalist will find the Kerry Moss. Randomly rummaging through the bushes will result in a similar rash within a few hours.

5) If the PCs sneak into the witch's shop, they will find her scattered supplies. A careful search and a successful herblore skill check (at a moderate penalty) will reveal the Kerry Moss.

6) If the PCs petition to speak at the witch's trial, they will be allowed as it adds a bit of legitimacy for the lord even though he has already decided her fate.

7) If the PCs are very respectful and well spoken during the trial, they will be able to get the lord to consider their points. The lord will grow angrily easily, especially if the PCs hint at him being simple minded or fearful. If they present information about the Kerry Moss and ask the instigating serf to speak, the lord will reconsider his actions. He is devout, but has no wish to kill the innocent and a very subtle hint about wrongly killing the innocent could be made to help him along this line of thinking. If a Peonian priest is available, he will help the PCs and will agree with their conclusion.

8) If the PCs are disrespectful to the lord, have no relevant evidence to present, or simply don't make their case very well, they will be listened to but summarily ignored by the lord. This will lead to the death of the woman.

9) If the PCs manage to save the woman, the villagers will be very apologetic and thank the PCs for saving them from themselves. The woman will gift the PCs with a handful of healing salves and a supply of fine tea, and will be their host for as long as they wish.

The P'vaker...

The PCs come to a small village whose people are very subdued. The feeling of fear and dread are almost palpable. The few who are willing to speak at all will quietly tell them to leave. They are reluctant to even speak to the strangers. A chance disaster would bring the small village under the control of a rogue.

Some two weeks prior, a bedraggled wanderer came into the inn begging for food and shelter from the fierce storm. When he became loud and pushy, he was tossed outside by one of the lord's guards and the innkeep's son. They threw him into the mud and yelled at him to leave the village. The man pointed at them and screamed an idle threat not to mess with him. The guard waved his sword above his head, and was struck by a huge bolt of lightning. In front of the gathered crowd, the guard and innkeep's son had been killed, seemingly at the whim of this stranger.

The stranger, always an opportunist and huckster, demanded food and a room or the whole village would be destroyed by lightning. Using a few tricks of legerdemain, a good act, and a bit of luck, the man has forced the hospitality of the village since that night. Every ill happenstance since then has been accredited to him, and he has taken credit for them. Including the death of a man who was kicked by a mule, even though the man hadn't even seen the rogue.

The man knows the lord will soon take action since he's starting to test the "wizard's" powers. But the stranger is also afraid to leave feeling he will be fully discovered as a phony and hunted down. He has the tiger by the tail and is looking for a safe way to leave.

1) If the PCs do not get involved the huckster will be finally arrested by the lord, fined, and flogged before being hanged.

2) If the PCs are insistent enough, they will be told about the wizard.

3) If the PCs try to speak to the lord, he will deny them access and ask them to leave the village before they anger the wizard.

4) If the PCs ask around, they will get various scraps of information from the villagers. Many of the stories will be utterly unbelievable, ranging from controlling demons to flying over the village at night. Obviously natural things, such as wind damage and the like, will be accredited to the man's powers.

5) If the PCs challenge the "wizard", he will threaten them by pointing his finger, and will use a few slight of hand tricks to try convincing them. If the PCs still approach, he will call any nearby villagers to protect him or they will all suffer his curse. The villagers are fearful, but reluctant to attack the PCs. If one of the PCs presents the simple idea that "If he's such a powerful wizard, why does he need you?" or something similar, the villagers will definitely not help. The man will surrender the instant he feels physical harm is about to be visited upon him.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 33

The lord will reward the PCs with 100d for their efforts and the man will be summarily hanged for witchcraft, robbery, and making a fool of the lord.

6) If the PCs approach the "wizard" alone, and threaten to call his bluff, he will offer to split the tributes and trinkets he's collected if the PCs offer to sneak him out. Otherwise he will try to flee, or surrender with no resistance.

A Dish Best Served Cold...

The PCs enter a village where the villagers are all gathering at the walls of the village manor (or have been there and know what is happening). The lord and two guards appear before the gate with a bound man. The lord explains that the sentence of death has been passed for the crimes of sedition, breach of rank, and assault. A noose is tossed from the other side of the wall and put around the man's neck. He is forced up a ladder, begging for mercy. A young woman, the man's daughter, from the crowd calls out and is held back. With little ado, the man is hanged by the neck until dead.

The next day a festival is planned (it is a coincidental traditional feast, not a celebration of the man's death), despite the sad events of the previous day. As preparations are made, it comes to someone's attention that the recently departed's daughter has gone missing. Worried, some folk of the village ask the PCs to look for her while they finish needed preparations. The girl was very close to her father and they fear she may kill herself or run away.

The man was hanged for speaking down to the lord, questioning why nobles were so much better. The lord warned the man to go home, but the man grew angry and threw a small knife at him. While not harmed, it was too much and the lord had him arrested, and later hanged after the man refused to apologize and accept a lashing instead. The lord didn't wish to kill the hard working man, but was left with little choice after several outbursts in court. The daughter has gotten a hold of a crossbow, and is hiding in a cottage near where the lord will be seated during the feast. She intends on killing him.

1) If the PCs decline to help, or don't search very carefully, the lord will be struck by a crossbow bolt in the side from out of nowhere. The girl will flee into the wilderness during the confusion, but it will be apparent who is responsible. She will immediately be declared outlaw and a bounty put on her head (and will be hanged should she be caught).

2) If the PCs continue searching after the festival starts among the cottages and buildings near the feast, they will come across her hiding near a window armed with a crossbow.

There is an overturned table between her and the PCs, and she will have time to fire before they can overwhelm her.

3) If the PCs try to overwhelm her by rushing, she will get the shot off before she is taken. There is a small chance that a missile weapon could be used to disable her, or a PC could sneak around and block the window, or shout a warning to the lord. Once captured, she will not resist nor will she try to blame it on the PCs.

Regardless of whether the lord survives, the daughter will be summarily hanged.

4) If the PCs try to talk her down, she will hesitate. If they can convince her this is not what her father would have wanted, that her actions would make her no better than a thug (or noble...), she will waver. If the PCs also promise not to turn her in (she will promise not to try again, and won't), she will surrender and let herself be led out quietly.

5) If the PCs do turn her in, she will curse their names. The lord however is sympathetic and does not punish her, save an assurance that such future actions will not be dealt with lightly. She will not make another attempt.

Snatch the Smith...

The PCs are minding their own business at the local inn when a wealthy looking man approaches them. He offers an employment opportunity that requires a bit of discretion and asks them to talk to him in a more private setting (outside, or in his room).

The man is a Mangai representative sent to deal with a situation in the village. The lord's weaponsmith has lost his guild membership due to flagrant refusal to pay his dues. The smith has the money, but refuses to pay "on principle." The lord met with the representative, but simply stated it wasn't his problem, and hinted no harm better come to his smith. In exchange for the lord's protection, the smith has offered his services at minimal cost. This is a precedent the Mangai can not allow! The representative has the authority (from the guilds anyway) and coin to hire PCs to kidnap the man and get him out of town. The man offers 100d each, with another 100d upon completion. If the PCs are caught, the man will deny knowing them.

1) If the PCs refuse, the Mangai man will pay them 10d for their time and silence, and quickly leave town in case the PCs decide to tell the lord.

2) If the PCs tell the lord, he will invite them to dinner and express his appreciation. If word gets back to the Mangai (probably via a local merchant), the PCs will have possibly earned some resentment from the guilds.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 34

3) If the PCs accept, the representative will pay the money and reiterate the subtle nature of the kidnapping. If the lord catches them or gets wind of the scheme, the PCs are on their own.

4) If the PCs try to sneak into the manor, they will face a hard time and unless they go totally unnoticed, they will have to face the lord's men and will of course become hunted criminals. Even if they manage to kill every person in the manor, the villagers will finger the PCs.

5) If the PCs observe the manor and village, they will find that the smith comes to the local inn every other day. Careful conversation with local merchants, who know of the man betraying the guild, will reveal that they will no longer deal with him. The smith must use peddlers or get his materials from other non-guild sources. Posing as peddlers or independent suppliers is a viable trap to get to the smith.

6) If the PCs are caught, they will be arrested and will be used as an example by the lord to the Mangai. Severe flogging, fines, and imprisonment are certain, but may include one or two executions just to make a point. If the PCs are discovered but manage to flee, they will be chased by the lord at length.

7) If the PCs manage to get the smith out of the village to the predetermined point, the Mangai representative will pay them. If the representative feels the PCs are capable or willing, he will offer each an additional 50d to murder the smith and hide the body. He will say he was just trying to scare the man if the PCs object to the thought of murdering the man. Other wise the Mangai man will shackle the smith and leave.

The Natives are Restless...

Soon after the PCs enter a village on their travels (and probably only if they look armed or "tough"), they will be summoned to the manor by a young lad. The lady of the manor will feed them a descent meal, and ask for their help.

The lady explains that recently her husband and his men were killed trying to fight a band of local bandits/gargun/barbarians. The lord had gathered most of his yeomen and all of his men-at-arms and squires to finally wipe out the problem makers. Unfortunately they fell to a surprise ambush, and were all killed except for a young page (the one that summoned the PCs) who fled to tell the tale.

The lord ran his fief with a heavy hand and was somewhat unpopular with the village officers. Now the lady is trying to get the village in order, but is not nearly as feared or skilled as her husband was in running the manor.

The villagers, seeing weakness and looking for a bit pay back, have all started petitioning the lady for relief and reporting all manner of problems. The lady knows some of them are taking advantage of her, but her attempts at intimidation and negotiation have failed. She quietly mentions that a few have subtly hinted that her own safety might at risk!

The PCs are to be her muscle and beat the peasants into shape. She will pay them 30d a month and provide meals and boarding, but the group must agree to stay for at least a full month. Any PCs with any knowledge of agriculture will also be paid extra for any advice they can offer. Deaths are to be avoided as the lady cannot afford to lose any man power and does not wish to further instigate any problems. Anything short of killing is acceptable in reasonable circumstances.

The situation is pretty much as the lady has described. The angry serfs see a chance to get some revenge on their unkind lord. While such open dissent is rare, the Beadle and Reeve have joined together to cause the trouble and encourage the other villages to do the same. They are willing to enter open conflict, but will not act too overtly. Neither will back down until they truly feel intimidated.

1) If the PCs refuse, the lady will understand and let them go unhindered.

2) If the PCs accept, they will be given what limited arms and armor (appropriate to station) she has left if the group is lacking. This is limited to leather, quilt, spears, and small shields. Their first order is to get the men who are supposed to be working her demesne. The lady will give them a list and locations of the 8 men.

3) If the PCs go to the men's cottages, they will offer various amounts of insulting dialogue and excuses, but will go at the first threat of violence. PCs who don't check up on the men after they start working, the farmers leave shortly after the PCs do. Later in the day, the Beadle will be seen watching the party warily.

4) If the PCs go the next day to gather the demesne workers, they will find them all gathered at the Reeve's cottage. The Reeve tells the PCs that they have no right to order his men what to do. An argument will ensue, and the men will only go to the fields after the group starts shoving them about. The Reeve will finally tell the men to go, but will warn the party they better look out.

5) If the PCs investigate reports of the "problems" they will find several inconsistencies. Convincing the various serfs with the problems (which will often be the Reeve or Beadle) they know about the deceit, will usually result in the offender declaring it an innocent mistake and suddenly finding a solution on their own.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 35

6) If the PCs go about getting to know the people of the village, they will find that several are not so supportive of the Reeve and Beadle, but fear the mob and consequences of defying them. If they manage to become friends with a few of the villagers, they will learn the Reeve wishes to get the fief taken away from the lady (he knows the villagers have their place, but hates the lord's family).

7) If the PCs manage to avoid too much violence, but maintain a presence, the villagers will slowly lose their will to resist. The Reeve and Beadle will be able to whip/intimidate them back into resistance after a short time.

8) If the PCs eventually realize just how much of the trouble is coming from the Reeve and Beadle, they will have to confront them in no uncertain terms in front of a large crowd. Should the PCs explain that their activities are known and will no longer be tolerated, and show how their actions are negatively impacting the entire village, many of the villagers will agree. As the argument ensues, it becomes apparent the Beadle and Reeve will have to be arrested, as their presence will simply cause further problems. They will resist any attempts at arrest, even fighting the PCs; unless severely beaten or wounded, neither will surrender.

9) If the PCs have arrested the Reeve and Beadle, and managed to calm the villagers down, the lady will pay and offer long term employment. The Beadle will finally capitulate and agree to work with the lady. The Reeve however has gone mad with rage and will attack the lady during a meeting. If the PCs save the lady, the lady will order the party to hang the Reeve and assist in choosing another.

Bullspit...

The peace of a small village the PCs are in suddenly shatters. Word quickly spreads that one of the village bulls was killed last night. A large crowd has gathered as the bull's owner confronts the man he believes killed the bull. From the argument, it seems the two men have been at odds for many years and just a few days ago they had a bit of a fist fight.

The argument soon turns to another fight, and the two men start swinging. One picks up a hoe and clubs the other, just before getting hit in the face with a rock in return.

The bloody fight, cheered on by the crowd, continues until the lord of the manor breaks it up. Both men are taken by the lord and questioned. After a long, frustrating exchange of exaggerations and insults, the lord simply has them locked in two separate rooms until something can be worked out.

The village Beadle asks the PCs (as either impartial strangers or trusted locals) to see what they can find out. Both men are important in the village and their brewing feud has simply gone too far. If they can help come up with some information, the Beadle will give the PCs a hefty supply of food and perhaps some seeds or clothing if pressed.

The two men have been feuding for some time, but neither had anything to do with the death of the bull. The bull was killed accidentally by a couple of boys of the village while playing "cow topple", a game where sleeping cattle are pushed over. Not usually harmful, the fallen cows simply get back up. But the bull fell in such a way as to cause some internal bleeding that killed it by morning. They boys are too scared to come forward and have been making themselves scarce.

1) If the PCs don't get involved, the lord will grow tired of the bickering men. He will fine each, causing the feud to grow further, and decide the accused is actually guilty, forcing him to hand over some of his own livestock.

2) If the PCs look at the scene of the crime, they will find the bull is still there. It lays motionless, but will soon be eaten by the village. Careful search will reveal a bit of blood pooled in the bull's mouth, but no cuts.

3) If the PCs search the pasture near the bull, they will find some small footprints, and a depression caused by the bull's fall.

4) If the PCs report their findings to the Beadle, he will realize what has happened. The Beadle will lead the PCs to one of the boys, who will admit to tipping the bull. The Beadle will tell the lord what has happened, and the lord will instead fine the families of the boys to pay recompense.

5) If the PCs bring the two feuding men together and act as calm mediators, they can manage to get the men to apologize and shake hands. From here they may or may not work out their differences, but the village will be impressed!

Beauty and the Beast...

As the PCs enjoy their breakfast in the village inn, the beadle bursts in, excitedly reporting that another person has disappeared. Only blood traces are found. This gets the villagers riled up, and they gather to help the widow and make a quick search party. After a long day, even with the aid of the lord and his hounds, nothing is found.

The PCs are implored by the lord to help search out the murderer. He asks them to aid his men search the cottages that evening, and continue investigating the next day, and until the culprit can be found.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 36

The culprit is a Nolah, a form of Ivashu known as the Harnic Troll. The Nolah was traveling the area when he noticed a young woman of the village gathering flowers and singing to herself. It watched her for some time and fell in love. Since that time, it has been skulking around the village, constantly watching her every move.

The girl is blooming into quite a young beauty, and has been facing the problems common to most developing women. All of the victims, 3 in the last month, were those who upset the young woman in some way. She knows nothing of the Nolah, save that she often feels she is being watched.

1) If the PCs refuse, the lord will be quite upset, putting forth the possibility they are being uncooperative because they are the culprits (which he doesn't believe but will use as a threat). PCs who are employed or are vassals of the lord, will be ordered to help. Otherwise, the PCs will be made unwelcome.

2) If the PCs accept, they will be one of three groups sent to search every cottage and shop in the village, including the remote homes. They will find nothing however, except villagers still upset by the assumed murder.

3) If the PCs search for tracks the next day, they will find none as the Nolah is a very skilled stalker. Very skilled trackers will manage to find a faint blood trail that leads to the woods, but no body will be found.

4) If the PCs question the victims' families, they will find no common connection. If the most recent victim's young son is questioned, he will talk at length about everything his father did that day, including that his father had made some harmless but tasteless comments about the young woman's growing breasts to her. She ran off crying while he chuckled.

5) If the PCs question the young woman, she will be very embarrassed, but will concede that it did happen. She is very sensitive, and will get upset unless handled very gently. She will also get upset if the PCs accuse her of being involved in the murder, or of having any intimate relations with the man.

6) If the PCs ask her about the other victims, she will remember that each one had upset her. She will make the connection, and run off crying thinking she is cursed.

7) If the PCs upset the girl, either unintentionally or on purpose, the Nolah will use his charm against one of the PCs and lure them to an ambush. If this will not work for whatever reason, the Nolah will instead sneak in and try to murder the sleeping PC. Unless the PCs have made some sort of preparation, the Nolah will probably be successful.

8) If the PCs manage to kill the Nolah, the lord will be very thankful and offer an appropriate bonus, around 50d per PC.

The village will scratch their heads, and the girl will have a reputation as being able to summon monsters, and probably has a lonely future as a spinster despite her looks.

9) If the PCs manage to drive off, but not kill the Nolah, it will realize the village will come hunting for it. It will leave the village, but will take its young love with!

The lord will mount all the men he can and chase the beast down. The struggling girl does leave a trail and a scent. After half a day's chase, the Nolah and girl will be found. The Nolah will fight savagely and will not leave the girl's side.

10) If the PCs were particularly rude to the girl, she became convinced she is cursed, or she was unduly accused by the village due to PC interaction, she will step in front of the Nolah after it is seriously wounded. It has treated her kindly, and she has grown to like it! The girl will have to be wrested away, but will plead for the creature's life.

For a Fargle...

As the PCs walk through the village, or stop at the inn, they notice a very long faced man who appears to be very upset by something. Even acknowledging the man's presence will result in him approaching them with his problem.

He is the lord's huntsman, and the lord has commanded him to scare him up a fargle beast to capture. The problem is there is no such thing! It is a common joke played on the young or imbecilic to have them wait in the woods while someone else scares the fargle from the bushes. The hunter tried to raise this possibility, but the lord grew quite angry at even the hint of the suggestion he'd been played for a fool. The lord ordered the hunter to find one for him to hunt, or be released from his position. The hunter asks the PCs for their help.

Some other lords at a recent moot have convinced the lord they each have one hanging on their wall, and chided him for not having even heard of one. The lord has been trying to impress his fellows of late and has vowed to catch a fargle. Any suggestions he's been duped will lead to an angry outburst. The lord believes a fargle looks like a fox with the hindquarters of a rabbit and small antlers. The lord insists on actually killing it himself.

1) If the PCs refuse to help, the hunter will find himself without a job within the month.

2) If the PCs agree to help, it will be up to them to figure out how to catch a fargle beast. While quite skilled, the hunter is not particularly bright or imaginative.

3) If the PCs simply suggest the hunter make fake tracks and convince the lord that they are indeed hard to catch, the lord will set out on several hunts, believing he's come close many times. After several months, he will grow bored and only hunt for them irregularly. The hunter keeps his job if the tracks are done well enough to convince the lord.

4) If the PCs try to make a fargle, they will need to capture or kill a fox and fix it up with antlers and rabbit fur. A live one, will be very hard to make indeed.

5) If the PCs help the hunter lead the lord to a predetermined point and convince the lord he's killed one ("M'lord! Its in the bushes, shoot!") he will be suspicious if it turns out to be too easy. The lord will need to see the body with the arrow in it to be convinced. If he gets too good a look at the faux fargle, the lord will see through the deception and have the hunter lashed.

6) If the PCs tell the hunter to make sure the lord doesn't see it closely, or manage to somehow distract the lord by showing up suddenly and distracting him ("M'lord! Only a few have ever caught a fargle!), the lord will be very pleased with himself and order the skin preserved for hanging.

7) If the PCs try to give the skin to the lord without help of a professional tanner, the lord will not be fooled and get very angry. The local tanner will require 4 times the price to make the skin look believable... and keep his mouth shut.

8) If the PCs have a funny GM, they may actually find a fargle beast, perhaps a long forgotten form of Ivashu. The lord will be quite famous as he shows his trophy to his open mouthed peers.

But for the Love of a Hound...

As the PCs wander around the village, a man obviously from the local barbarian tribe comes into the village and starts yelling at a child of one of the villagers. His words can only be understood by someone who speaks his language (which excludes all of the villagers), and the child gets very scared. Shortly some adults with hoes and pitchforks show up and start yelling at the barbarian. Finally one of the villagers takes a wild swing and the barbarian runs off.



The villagers are a bit concerned at the boldness of the barbarian. The lord mounts a quick search for the trespasser, but finds nothing. Waving off the concerns as a simple crazy wild man who appeared harmless, the lord will pay no further heed.

The barbarian wants his favored dog back. He is the head of his small tribe, who have had a hard time of late. His dog is his best friend, and it wandered into the village some time last week, after running away from the barbarian's son. The barbarian's son also claimed that the village boy beat him up and took the dog, being scared of his father's wrath. The village boy found the dog and fed it. It followed him home and after a while, the boy's father made him give the dog to the village beadle.

The beadle is a skilled dog trainer. The beadle has noticed the dog seems to have been trained, but hasn't bother to bring it up. The barbarian knows he can't afford to get into a war with the village, so will do anything sort of open attack to get it back.

1) If the PCs don't become involved, the barbarian will show up again the next day, and begin speaking to the village boy again. This second incursion will lead the lord to seek him out again, with similar results.

2) If the PCs talk to the boy, he will have nothing to say about the barbarian except that he is scary. The PCs will have to question him at length about everything he's done over the last week before he mentions the mysterious dog, and where the dog went.

3) If the PCs speak to the village beadle about the dog specifically (random questioning won't evoke a response from him about the unnoteworthy animal), he will admit the dog seems as if it was well trained. He won't mind giving up the dog if the PCs explain the barbarian will leave them alone for it.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 38

4) If the PCs take the dog and lead it into the woods, the barbarian will come out eventually and the dog will run to him. The barbarian will give a gesture of thanks (though the PCs might think it's something else...) and disappear into the woods.

5) If the PCs fail to bring the dog to the barbarian after three days, the barbarian will sneak into the village one night to get his dog. He will be surprised by one of the lord's men, and wound him with a spear before fleeing. The guard is hurt, but will live. The lord will mount a full excursion the next day and will finally find the small barbarian family, who will all be slaughtered.

6) If the PCs figure out the situation and explain it to the lord, he will allow the PCs to bring the dog on the expedition. The barbarian will meet the band before they find the tribe's camp. If allowed he will collect his dog, and will offer the lord a stack of furs as a gesture of peace and apology. Unless the PCs suggest it is a gesture of peace instead of a trade, the lord will attack and kill the barbarian. The barbarian, hoping his death will save his tribe, will not resist.

No Stone Unturned...

The PCs are approached by a somewhat disheveled, but muscular, man as they go about their business in the village. He will ask what they know and feel about the miller, and he feels the PCs have no personal attachment, he will continue.

The man is a member of Masons' Guild and is investigating reports of that the miller is breaking a guild agreement. Word has gotten to the guild that the miller has added to his mill using some shaped stones. While he has legally worked everything out with the manor lord, he is apparently breaking an agreement with the masons as he has not paid them for any stone. The Masons' Guild has precedent for being given the rights to haul the stone of such ruins away for their own use. The miller has also been putting the additions on himself, without any masons involved, which is not illegal as the millwrights have that right, but it is local tradition.

The miller has been questioned, but smugly states there is no proof he's gotten the stones illegally. And he won't tell where he is getting them. The mason's wish to find out. If the PCs can figure it out and report it, the guild will pay them 200d.

The miller has found some old ruins some distance from the village. These ruins are not known to most in the village. The miller's son found them some time ago and the miller has been sneaking them to the mill. While the ruins hold nothing of interest save the stones, stalwart PCs may spend much time their looking for treasure.

A poor cottar is collecting the stones and hiding them in wheelbarrows filled with grain or dirt from various places in exchange for free milling. They are then hidden in the water near the mill wheel.

Finally the stones are added, usually only one or two at a time at night. The work is not as good as a mason, and is slow going, but it will suffice.

1) If the PCs refuse, they have simply passed up some good money.

2) If the PCs question the miller, he will simply laugh at them and tell them to bugger off. He has no time for "thugs of the Masons' Guild."

3) If the PCs watch the mill, the miller will not perform any new work. The miller is very aware that folk want to know about his stones, so is very careful and often sends his son to check likely hidden, observation points. The GM may allow careful and especially skilled PCs to hide successfully. If so, they will eventually see the miller grab some stones from the pond.

4) If the PCs carefully inspect some of the new stones, they will find some grain chaff in recesses and cracks.

5) If the PCs watch the mill during the course of several days, they may notice the cottar appears to be making many trips. Confronting or asking the cottar about it will result in him simply saying "he's helping out," and he will be very mindful of the PCs there after.

6) If the PCs carefully follow the cottar unseen, he will eventually lead them to the ruins, which are about 3 miles out of the village.

7) If the PCs wait until the miller adds some new stones and then watch him carefully, or speak to him, the next morning, they may notice his leggings are wet from getting the stones from the water.

8) If the PCs tell the mason the location of the ruins and where the stones are hidden, he will investigate it and pay the PCs. He will leave and return the next day with a work crew to gather the stones at the ruins, and from the miller.

9) If the PCs let the miller know they know about the ruins and his hiding place, he will offer 100d for their silence. The mason will accuse them of their involvement, but can't really do much about it.

The New Neighbors...

As the PCs listen to the idle chatter of the villagers, one speaks up about some of his tools missing. Another pipes up about one of his shovels turned up missing about 3 months ago, and another speaks of a missing wheelbarrow.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 39

As more of the peasants compare notes about what has gone missing, (mostly tools and cutlery) someone points out that one of his dogs disappeared two weeks ago.

The gathered crowd finds the beadle, and everyone talks about the thievery going on. After having to shout the crowd down, the beadle takes note of who lost what and is soon overwhelmed by more than 20 items. Finally the beadle throws his arms up and says he'll come by personally and get the details. As the crowd dissipates, the beadle asks the PCs to help him question folks and find out what they claim to be stolen.

Some months ago a tribe of Gargu-Kyani (White Orcs) were wiped out by a rival gargun horde. It was a bloody battle and nearly all of the kyani were wiped out. Only three males survived, but managed to escape with one of the females. They ran far, in a near panic, before picking a place about 2 miles from the edge of the village. In their state the gargun didn't realize how close they were to a human settlement. By the time one of them realized it while hunting, the lair had already been started and the new queen already ready to lay her eggs. The gargun have been desperately trying to hide while establishing their new colony. The new king is a very intelligent gargun, and has a great desire to keep the colony safe. He knows that they will, at the moment, loose an all out fight with the nearby humans.

The thief is in fact a young boy of 8 that lives in the village. While playing in the woods alone, he came across the newly dug lair. With the fearless curiosity of a child, the boy entered and saw the sleeping gargun. Instead of being afraid, he thought the gargun were his fuzzy friends.

The gargun king spoke just enough Harnic to speak to the child. Realizing that a missing child would bring search parties, he decided to befriend the child instead.

The gargun convinced the boy to get things for them from the village. Mostly tools to help finish the lair and items of iron that can be melted down, but the boy has also led various animals into the woods for gargun food.

The queen has laid her first batch of eggs and they are due to hatch in a few months. The males have had to hunt more actively as the wildlife has scattered and the eggs need offal to grow. Gargu-Kyani are less violent than their relatives, but it has been a monumental act of will and leadership to keep from eating the human child. The king realizes however that even after the eggs hatch, they will be helpless for a time and their chance of discovery increases. He knows that to keep his tribe alive, he may have to figure out a way to live with the humans. But this is an improbable solution as the strong-willed hatchlings will be hard to control, and the humans themselves will probably not be willing to live peacefully with the foul spawn either. In either case, it will be about a year before the gargun have a chance to fend off any human attack. Given a choice between death or killing the humans, the king will happily kill them.

1) If the PCs refuse, the beadle gets frustrated and assumes its a villager and spouts threats and beatings until someone admits it. Sooner or later the gargun will have to dealt with in some fashion. The longer the human's wait, the more advantage the gargun have.

2) If the PCs accept, they will be told by the beadle to start tracking folks down and finding out what has been stolen. Far more will be red herrings, claiming to have had all manner of items stolen. It will be a very frustrating ordeal and experience with some suddenly thinking of other things that they have lost that might have been stolen up a year earlier.

3) If the PCs manage to question most of the villagers (the beadle seems rather disinterested in doing so), they will find some more reliable claims. They include two shovels, a hoe, a pickaxe, a hatchet, a wheelbarrow, and some other metal items (such as cutlery, nails and horseshoes).



HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 40

4) If the PCs specifically ask about lost animals, a few will remember loosing the occasional sheep or chicken. Animals are prone to wander at times and no one bothered to really think about it. Should the PCs think about asking the local woodsman or lord's hunter about the animals, he will claim to have found signs of poaching but no proof or tracks to the village.

5) If the PCs ask any of the more reliable claimants about more details (such as the last time they were sure they saw it), two will mention the boy being in or around their cottage.

6) If the PCs ask the boy or his parents about the thefts, the boy will deny all of it, and start crying loudly if pressed. The parents will take offense at the accusation and dismiss the PCs.

7) If the PCs report their findings to the beadle (what ever they may be), he will smile and nod and return to his work. Unless the PCs bring a gargun with them, he thinks the whole affair is nonsense but pretends to take action.

8) If the PCs carefully follow the boy, they will eventually catch him sneaking away with something. Confronting the boy will result in a fit of crying and punishment from the parents, who still don't appreciate the PCs actions.

9) If the PCs follow the boy after he has stolen something, he will lead them to the gargun lair. The boy will enter and laughter can be heard from within.

10) If the PCs enter the lair, they will find the boy playing with the gargun, and the missing items. The gargun king will take the boy and threaten to kill him if. He claims to simply wish to talk to them, and explains that his small colony can live with the humans.

The king tries to convince them not to tell the village and to give them a chance. He will then release the boy and order his 2 warriors to let the PCs leave in peace as a good faith gesture.

11) If the PCs attack, or inform the village lord or beadle who will summon village soldiers, there are only three gargun warriors and the bloated queen. They will be easy enough to defeat and the lair easily destroyed.

12) If the PCs agree to allow the gargun to live on, or simply don't find out about them, the eggs will eventually hatch. From this point it is up to the GM to decide if any sort of peace is possible. An assault on the village is more likely however.

A Witches' Gift...

As the PCs carry on about their business in the village, they come across a group of villagers talking about a haunt that has been prowling around at night lately. Just last night the haunt scared the shadow out of the poor miller's wife. No one has been seriously hurt in the few months since the haunt has come around, but various forms of vandalism and damage, not to mention fear, are starting to get worse.

It is suggested that the PCs be paid to help stand guard and help catch who ever it is. Sooner or later this depraved skulker is going to hurt someone or worse. After a bit of pestering and discussion, the manor lord vehemently forbids the PCs to get involved. He seems angry even at the suggestion, though the villagers claim he has done little to mend the problem.

Some of the villagers are not pleased with this however. A small group of them, including the beadle, ask the PCs to work for them anyway. This of course involves keeping their actions hidden from the lord, who they claim will not be too hard as the lord keeps to his manor of late. They don't have much, but will provide food and shelter, and can pay each 20d if they stop the haunt.

The haunt is actually the lady of the manor, having succumbed to a malicious hex placed upon her secretly by a spiteful witch. The witch was denied hospitality once by the lady, and resents her greatly. The witch threatened one of the manor servants to steal a locket from the lady, give it to the witch, and then return it. The witch put the hex on the locket, and can at times influence the lady when it is worn.

The witch cannot actually control the lady, but can drive her insane for short times and fill her with spite and mischief. This causes the lady to creep out at night and do things she would not normally do.

The victims are often villagers who she dislikes or has irritated her recently, though often it is simply a random innocent that suffers her arcanelly induced wrath.

To make matters worse, the lord strongly suspects his wife is responsible. He is unwilling to lock her up, confront her directly, or send out folks who might end up hurting her. Unfortunately he doesn't know what else to do. No one has been seriously hurt yet, and the lord simply hopes no one will; especially his wife.

1) If the PCs refuse on the wholly reasonable grounds that the lord said no, the villagers will understand. After a week or so, a young lad that accidentally stepped on the hem of the lady's dress and ripped it, will turn up missing. He will be found a few days later in the woods, dead from exposure. The PCs will be approached again, offered 40d.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 41

2) If the PCs accept, they will be provided a place to stay and given food. They are expected to patrol at night, and keep a low profile so the lord doesn't grow angry and expel them from the village.

3) If the PCs are vigilant in their nighttime watches, they will find the "haunt" after three nights or so. She is running about throwing rocks against shutters and doors, or inside the cottage if an opening presents its self. The lady will run from the PCs, and knows the area well, fleeing into an open window in the house. She's fast, but can be caught.

4) If the PCs catch the lady, she will bite and scratch, but pose no immediate threat. She will scream and threaten and loudly remind them who she is. The lady will then pass out. All she wears is her night clothes and the locket.

5) If the PCs can't catch the running lady, they will most likely be able to at least catch her figure escaping into or towards the manor. A skilled tracker will most likely be able to follow the tracks to the manor window as well.

6) If the PCs inform the lord that the haunt is someone in the manor, the lord will sarcastically demand to know what ghouls live in his home. Without proof, or an accusation, the lord will dismiss them and warn them about disobeying him again.

7) If the PCs bring the unconscious lady to the manor, the lord will bring them in. After ensuring his wife is relatively unhurt, he will explain to the PCs what he knows, which is little. When his wife is roused, she will remember nothing of her activities. Observant PCs may note that all she wears is her sleeping clothes and the amulet.

8) If the PCs killed the lady in the struggle, the lord and villagers will be very angry. The lord will mount an extensive search, and will probably find the woman unless she is very cleverly hidden.

Should the woman be found, or the PCs tell what happened, they will each be given 20 lashes and banished from the village forever.

This may seem light punishment, but the lord fears the truth about his deceased love getting out. The villagers will not support the PCs, and will be dismayed; even those who believe their story. The PCs will not be paid, and the villagers will deny hiring them.

9) If the PCs ask the lord or lady about the locket, the lady will remember catching the serving girl toying with it. They will immediately confront the maid, accusing her of casting some spell. In tears, the maid will tell them about the witch. The maid doesn't know where the witch lives, except that its out in the woods.

10) If the PCs ask the local hunter or woodward about this witch, he will describe an old, spooky hut some leagues from the village. He has never been very close as it is too frightening. He does know how to get there however. The lord mounts an expedition of five men-at-arms, and offers the PCs 10d each if they come.

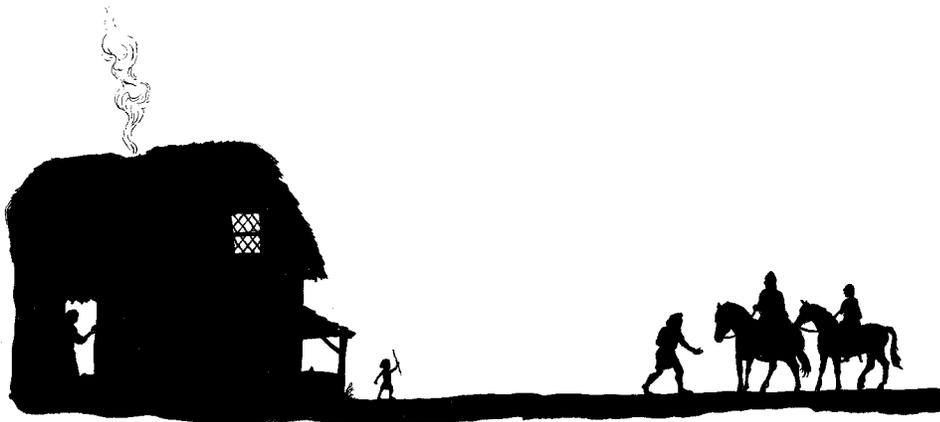
11) If the PCs join in the witch-hunt, they will find her powers very real, though she is no Genin. She has command of a vicious wolf pack, along with whatever other alchemy or magical powers the GM sees fit. Should she be captured, the witch will scream insanely about the lady cruelly mistreating her. The lord will have her burned at the stake, whether or not she survives the battle. The lord and villagers will both pay the PCs their due.

A Dangerous Faux...

As the PCs enjoy breaking their fast, they over hear some of the villagers talking about some folk that were passing by a few days back talking about gargun raids at neighboring villages. The discussion turns to laughter and poking fun at those scared of such bogeymen and hobgoblins.

Some time after, the village beadle gathers up all available folk at hand, whether they like it or not. Once collected the beadle leads everyone out to a remote cottage. It has been burned down and some slaughtered sheep lie nearby. A few crude arrows can be found lying about. A quick search of the area reveals no clues.

When everyone returns to town, the residents of the ruined cottage meet them. None are seriously hurt, but they are somewhat scuffed up. They claim hunched, hairy creatures did the attack.



HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 42

The stranger who mentioned the gargun some days ago is in the village. Quickly catching the lord's attention, the stranger says that he knows of some men who are capable of helping. Quite bluntly the lord declares no help from wandering vagabonds is needed. The man leaves.

The following evening, a villager from an outlying cottage summons the lord to warn him the gargun are attacking his home. The lord quickly summons his squires, what ever men-at-arms he has, the beadle, and a few yeoman and rides out. The PCs are otherwise engaged and won't have time to follow the expedition should they notice, but they may follow and be the ones to find the aftermath at the GM's discretion. In this case they will find the dead bodies, and similar "gargun" spoor as was found at the first cottage.

The next morning, the village is abuzz with the tragic news. Last night's expedition was utterly wiped out by the gargun; everyone including the lord was killed. Also new is a company of mercenaries that the lady (or surviving heir/noble) of the manor hired early that morning. They are a rugged, surly looking lot, but the villagers seem willing to put up with them for fear of the gargun. Even to the point of trying to ignore the occasional brutality, theft, and worse.

The mercenary company, about 15 men, are in fact the gargun. They are responsible for both attacks, and ambushed the lord's party for the sole purpose of killing the armed men in town. They are now intimidating the lady into paying them, with threats of the gargun attacks and of their own anger. The pay they have managed to get from the lady is exorbitant. The mercenary captain, who happens to be the stranger who spoke of gargun attacks initially, has ordered his men to make sure that no one leaves the village. This is of course for their own safety as there are wild gargun out there after all. The mercenaries have taken residence, by force, in the village inn or spread out among other cottages whose families have been ejected.

As time passes, the mercenaries' trespasses grow worse. Simple thievery turns to blatant burglary, those who argue are assaulted into submission, and they are not above having their way with the innocent women of the village. Each travesty is suffered in silence on fear of death, and whenever a strong following of villagers demands the mercenaries leave, another cottage (perhaps belonging to one of the dissidents) conveniently falls to a "gargun" attack. This usually is enough to quell the villager's opposition. If the PCs are not local, they will be offered 5d for every gargun head they bring back.

This offer is of course bogus, and merely designed to keep PCs from leaving the village until the captain decides to get while the getting is good. The mercenaries are skilled veterans and well equipped with leather, mail, short sword, spear, and shield; three also have shortbows. The mercs will fight savagely if need be, but are not suicidal, trying to flee any losing fight as their sentences if captured will be quite severe.

1) If the PCs don't interfere with the mercs, the village and perhaps the PCs, will suffer its indignity for about a month. They will then suddenly leave, taking everything they can, and leaving a broke and despairing village.

2) If the PCs try to leave, they will be firmly reminded of the danger of the gargun. They may be able to sneak out if very careful, but will be set upon and hunted by the mercenaries if they try to force their way free.

3) If the PCs openly disobey or challenge any of the mercs, they will have to fight the whole company who will respond to the cries of their brothers (if they are able to make them).

4) If the PCs speak to the lady, she will break down in tears and tell them she is no longer in control. The mercs are taking all of her money, food, and valuables. She will also tell the PCs she tried to send her chamberlain to the next village to ask for help, but the mercenaries brought back his body and told her he was killed by the foulspawn.

5) If the PCs search through the mercenary stores, they will find furs that have been fashioned into crude suits, including simple masks and antlers to finish the off the gargun disguise.

6) If the PCs keep track of the mercenaries during any of the "gargun" attacks, they may notice that about half of them always seem to be missing.

7) If the PCs confront the captain about the fake gargun, he will argue that they are mistaken while secretly motioning for help. At the next best opportunity, the PCs will be attacked by several mercs.

8) If the PCs can sneak out of the village unnoticed and make it to the next village, they will be able to summon help and return with a military expedition.

9) If the PCs gather support from the villagers, they will be able to get about twenty, militia trained, men to fight with them. While brave, the militia weapons are simple and they are unarmored. The villagers will fight, but only a good plan will allow them to defeat the veteran mercenaries.

10) If the PCs manage to drive off the mercenaries, they will become local heroes. The lady of the manor will also reward them each with 100d, with monies reclaimed from the mercenaries, and offer them employment as men-at-arms until she is able to get the guards replaced.

A Pale Lady with a Pale Hand...

As the PCs cross a ford in a river, they notice a pale hand sticking up from a nearby accumulation of flotsam (or frozen in the water if during winter). Upon further investigation, the hand is connected to a waterlogged (or frozen) body. The corpse is that of a young, dark-haired woman dressed in white. With some effort, the body can be pulled free. She has had her throat cut, and her dirty clothes are discernable as being of above average quality. A ring is on her middle finger, and a fine, thin necklace is tangled in her knotted hair. A skilled tracker may detect faint footprints on the riverbank, about 3-4 days old.

The girl is the daughter of the innkeeper in a nearby village. She has been romantically involved with the miller's son, but had a fight about a week ago. While clues will point to the miller's son, it was actually a village cottar that killed the girl after being spurned by her several times. He tried to rape her but she fought him, and he killed her and dumped the body in the river.

The miller's son actually saw the two leave together before she disappeared. Growing suspicious, the miller's son confronted the cottar, which resulted in the cottar threatening the none-to-brave son into silence.

1) If the PCs choose to do nothing about the body, they will hear local rumors of the missing girl in the weeks to follow.

2) If the PCs happen to loot the body and try to sell or wear the jewelry in the girl's village, they will have some serious explaining to do.

3) If the PCs stop to inquire at the nearest village, they will find out that the eldest daughter of the innkeeper, and betrothed of the miller's son, has been missing for 3 days. If they have brought the body with them, or offer to lead the bereaved father and fiancé to the body, they will be paid 75d in reward.

4) If the PCs choose to investigate the murder further, they will find out about the fight with the miller's son from some of the locals. Many will obviously finger the miller's son. There is not enough evidence to charge him, however the family reputation is at stake.

5) If the PCs ask the miller's son, he will appear nervous and claim he knows nothing. Should the PCs manage to be intimidating enough (such as threatening to get him arrested, or tell the village it was him for sure), he will break and talk about the cottar.

6) If the PCs confront the cottar, he will try to flee. If he escapes, the miller will give them 40d for saving their name. If the cottar is captured, the PCs will also receive a reward of 60d from the lord of the manor.

So Goeth the Flock...

The PCs come across an older man, desperately calling a name over and over. If the PCs inquire, the old man will explain he is a shepherd from a nearby village. Over an hour ago, the man and his grandson were grazing their sheep when a small group of ewes skittered away from the main flock. The man sent his grandson after the ewes, who had run down a small ravine. The sheep are milling about nearby, but there is no sign of the boy. The man is in a near frantic state.

The boy chased the ewes into the ravine and has slipped into a steep pit. He is currently unconscious, and will not respond to any calls. A sheep is currently stuck in the top of the hole.

1) If the PCs don't help, or only look for a short time, the boy is never found.

2) If the PCs mount a full search, they will only find the sheep, who appears to be stuck.

3) If the PCs have a skilled tracker, who makes a difficult skill roll to see the boy's tracks under the tracks of the sheep, they will follow the tracks under the stuck sheep.

4) If the PCs get the sheep worked free, they will notice the pit. The boy cannot be seen.

5) If the PCs send some one down with a rope and a light, they will find the boy laying hurt at the bottom. It will be difficult but possible to raise the boy up with the rope. It will take about 2 hours of work and should require several strength and climbing tests.

6) If the PCs manage to save the boy, the shepherd will offer his hospitality in thanks. He has no money to offer however.

It wasn't me...

The PCs are accosted while traveling (or shortly after setting up camp) by a well-armed party of men-at-arms, squires, foresters, and hounds. The obnoxiously arrogant son of the local Earl/Baron leads the men. The party stands accused of illegally poaching on nearby lands. The men are quite earnest.

The PCs are (hopefully) obviously innocent, but the son has been hunting a group of poachers for 3 days now with no success. Unwilling to face his father with the failure, the arrogant son has decided to arrest somebody, anybody, at the next opportunity. The PCs have that unfortunate honor.

The PCs can protest their innocence as much as they like, but unless they have a noble born person in their party, the Baron/Earl's son will arrest them.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 44

1) If the PCs surrender without a fight, they will be treated roughly and brought to stand justice before the Baron/Earl himself. The Earl is a more reasonable man than is his son however, and if the PCs conduct themselves respectfully and explains what happened, they will be set free with no further incident.

2) If the PCs manage to flee and escape, they will be hunted down for several days and probably caught if they try to remain in the area. If successful, they will be relatively safe if they keep their heads down. If they are again caught, then situations 1) & 3) again apply, but they will be treated more roughly. After all if they were innocent, why would they run?

3) If the PCs fight, and manage to win or escape, they will become wanted felons, and soon declared outlaw. Even if they later turn themselves in and explain what happened, they face serious charges. If they ensure that all of the attackers are killed, then chances are no one will be the wiser. But it will be difficult as someone will probably try to flee if the battle goes badly, and the lord's men are tough.

Arms for the Poor...

The PCs come across a discarded sack lying by the side of the road. Upon approaching the bag, a scent of fetid decay wafts from the sack. Opening the bag reveals a severed arm, encrusted with dirt and several days old. On the shoulder is a tattoo of a dolphin (tattoo of the seaman's guild).

The arm belonged to a sailor who was hanged for stabbing someone in a bar fight in the nearest village. The sailor's body was dug up by the village physician (actually by his apprentice), to further his works on the complete human form. After the dissections, the body parts are transported in a wagon to a nearby ravine for disposal.

1) If the PCs leave things be, they may hear rumors circulate in the area about grave robbers and haunts in the area.

2) If the PCs speak to the grave keeper (most likely a Peonian cleric), he will recognize the tattoo of the sailor and relate the story. He will be very upset.

3) If the PCs press the issue as to why the grave keeper is upset, he will tell them that over the last several months, other graves have been dug up. No culprit has been seen and rumors of the undead and other fanciful bug-a-boos have been spreading. He has even heard that the same thing is happening in some other neighboring villages. The grave keeper has been pressured by the local lord to put a stop to it, and suggests he would be grateful for their help.

4) If the PCs are very stealthy and set up a watch over the grave yard, they will find no disturbances for at least a month as the culprits have taken to visiting the cemeteries of other villages. If word gets out that the PCs are watching the cemetery, or are not stealthy in doing so, the physician will not rob that cemetery. Successful PCs will eventually see a cloaked figure sneak in and start digging.

5) If the PCs confront the figure, he will try to flee into the night. If caught, the cloaked figure turns out to be the physician's apprentice.

6) If the PCs let the man continue and follow him, the cloaked figure will lead them to the physician's home.

7) If the PCs confront the physician, he will deny it and will not allow them into his home. He will raise the alarm if the PCs try to force his way in.

8) If the PCs report it to the lord or grave keeper, they will not be believed as the man is well respected for his skills. They require proof.

9) If the PCs manage to sneak into the physician's home, they will find the proof they need, including texts, body parts, and the latest body. Presenting this evidence will be enough.

10) If the PCs manage to get the apprentice drunk, which is relatively easy as he is a known drunkard, he can be goaded into admitting what he's done. If this can be done with witnesses, it will also serve as sufficient proof.

11) If the PCs manage to uncover the mystery, the local lord will reward them with 40d each.

12) If the PCs are caught breaking into the physician's home, or using force against him, they will be tossed into the gaol and fined. PCs who have been particularly irritating to the physician may find their food poisoned. Perhaps they might end up as an experiment themselves...

A Hero Remembered...

In a small forest clearing, the PCs come across a gravesite consisting of a cairn of moss-covered stones. A tarnished, but rust free, broadsword rests point down in the stones. The blade still holds its edge, and its tattered leather handle looks blue in the sunlight. A wooden plaque hangs from a leather cord tied to the hilt. The plaque obviously had writing upon it, but the weathered, split wood is unreadable.

The sword and cairn is the grave of knight who fell long ago. While the facts of the story are long lost, legend has it that it was a local knight who died protecting the nearby village from a terrible beast. For three nights the beast attacked the village and wounded the knight, but was driven back each time by the valiant knight.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 45

Finally the knight dealt the beast a mortal wound before dying himself. The villagers buried the knight on the spot where he slew the creature. The villagers and the local lord maintain the grave and sword.

1) If the PCs leave the sword be, it will make an interesting object of discussion at the nearby village. Nearly anyone they meet will happily tell them the tale.

2) If the PCs take the sword, they will find the blade is pitted and a bit rusty near the point. It is neither special nor enchanted.

3) If the PCs openly carry the blade in any nearby villages, or let it be known publicly what they've done, they will immediately be set upon by an angry mob, and charged by the lord with desecrating the grave. If they aren't torn apart by the mob, the PCs will be thrown in the local gaol and fined 50d each.

4) If the PCs keep the sword quiet, they will find it brings a low price if they try to sell it. They will also probably have to answer some questions as to why they have a chivalric weapon.

5) If the PCs keep the sword quiet, but remain in the village for several days, someone will notice the sword is missing. The PCs, being strangers will be the obvious suspects. The villagers will demand to search the PCs gear. Refusal will result in a mob trying to search the PCs by force. Unless the PCs flee, or have hidden the sword well, they will be taken to the lord and fined 25d each.

6) If the PCs return the sword after the village is aware of it missing, they will be seen, but allowed to do so with no questions asked.

7) If the PCs leave the village with the sword, the lord will hire bounty hunters when he finds out about the sword. He will provide a description of the sword, and of the PCs if he has reason to suspect them.

Unclean...

As the PCs travel through the kingdom's hinterland, they come across a small cottage. The cottage and surrounding lands are unnervingly quiet. There are no people or animals around. Doing a quick search will reveal three relatively new graves and the remains of a large bonfire with scorched bones mixed in the ashes. Investigating the house will reveal the door has been latched and locked from the outside and the windows have been boarded.

This cottage is a distant part of nearby manor and has recently been ravaged by a case of Harnic Moor Pox, a deadly skin disease. When the manor lord found out, he led a party of men who gathered all the farmer's animals and burnt them and the newly dead wife and two sons, and locked the father in the cottage to keep from

spreading the sickness. Escaping the cottage would be fairly simple, but the farmer is too weak to make break the boarded windows or climb through the thatched roof. He has survived far longer than expected, and refuses to answer any calls or knocks initially. A young man from the manor is sent every morning to see if he has died.

The Harnic Moor Pox is not overly contagious (by bodily contact, about 35%) but is deadly if contracted. The first signs will show up in 72 hours, with death usually in 4 or 5 days.

1) If the PCs move on without disturbing anything, nothing will come of the encounter.

2) If the PCs try knock on the door or call to the inside for several minutes, or try to break into the house, they will have a relatively simple time. After a time, before the PCs are able to enter, a faint voice from within will answer from within, "I'm not dead yet ye bastards!" If the farmer realizes the PCs aren't from the village, he'll try to convince them to let him out by claiming he was locked up by bandits or a cruel lord. If the farmer has reason to fear for himself, he will threaten the intruders with the fact he has the pox.

3) If the PCs continue and let him out, they will be met by a gaunt, pox-ridden man covered in his own filth. He will then ask for food and aid and help in escape. Regardless of any aid or lack thereof, the farmer will die within 2 days. They will also have been exposed to the pox, as will others depending on where he manages to travel (if anywhere).

4) If the PCs do not let the farmer out, the farmer will continue to plead, adding to his tale of woe. His mind is a bit weak, and his claims will seem contradictory if questioned carefully. He will finally tell them the truth when he realizes they aren't going to help. He will tell them what has happened and warn them away from his plagued home.

5) If the PCs let the man out, the village will find out the next day. When the village learns of the escape, the lord and his hunters will gather a party to hunt down farmer, and who ever freed him, to prevent the disease from spreading. They have a similar fate as the farmer if they are captured (and if not just killed outright).

6) If the PCs visit the village and inquire about the cottage, they will be told the story, and asked if they opened the door. If so, the PCs will be locked up for two weeks (or hunted down and killed if they flee or resist) to make sure the disease didn't take them.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 46

URBAN ENCOUNTERS

This for That...

As the PCs work out their day, a young boy slips up to one of them. He bows, gives a short greeting, and then hands them a slip of vellum. The boy then runs off and slips away into the crowd. The note informs the PCs that one of their close friends or family members (perhaps another PC, a good idea when one player can't make the session) has been taken. The kidnapper is willing to trade the victim for a rare stone sculpture currently held by a local trader, to which directions are given. Failure to deliver will result in the victim's death. The note states the PCs have three days. Included in the parchment is a small belonging of the victim, a ribbon, locket, or even lock of hair that should certify the victim's identity.

The PCs friend has gotten involved in some shady dealings with a group of scofflaw merchants who have been running a variety of scams and illegal activities. These include fencing stolen items, collecting protection money, and trading in counterfeit usury notes. The friend got their orders mixed up and accidentally sold the sculpture to the wrong person. The real buyer is rather upset and wants his goods. The scofflaws do not wish to be connected with an actual burglary, so have decided to use their foolish broker as bait to get the PCs (who the friend mentioned under torture) to do their dirty work for them. The merchants' cronies are watching the PCs.

1) If the PCs refuse to act in two days, they will be sent a single finger of their friend, and reminded they only have a single day left.

2) If the PCs refuse even after the finger is delivered, the body of their friend will be found in the street as a warning to those who would defy the merchants.

3) If the PCs follow the directions to the trader's place, they will find it rather well protected. His muscular son acts as a guard, and the sculpture is not present in the trader's wares.

4) If the PCs try to rob the trader, they may well succeed. But the son is somewhat skilled and the home is small, making it defensible. They will also make enough racket to ensure that someone, possibly even the town watch, investigates. The PCs will most likely be recognized and sought after.

5) If the PCs try to sneak into the trader's home, they will find it difficult but possible. The small residence is locked and the clutter inside makes it difficult to move around. The sculpture is also somewhat awkward. PCs who fail their stealth checks will most likely wake the son, who will charge in brandishing a large club.

6) If the PCs carefully examine the vellum, they will see that it is brand new. There is also a row of four small scratches along the bottom corner.

7) If the PCs investigate the local sources of vellum in the area, they will find few scribes or lexicographers remember whom exactly they've sold plain vellum to recently. If they point out the scratches to them however, one will remember. The scratches were caused by his cat and hoped no one would notice. For a mere 5d, the scribe remembers that a particular merchant purchased the scratched vellum. He will give directions to the merchant's home.

8) If the PCs find the merchant's home, they will find it relatively easy to get into. Only two merchants, a servant, and the bound friend are within. The merchants will beg for their lives as they are not armed or inclined to fighting. They do warn that the friend should leave town, or else. Assuming the merchants survive.

9) If the PCs retrieve the sculpture, they will receive another note arranging a trade. Their friend will be returned worse for the wear, but still alive, should the PCs meet their end of the bargain. Any failed tricks on behalf of the PCs will likely result in their friend's death. The merchants have come with four guards who are ready to fight if need be.

The Trash Men...

As the PCs walk through the streets of the city, they come across a meeting of local residents. Angry voices flare and the leader of the meeting, a merchant and member of the local mangai that lives in the area, is having a hard time keeping things calm. From the excited chatter, it appears that burglars have been quite active in the area and the residents want something done about it. Various options are discussed, among them hiring guards, as no one seems willing to walk the streets at night themselves. And the few that have watched the streets have seen nothing.

The merchant finally shouts the crowd down. Noticing the PCs, he asks if they would be interested in helping out. He'll pay 2d a night and offer room and board for as long as they patrol. Some protest about having to pay, but are silenced when it is suggested they could do the duty.

The burglaries are on the rise due to a new civic program introduced by one of the city aldermen. At night, a team of two guards and two workers collect refuse from the streets in an attempt to keep the city clean and free of rats. While a forward thinking proposal, the alderman is actually a high-ranking member of the local Lia-Kavair, and the collectors and guards work for him.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 47

Using their cover and skills, they collect stolen goods as well as refuse, hiding the former in the later. The alderman is well connected and corrupt, and his men currently work under the auspices of the city warden.

The Lia-Kavair has worked hard and spent a great deal of money to get into such a ripe political position. They are very careful about anything that might compromise that achievement. The LK won't be very pleased with anyone that ruins it for them. Any other crimes the PCs might encounter at night (GM's discretion) will not be part of the LK operations.

1) If the PCs refuse, it won't affect them (unless they live in the area). They may hear of rumors of crime increasing across the city however.

2) If the PCs agree, they will be given a comfortable but cramped room in the merchant's home, and paid as agreed. The GM may decide the PCs have to actively go and collect their pay from reluctant residents, just to make things interesting.

3) If the PCs openly patrol the streets, they will only see the refuse collectors. Crime will stop however as the Lia-Kavair doesn't wish to give themselves away. After two weeks of no crime, the merchant will thank the PCs for their good work and dismiss them. One week later, the PCs will be approached again, informed the crimes have started anew. They will be offered the same terms.

4) If the PCs watch the streets from a hidden vantage point, they will still only see the collectors. The collectors are very discreet and skilled, and it should take several nights of observation before the PCs see anything amiss. The crimes continue however, and some residents will become angry at the PCs. The merchant placates them, for now.

5) If the PCs ask the merchant about the collectors, he will tell them they are city workers working for the alderman. No one really knows much about this new alderman, but he is well connected and started the program.

6) If the PCs inquire independently about the alderman, they will find nothing out unless they have some Lia-Kavair connections. Even then, they will only find hints about his true nature.

7) If the PCs attack the collectors, they become wanted by the city watch. It will be very difficult to prove any wrongdoing, and the collectors any stolen goods found in their cart must have been accidentally thrown out. The collectors are after all, working for the city authorities. PCs will be fined harshly and possibly expelled from the city.



8) If the PCs ask the merchant to watch the collectors with them, he will see the misdeeds as the PCs point them out. As a member of the mangai, the merchant is able to use his own pull to have the criminals arrested. The PCs are given a bonus of 50d each, put forth by the mangai.

9) If the PCs are able to get the collectors stopped with the help of the mangai, the scandal is all the news. The alderman becomes somewhat unpopular amongst charges of corruption. Nothing is proven (unless the PCs are very clever), but the alderman loses a good bit of his political clout. The merchant turns up missing about a week later, as the angered alderman has him killed. The mangai, not the sort to take things lying down, have the alderman killed a week after that. But the crime wave subsides.

Double, Double Cross...

As the PCs carry on about their business in the city market, they meet a well-dressed merchant. After a brief nod, the merchant takes a second look at one of the PCs. Observant PCs will notice a passing resemblance between the merchant and the PC.

The merchant stops short and says he has a proposition the PC can't refuse. Due to some faulty thinking on his part, he explains, the merchant has arranged two very important business meetings at the same time. Halea has blessed him however with the appearance of the PC.

The merchant would like the PC to dress up like the merchant and conclude business at an inn two nights from now. The deal has been pretty much worked out, only an exchange of an usury note and pick up of a rare Hælan relic.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 48

The merchant will pay 25d up front, and another 100d upon delivery. He also hints at very reasonable deals with him in the future. The relic is not particularly valuable, except as a personal item to the merchant.

The truth is the merchant has double-crossed the local Lia-Kavair. He was contacted about the business deal, but through his contacts learned that the contact is actually an assassin who will kill the merchant. He has saved enough money to move to the other side of Harn, and hopes to take on a new identity. If the PC is murdered, hopefully the Lia-Kavair will think him dead, allowing him to escape the city alive afterwards.

- 1) If the PCs refuse, they may or may not hear of the merchant's disappearance some days later.
- 2) If the PCs accept, the merchant will take the PC to his home and give him a fine set of clothes and an usury note to be used in trade for the relic. The merchant gives directions to the contact and a few tips on how to act. The merchant also allows them to stay in his home while he has to attend to other business. He is actually hiding so the Lia-Kavair observers will see the double at the home, to help verify the merchant's plan.
- 3) If the PCs examine the home closely, they will find it somewhat sparse, with some empty closet space, for a man dressed so richly.
- 4) If the PCs examine the usury note closely, and have experience in mercantying, they will notice that it is a high quality fake.
- 5) If the PCs use any underworld contacts and ask about the merchant, they will find he is marked for death for cheating the Lia-Kavair out of close to 1,000d. The contract is to be fulfilled soon.

6) If the PCs go to the meeting, only the double will be allowed to head upstairs to the meeting by the "guards", as the dealer is very nervous.

7) If the PCs tell the guards that the merchant hired them as a double, they will claim not to know what they are talking about. The guards and the assassin will however leave, indicating its not safe for the PC to look like the merchant any longer. The PCs will not be able to find the merchant, but the Lia-Kavair will...

8) If the PC double goes upstairs, he will be made comfortable while the fake deal takes place. The assassin will then attack with a poisoned dagger when the PC least expects it. The assassin is an expert knife fighter, and won't leave until the PC is killed or poisoned.

9) If the PCs are able to defeat the assassin and/or the guards, they will not be able to find the merchant. However the merchant is now double marked as "he" killed Lia-Kavair men. He will be found dead in his home some days later.

10) If the PC double is killed, the merchant will manage to slip out of town and live, under his new alias, happily ever after.

The Heretic...

A charismatic man dressed in robes approaches the PCs on the street. He is persistent but friendly, and will speak with the party despite any objections. After several minutes, he will turn the conversation to a dominant religion of the region (Larani, Agrik, or Morgath is most appropriate). Soon the PCs find themselves the center of a sermon as a small crowd gathers about the man. Various nods and gasps can be heard to roll through the crowd. After several minutes of entertaining enlightenment, the preacher will give his blessings to the PCs and leave in peace.

Unfortunately the man is a known, self-proclaimed prophet, considered a heretic by the local church. As the crowd disperses, a group of priests of the offended religion appears with a band of temple warriors or local guard. Half of them chase after the prophet while the other half begin speaking to the crowd. Several fingers in the crowd begin pointing to the PCs as the priests ask questions. The head priest and a handful of upset looking guards surround the PCs. At that point, a beaten and bloody prophet is dragged back.

The priest accuses the PCs of being in league with the heretic and declares the heretic shall feel the wrath of <insert appropriate god> on his flesh before dying.

- 1) If the PCs disavow all knowledge or validity of the heretic publicly, the priest will nod in approval. They will still be subjected to a long diatribe as what exactly the heretic said that was so offensive, as well as the proper, church doctrine.
- 2) If the PCs decide to run, they can probably escape in the thick crowd if they separate. They would be wise to lay low for a couple of days, but they will not be actively hunted.
- 3) If the PCs fight the priest and his men, they are in for a tough fight. Should the PCs win, they will of course become criminal in the region and can expect little respite if they have killed the priest.
- 4) If the PCs try to help the priest escape, they will have to distract the priest's party and help lead the man through the crowd. They will become enemies of the local church, and any PCs that are captured will face their own heresy charges.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 49

5) If the PCs petition to speak for, or defend, the man in the canon hearings, they will be politely but firmly rebuffed unless they have powerful connections in the church or local leadership. Doing so will ultimately prove futile however, and will earn them the ire of the church.

6) If the PCs try to break the heretic out of the temple, they will either have to assault or sneak in. Assaulting the church will prove difficult, as a few extra guards have been placed; any survivors will report the PCs' descriptions to the authorities. Should they manage to sneak in, another difficult feat, the PCs will be able to sneak back out. If anyone sees the PCs, they will be reported.

7) If the PCs do nothing to aid the man (he is a heretic after all), the man will suffer the most severe punishment the canon court can give, up to getting the local authorities to execute him, depending on the church.

The Signet Fish...

The PCs are enjoying a meal of fish (either bought from a fish monger or at a tavern). As one of them opens up the fish, they find a shiny ring with a royal signet on it. PCs that pass a heraldry skill test will recognize the ring as belonging to a certain local noble family.

What has happened is that a distant cousin of the chosen family has been abducted and murdered when the ransom wasn't paid on time. The cousin was hacked to pieces and dumped in a nearby river/lake. The family only knows the noble has been taken, but not his true fate.

1) If the PCs turn the ring in to the authorities or the seller of the fish, they will be questioned and released and the matter will be out of their hands. The cousin's body will be found some months later, the criminals will have long escaped.

2) If the PCs ask around discreetly, they will hear rumors of the cousin missing. Of course the family hasn't acknowledged such rumors and will vehemently deny them. The connection should be easy enough to make.

3) If the PCs ask where the fish peddler/cook got the fish, he will tell them about a local fisherman and give directions to his home.

4) If the PCs go to the fisherman and ask about his last trip, he will describe a place some miles up river where he had a good catch. It is easy enough to find.

5) If the PCs are less than subtle in their inquiries, word will get back to the family and a young, ambitious noble will join them, offering his help.

6) If the PCs follow the directions up the river it will take them about half a day to reach the site. Careful searching for about half an hour will reveal signs of a scuffle and blood.

7) If the PCs search the area further, they will come upon the murderer's camp and 8 men.

8) If the PCs manage to defeat the murderers on their own or sneak away and summon help, most likely by explaining the situation to the noble family, a party of soldiers will be dispatched and the murderers captured and killed. Each PC will be given a 100d (see #9) reward and find a friend in the noble family.

9) If the noble from the family joined the PCs, he will immediately take credit for finding and capturing the murderers. The PCs will be given a small 10d reward for working for the noble, some words of thanks, and nothing more. Arguing the point could prove dangerous.

10) If the PCs try to subdue the murderers and end up fleeing, the men will long be gone by the time help can be summoned. The PCs will be given hospitality of the noble family until their wounds are healed for their help, but will be dismissed afterwards.

The Rogue Scholar...

As the PCs sit in the local tavern, a smallish man in travel worn clothes approaches them. Offering them a round of drinks, he asks if he can sit and offer a business proposal.

Assuming the PCs agree, he will sit and explain that he is a scholar and teacher in the Guild of Arcane lore. His research has led him to an ancient barrow that holds an ancient treasure. The man knows where the site is, but a small group of bandits has taken up residence there. He needs the PCs to help him clear them out.

The man is actually a renegade Shek-P'var of the Lyahvi convocation. He's not particularly powerful, being rather young. What he has located is an ancient Earth-master site, using notes stolen from his murdered master. The renegade believes the site holds a powerful Earth-master item that will increase his magical power. Were it not for the 5 bandits living in the building, he would not need the PCs. Fearing discovery, the renegade is loathe to use his own powers. The man is on the renegade scrolls, but is using an alias.

1) If the PCs refuse, he will let a short snarl, and storm off. At the GM's discretion this renegade could manage to get others to help him and become a long-term villain.

2) If a Shek-P'var PC should somehow divine or otherwise figure out the man is a renegade, he will be relatively easy to overpower. PCs who may not want to face a mage will be able to get the local chantry or Guild of Arcane Lore facility to assemble a few mages who will be able to capture him easily.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 50

3) If the PCs accept the offer, they will be led to hill about two days from the city in a secluded dale. The site is mostly beneath ground, with just the entrance and small bit of psuedostone visible. Signs of the hiding bandits are few, but noticeable.

4) If the PCs threaten the bandits, they will leave with their goods, as they are not inclined to bring undue attention to themselves.

5) If the PCs attack or try to smoke them out, the bandits will defend themselves but will otherwise try to flee.

6) If the PCs accompany the renegade inside, they will find only one room cluttered with the discarded trappings of the brigands.

7) If the PCs search carefully and have the ability to detect magically hidden doors, they or the renegade will find one under a mass of algae. If opened, this door leads to a smaller room, containing a small, pink pedestal. The renegade will declare "Its mine!" and rush to the pedestal.

8) If the PCs try to stop the renegade (probably being made nervous by his actions), the renegade will use his limited magic to fight them. But he will still try to get to the pedestal, which won't be too hard because it is a small room.

9) If the PCs allow, or are unable to stop, the renegade from making it to the pedestal he will place both hands firmly on it. He will suddenly seem larger and more invigorated before turning a wicked eye to the PCs - and passing out. He has been overwhelmed by the power of the cube and his aural and psionic powers permanently burned out. Anyone else who touches the cube will be affected similarly. The renegade will awake is several hours.

10) If the PCs bring the man to the nearest chantry, the masters there will thank the PCs with hospitality and will be very interested in the ruins. A payment of 100d will be offered for directions to the Earthmaster site. The Order of the White Hand may have some plans for the pink cube...

The Noble Prostitute...

As the PCs wander about the seedier parts of the city, they come upon a young lady crying. She is attractive, and while she wears the worn clothes of a streetwalker, her appearance is that of a cared for woman. Her eyes are red from tears, one is bruised black, and blood trickles from small scrapes on her hands and arms. She will look at the PCs as they approach, fear in her eyes. When she realizes they will not hurt her (making that assumption of course...), she will return to sobbing into her hands.



She is actually the daughter of the lord of a nearby manor. After a huge fight with her father and brother, she snuck off to the city. As an act of pure rebellion and to her family, she became a prostitute. Not surprisingly it was far worse than she imagined. She was beaten up by one of her clients last night, and then again that morning by a Lia-Kavair pimp whom she refused to work for. She wants to return home, but fears what her brother will do to her.

Her brother has been in the city looking for her. His efforts have been as subtle as possible to prevent any family embarrassment. While he does love her and is worried, he is rather fiery in temperament. She knows he is in town and has hidden from him.

1) If the PCs go on about their business, they won't hear anything more about it.

2) If the PCs offer to help, she will let them. If they ask anything about her, she will tell them the whole story (even if they didn't want to know). She will ask them to help her get home.

HÂM ENCOUNTERS 51

3) If the PCs talk to her brother first, and explain that she is hurt and needs his help, he will show great concern. He will demand to be brought to her and will bring her home amongst great hugs and tears. The PCs will be forgotten.

4) If the PCs find her brother and attempt to get a ransom, he will lose his temper and attack, summoning help if he can. The outcome of the fight is uncertain obviously, but if the PCs lose they are in trouble. If they win, the brother will agree to pay up to 2000d. They will of course become outlaws after they receive the payments.

5) If the PCs bring the girl to face her brother without first speaking to him, he will become enraged as soon as he sees her. She will become very scared. In an attempt to deflect her brother's anger, she will accuse the PCs of kidnapping and raping her! The ramifications are obvious; they will either have to fight, flee, or surrender to the authorities. If they surrender, they will be put on trial. Unless they can get the girl away from her brother and father, perhaps by having her speak to a litigant one-on-one, she will stick to her story and the PCs will be found guilty.

A Merry Troupe of Merry Fiends...

Merry tunes fill the city square as the PCs wander about. Several troupes of performers have set up small tents and stages, starting their own make shift festival. Several puppet stages are set up, minstrels and jugglers work the crowd, and even a few stage magicians perform feats of legerdemain for pleased onlookers. The wagons of the performers are spread out in the lands just out side the gates of the city.

The festival is mostly on the up and up. They have paid all of their fees, have permission from the city and mangai, and have even paid a bit to the Lia-Kavair to keep them away. There are of course charlatans and thieves that travel with such troops, but over all it is just a gathering of performers who agreed to converge on the city.

Since the appearance of the performers however, several people have disappeared. Obviously the first suspicions fell onto the vagabond performers. But the city warden and others have checked the tents and wagons. No clues have been found.

There is one wagon however that is not as it appears. This black wagon, festooned with bright banners, carries a troupe of 5 Night People, one of which is powerful priest. These Navehans are mixing with the other performers, but their objectives are a bit more sinister.

The Night People have come to finish a ceremony. They have traveled to several cities lately, gathering victims for the glory of Naveh. They must kill several more (3 - 5) in this city, within 2 weeks, to finish the ceremony.

It is these Night People who are responsible for the missing children. They operate in town from a plain looking tent, claiming to have a fortuneteller within. They use a powerful drug ("Have this tea, it will help the reading."), which leaves the victim helpless and barely conscious. They then dress the victims up in bright costumes and masks and lead them to their wagon. If the victim is unable to walk, they carry them in a rug, folded tent, or chest. Once back in the wagon, the Night People wait until night and murder them quietly. The bodies are then disposed of in a convenient manner (usually dumped in nearby woods, city alleys, or rivers).

1) If the PCs do nothing, the Night People will finish their ceremony and move on with the other entertainers in about a week. It is of course possible a lone PC might fall victim.

2) If the PCs go through the trouble of finding out who is missing (maybe asking the guard, or listening to people in the nearest inn), they will find out that two mothers have been constantly walking around the square, looking for their children. Neither has any idea what has happened, but if pressed, one will remember giving the child a few pennies so they could play games and see a real fortuneteller.

3) If the PCs inspect the various fortunetellers, of which there are 5 total, they may notice a new victim enter and not leave (at the GM's discretion). Any observing PCs will have to be subtle however; the Night People are careful and won't do anything if they think they are being watched. PCs who perhaps recognize the victim through their heavy disguise or become suspicious of the rug/chest, may try to follow them. It will be relatively easy, but the Navehans might notice if the PCs aren't careful. The PCs will be able to find the wagon.

4) If the PCs inquire about the Navehans to other performers, they will be told the Night People are creepy (some other performers may not be willing to speak about them at the GM's discretion), and keep to themselves. If the PCs ask more than three separate entertainers, the Navehans will find out about the inquiries.

5) If the Night People find out the PCs are investigating (either by #4 above, or from noticing the PCs following them), one PC will be attacked while alone by a stealthy Navehan assassin. If the attempt (or success!) doesn't shake the PCs they can expect further visits if they continue.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 52

6) If the PCs succeed in finding the wagon and making the connection, they will hear quiet chanting from the wagon just before midnight. The PCs can storm the wagon (making it very crowded) and kill the Navehans, saving the victim. They could also get the guard, who will not get there in time to save the victim, but they will catch them with the body. The Navehans are somewhat skilled but lightly armed and will be surprised. The PCs will be rewarded by the town and the other performers (total about 250d).

Seek Thyself..

The PCs come across a young man in a great deal of distress. Without prompting, he approaches the PCs and asks them what they know of infinity.

The man is an acolyte of Save-K'nor. In an outburst of academic arrogance, he angered his temple master. The master banned him from classes or services until he could figure out a riddle. "What is the color that marks you? Seek the answer in infinity and come back when you've puzzled it out."

Unbeknownst to the acolyte, his master has put a small bit of red dye on the back of the man's head. But even just answering that is not enough. The master wants to know how the acolyte could see it on its own, and how he looked into infinity. The answer is to use two mirrors, allowing him to see the back of his own head, and when lined up the mirrors will have an infinite number of reflections.

1) If the PCs ignore him, or offer a glib or useless answer, he will mutter something and wander away.

2) If the PCs (especially a devout Save-K'norian) tell him he should seek the answer on his own without trying to cheat, the man will beg the PC not to tell his master and then scurry off. The man is poor, but might be convinced to buy a round of drinks to keep the PCs quiet.

3) If the PCs inquire as to his question, he will tell them about his situation. It is quite possible that someone will notice the red dye in the man's hair. But they will still have to solve the puzzle of the mirrors.

4) If the PCs figure it out and let the acolyte know, he will be very grateful and return to his master and be back in his good graces. He will give the PCs a small silver ring (worth about 18d) to keep them from telling anyone they helped him.

5) If the PCs turn him in, or the information otherwise gets to the master, the man will be stripped of his status and kicked out of the church. The man will then take to following the PCs around in a drunken stupor, cussing and cursing them very publicly.

He will continue doing this until actually physically harmed in the slightest manner (a simple slapping or rough handling will work).

For my Wife's Sake...

As the PCs shop around the city they come across one vendor/merchant who is arguing with his wife. As the PCs approach the two stop speaking and the wife storms off. The merchant looks rather distressed.

He is to attend a small dinner a few evenings from now with his wife. Unfortunately his wife, while quite lovely, has nauseating breath. The merchant has never told her outright, but he has taken quite a bit of ribbing from his fellows who call her "M'lady Aklash." He has just tried to convince her not to go with him, to prevent her from embarrassment. She did not like his excuses however, and became rather upset with him.

The merchant knows of a mint plant that grows just a half-day's walk, but he is being reviewed by the Mercantylers' Guild for the next couple of days. This is due to an accident on his dues payment, and is innocent and unrelated to the dinner. As such, he cannot go and gather it, and the local apothecaries are out (he sent his son to check) and none plan on getting more before next week. His son is too young to gather it, and he knows no one else willing to do it.

1) If the PCs don't inquire as to the merchant's distress, or decline to offer, he will do his business with them with no comment.

2) If the PCs comment on the fight (even in the most off-handed manner), the merchant will explain the situation. With a look of sudden realization, he asks the PCs if they would be willing to help him out. He will offer 1/2 price on an expensive purchase (over 100d total), or offer them a set of well-crafted daggers he just received (worth about 32d each).

3) If the PCs accept, he will happily explain where the mint can be found, and give a detailed description of the plant. It is called Terbamint, grows only 6" tall, and its fuzzy leaves grow in clusters of 7. He also draws them a simple picture.

4) If the PCs follow the directions, they will walk for half a day. The directions are easy to follow and there is a notable landmark (rock outcropping, great oak tree etc.) near by. When the PCs enter the area, they come across a small group of 5 people who scatter as soon as they see the PCs. The Terbamint is nearby and easily found and gathered.

5) If the PCs call to the men in an unthreatening manner, one will come forward and explain they thought the PCs were poachers. The poachers come to the camp every night and steal their food. The man explains they are poor lepers, and can't defend themselves. He asks if the PCs will stay until the poachers come and drive them off. They will not go to town for fear of spreading the disease, even if offered Peonian aid.

6) If the PCs accept, 4 rough looking men show up just before sundown. They will challenge and try to intimidate the PCs but won't initiate an attack themselves. They will leave after much posturing if the PCs don't back down. Any that are captured or killed by the PCs will be worth 20d to the local foresters.

7) If the PCs refuse, but tell the local foresters where the poachers can be found, the poachers will be arrested two days later and the PCs will be rewarded 20d each for their help (if the PCs are still around). The foresters will also chase down and kill 3 of the lepers (who have been poaching themselves, and are unsuitable for the gaol for obvious reasons).

8) If they don't inform the foresters, the lepers will finally have to move deeper into the wood as the beatings get worse.

9) If the PCs bring back the mint, the merchant will grateful and will happily pay them. Now he just has to figure out how to get his wife to chew it...

Merchant's Mask...

As the PCs wander around the town market, a wealthy looking merchant who noticed them approaches. He offers them a deal.

In a week, the Mangai is holding a festival where all invited are to wear a costume. This yearly event is open only to members of the Mangai and to be judged with the best costume has become a matter of a matter of prestige among the Mangai members. The man wants the PCs to hunt him down a creature and make a mask from its skull. He will pay 100d total after he gets the skull, plus a 50d bonus each if he wins the contest.

Unfortunately, he wants a vlasta skull. And that's the only thing that he'll pay for. Even more unfortunate, he has no idea where to get one. But if the PCs want their money, they only have 4 days (he needs time to finish the costume). If the PCs succeed however, he will win and the PCs will get their bonus and gain a friendly contact.

1) If the PCs decline, nothing happens and the merchant doesn't get his skull or win the contest.

2) If the PCs inquire at the local shrine of Ilvir (assuming there is one), they will get serious looks and a tongue lashing if they show interest in finding a vlasta. He will pelt them with curses and phrases like "The brooder will show you his children if he wishes, not before." The local Ilvirans may have captive vlasta at the GM's discretion, but they will be well hidden.

3) If the PCs inquire around town, especially the local hide worker or hunters, they will find out about a crazy old hermit who is rumored to live with some queer creatures. They avoid the man, but know the area he lives in.

4) If the PCs follow the directions to the hermit, they will come across some vlasta. When the PCs attempt to kill one, the hermit will jump out from the woods with a bow. He warns them not to harm the vlasta or he will shoot. If the PCs attack him or the vlasta, they will have to fight all of them at once as they have come to live with each other (about 6 vlasta). The hermit will demand the PCs leave. He will watch them as long as they are in the area.

5) If the PCs offer to buy a vlasta, he will laugh and offer a skeleton but nothing more. This is acceptable for what the merchant wants. The hermit wants 2 dozen arrows for his bow, then he will lead the PCs to the skeleton.

6) If the PCs wander about in the woods at least a day away from the city, they *may* come across wild vlasta. It will be dangerous, of course, but any skulls must not be damaged. In actuality, to find a rare Ivashu at random will be rather unlikely.

A Thorn Among the Roses...

The PCs have joined many in the city in attending a local tournament. All the local nobility are in attendance, and even some well-known knights from afar have traveled to the festivities. The locals have been given the day off to watch, and people have come from several villages away. The area for commoners to watch is very crowded.

As the PCs move about to find a better position, their attention is drawn to a servant who appears to be nervously fiddling with the gear of a nearby mount. He does not appear dressed as a squire or ostler, but many servants are wandering hither and thither around the field before the combat starts. PCs with knowledge of heraldry might recognize the horse's colors.

The horse belongs to one of the participants of note, is an up and coming female knight. While her skills are considerable, she has not made many friends among her circle of mostly male peers.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 54

Her own fiery, strong-willed responses to certain unfair biases and false accusations have quite vocal and unappreciated. Despite this colorful affair, she is becoming quite popular at tournaments.

A particular knight has taken a great disliking to the dame after suffering a spectacular defeat to her lance. He has convinced a couple of his friends to aid him in trying to humiliate her during the tourney. They have decided to resort to skullduggery to achieve those ends. It is his servant that is currently near the dame's horse.

1) If the PCs don't watch the servant carefully, or choose not to interfere, about half way through a mounted melee, one of her saddle straps comes undone. The dame will fall from her horse and break her leg. She will be helped off the field afterwards among much laughter goaded on by the vengeful knight and his cronies.

2) If the PCs watch closely, the servant will finally be seen to gently loosen a strap on the saddle.

3) If the PCs enter the field and confront the servant, he will immediately flee. He will try to lose the PCs in the throng of activity, before finally returning to his knight in an attempt to hide. Trying to confront the knight will result in swift action to remove the PCs from the field followed by harshly worded threats (if commoners), or stolid denials (if one of the PCs are noble).

4) If the PCs wait for the servant to leave the horse, he can be followed quite easily without entering the field area to the arming tent of his master.

5) If the PCs attempt to fix the saddle on their own, the dame will arrive just in time to see them toying with her gear. She will storm forth, accusing the PCs of trying to sabotage her chances in the tourney. She will not listen to any excuses. She will administer a warning to their supposed master and several cuffs to the head, before ordering them off the field. If the PCs don't leave promptly, the dame will call the guards and the PCs will find themselves hauled off by the local guards. She will fix her saddle and perform well in the tourney.

6) If the PCs wait for the dame to return and warn her of the treachery, she will eye them suspiciously. Seeing they are correct, she tightens the saddle offers grudging thanks. During the tournament's mounted melee, she will approach the guilty knight and then pretend she is losing her balance due to the saddle. He takes the bait and rushes in to knock her off. But she surprises him and soundly clubs him from his own saddle. The dame will have nothing else to say to the PCs.

7) If the PCs inform the dame of where the servant went to after fouling her saddle, they will find themselves pulled into an impromptu meeting of the knights.

The dame has gotten the ear of a friendly, visiting baron and the holder of the tourney. With the PCs as witnesses, the dame accuses the guilty knight and convinces the others assembled of his cheating. The knight is banned from this tourney in the future, and his reputation (such as it is) is soiled among his more honorable peers.

8) If the PCs helped the dame call out the offending knight, and are of the respectable sort, she will offer a position as servants to them. She is not rich, and can't afford to pay well, but promises to show them the world and give them the opportunity to rub elbows with the nobles in the tourney scene (from a servants position of course). She can be persuaded to share some of her considerable skills along the way as well.

Mangai Madness...

The PCs are sitting around in a local tavern. Being hardy looking folk (or just strangers who don't know what they are about to get into...), a man approaches them and offers them some easy money.

He tells the PCs he has a stable that needs guarding against some local street thugs who are trying to shake him down. The town watch is unwilling to do anything about it. He knows they are not Lia-Kavair, and simply having guards will keep them at bay. He and his son have been keeping guard but need some sleep. He has chased off the thugs once or twice, they are not interested in direct confrontation.

The man offers each guard 5d a night, with an offer to work at least one week. They simply have to stop the thugs from stealing his horses, wagons or damaging his property.

The man has not been honest however. He is a teamster and the local teamsters have applied for guild status. The matter is in the hands of the Mangai, the main opponents being several local mercantylers, who fear losing control over the seasonal caravans. The teamster is the most vocal supporter in the Mangai hearings. The thugs the teamster is worried about are not mere thugs, but hired thugs of a local rich merchant whom has taken issue with the teamster. This is why the locals are reluctant to work for the teamsters.

1) If the PCs decline, the teamster's stables and wagons are burned, his horses stolen, and his son killed two nights later when they fell asleep on watch. There are other supporters of a Teamsters' Guild, but the Mangai will table the issue for now.

2) If the PCs ask around about their employer, they will be able to find out most of the real story if they ask the right sorts (inns with guild customers, shops, et.).

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 55

They will get several indignant responses from those who support the mercantylers. They may even get an offer of 100d each to walk away from their post tonight if they speak to the merchant against the teamster.

3) If the PCs confront the teamster about the information on the guild problems, he will apologize and explain that he was having a hard time finding help. If pressed, he will offer up to 15d a night.

4) If the PCs accept, they are in for a rough night. Shortly after midnight, a group of 5 men will sneak to the teamster's stables. They will attack the PCs and try to burn down the stables. The thugs are not expecting any real resistance and will flee after any stiff resistance. Should any PCs flee from the fight, the thugs will not give chase as they have too much to do at the stables.

5) If the PCs helped the teamster, they are now on the local Mercantylers' Guild black list. No mercantylers will trade with them, no usurers will honor notes, and some inns and shops may deny them entry.

6) If the PCs accept the job for a second night, a number of thugs equal to the PCs group, or a minimum of 6, will appear again. They are more prepared, wearing light armor and carrying weapons. They will try to take out the PCs this time. They are however not particularly skilled. They will flee if they suffer any major wounds. They will chase down any fleeing PCs after the stable is burned. The thugs, if given the chance, will kill any unconscious or helpless PCs.

7) If the PCs drive off the thugs a second night, they will have gained a permanent enemy in the merchant. No further attempts will be made against the stable. The teamster will be able to make the case that they can handle themselves to the Mangai. This will help the Mangai see the teamsters as folk who can take care of business. The teamster will hire the PCs for 3 more uneventful nights, and then pay them a bonus of 25d each for their help. He will offer to hire them on at regular guard pay for the next month if they desire.

Note: The Mangai wish the teamsters would just go away. Some in the Mangai support it, other don't. But the one thing they all agree on is that it is a messy affair. It is up to the GM to decide whether or not to implement another guild to Harn; it will have far reaching effects on the Harnic economy. But this could be a good starting point for a Teamster's Guild Campaign.

The Pilfered Pilgrims...

As the PCs are perusing the wares of a particular shop, the shop owner's wife comes out and begins throwing a fit. Apparently their young son has not returned since yesterday. The man seems rather unconcerned, but the spouse will not let the issue lie. Finally in frustration, the man screams at his wife. To placate her, he offers the PCs some items (about 30d worth) to go try to find his son.

The boy and his friend have fallen prey to slavers looking for easy prey. They recently suffered an assault from slaves they were transporting and all but 3 of the slavers were killed. The survivors, lacking any coins, have decided to trick some folk and sell them so they could start over. One dressed as a Peonian (who was in fact at one time a Peonian acolyte), has lured the children into a trap.

1) If the PCs refuse to help, or fail in their investigations, neither boy will be seen again.

2) If the PCs accept, he will tell them his son was to stay at a friend's last night. The friend's house is on the other side of the city, but with the shop keep's directions it is easy to find. He also describes his 14-year-old boy.

3) If the PCs get to the house, they will meet the friend's mother. She will happily explain what good boys they are, having gone to a Peonian service outside the city walls yesterday. She assumes they spent the night with the Peonians, since they told her where the service was held.

4) If the PCs go to the area the service was held, it is easily found with the mother's instructions. There is however no trace of the boys or any Peonian priests. The only people in the area besides locals going about their business are a small group of homeless that has set up a small lean-to.

5) If the PCs ask the homeless folk, and pay the farthing they ask for, they will tell the PCs about the Peonian's sermon. He talked about a short pilgrimage for the young ones, and led about a dozen of them down the road and into the woods not too far off.



HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 56

6) If the PCs follow the road to the woods they will find signs of passage. With little skill, the PCs should be able to follow the trail. The trail leads to an abandoned camp with wagon and mule tracks leaving from there.

7) If the PCs follow the tracks for at least 6 hours, they will come across three rough looking men working on the broken wheel of a wagon full of children. The children are tied in the wagon and begin crying and calling for help if they see the PCs.

8) If the PCs attempt to free the children, the slavers will fight them if the PCs are not overtly dangerous. Given their recent luck, the slavers will flee, trying to take their mule with them, if the PCs appear too tough for them.

9) If the PCs take the children back, they will be met by much praise by the parents when the full tale is told. The shopkeeper who hired them will not offer a greater reward, but will give one if asked (especially if the wife is within earshot!).

Have Groom, Will Travel...

The PCs have been invited (or hired in some fashion) to a wedding between two minor but influential noble houses. There are many people there, including the most powerful noble in the local region, and there is much merry making and feasting. After the initial festivities however, it becomes quite clear the bride is absent.

The PCs friend (or employer) calls for them. The bride's father is gathering retainers and friends to search for the girl before the wedding is ruined. Each party is sent to one of her hiding places within the city. They are to bring her back.

While it is true the bride does not really wish to marry, it is not her love for another that has caused her to run off. She is being paid well by a third family to make a fool of her father in front of the other nobility. The bride is not particularly fond of her father, and is willing to cause him this grief for the money she's getting.

1) If the PCs refuse, another group will find her, and they will have all the fun.

2) If the PCs agree, they are assigned to search near a large willow tree (or something similar) near the edge of the city. They will find her there, sitting quite in the open. When she sees the PCs, she quickly works up some tears. She goes into a long, dramatic diatribe about how her cruel father is forcing her to marry when she loves someone else. By the time the PCs are done speaking with her the wedding has long been called off. She asks them to follow her to a friend's house where she'll stay while they tell her father where she is.

3) If the PCs try to force her back, she will scream and yell, warning the PCs what the penalty for raping a noble woman would be. If they persist, she will be dragged kicking and screaming with little interference as most of the city knows of her running away. The wedding will be done again next week, with her under constant guard (perhaps by the PCs, which could lead to a whole new set of adventures/problems). This wedding will also try to be sabotaged.

4) If the PCs agree to let her go to the house, she will take them to a simple house in the city. When they tell the father where she is, he will be angry but sympathetic to the PCs as he knows his daughter well. She will be collected the next day, and the wedding will be tried again (see #2 above).

5) If the PCs leave someone to watch the house, a man will enter some time later. They speak in a ground floor room, where a stealthy PC can hear the transaction and learn most of the facts above.

6) If the PCs find out about the plot and let the father know, he will imprison his daughter until the wedding and will use his influence against the third family. The wedding will succeed and the two families will do their best to disgrace the third noble party. The PCs will have gained the favor of both families.

7) If the PCs find out about the plot and confront the daughter or third family, they will be paid off 100d each for their silence. If they collect and then renege, they can later expect to be targeted for legal problems or worse. They can earn another 100d each if they use their positions to help sabotage the next wedding as well. Of course if things go wrong, they'll have three noble families out for them...

Of course if things go wrong, they'll have three noble families out for them...



The Naughty Notes...

As the PCs rest in town, they are approached by a contact that has a job opportunity. A noble has put out a call within his circle of friends for the recovery of some documents stolen by a foreign agent. Disguised as a simple scribe, the man absconded with a list of supply needs that could be used by another kingdom to determine information about the army.

In fact the man is a simple writer, who has come into an inheritance and decided to travel the island. While doing so, he's decided to write about his adventures and make a book. Some time ago he found himself at a royal function. Finding a quiet corner to scribe down the interesting things he'd seen and heard, the noble and a female courtier stopped nearby and did not notice him. The noble was rather flirtatious, and a bit free with his hands. But the most interesting was the noble's rather bawdy poem (which he originally wrote for his wife). The scribe wrote it all down.

Before leaving, the scribe mentioned the encounter to the lady. She thought it was a sweet sentiment and thought nothing of it. It was some time before she told a very angry noble. Upon hearing this, he immediately made up the story about stolen documents and put the bounty on the man's head worth 200d. His wife is very fond of literature, and fears she will someday read the book.

1) If the PCs accept, they will have access to basic travel needs, given a description of the scribe and the book, and the information that he is no longer in the city. There is no information as where he might have gone. The noble gives them an official writ giving them the authority to seize the book and kill or arrest the scribe.

2) If the PCs speak with the noble's courtier about the man's whereabouts, she will say he had mentioned traveling to the next largest city with a troupe of entertainers.

3) If the PCs ask around blindly, they will have a very frustrating time. At the GM's discretion, there is a small chance someone in one of the nearby inns remember the man who spoke about leaving with some jugglers. Someone else might remember the entertainers leaving for the next large city.

4) If the PCs follow the roads to the next large city having discovered which direction the scribe was traveling, they will catch up with the troupe in a village just before the city. Any overt attempts to seize the man will meet with heavy resistance from the entertainers (watch out for those knife throwers!) who have taken a liking to the man. The scribe of course has no idea what the PCs are talking about. He will gladly show them his book, and if the noble is mentioned will point out what he wrote.

Suspicious PCs might assume there is a hidden code of some sort.

5) If the PCs try to force the man to come with them, they will have to fight or face down a handful of the entertainers, even with the writ. If they show the writ to local authorities, they will aid the PCs in the capture but not transport back. Getting the scribe back to the noble will earn them the bounty.

6) If the PCs decide the man is innocent and instead just bring back the offending page, the noble will be irritated but will accept the solution. He will pay the full bounty if the PCs promise to keep the secret. Breaking the secret may result in another writ with a different set of names on it...

7) If the PCs don't return with the page or the scribe, they will not get any pay and will be unpopular with that noble. If they try to blackmail or threaten the noble, they will immediately be arrested for being co-conspirators. The noble will do what he can to ensure the PCs are taken care of before the truth can leak out.

Squire for Hire...

As the PCs are minding their own business walking the streets of the city, a well-dressed knight approaches them and addresses the strongest looking of them. He is looking for someone not well known in the city, so will only approach if the PCs are not well known in the city.

He offers the PC 50d to act as his squire at an upcoming minor tournament. His own squire has disappeared and he wishes not to be mocked by the other knights for appearing too poor to have a squire. The job will only last one day and will only consist of fetching items for the knight and being properly respectful and eloquent. The tourney begins tomorrow and the knight will show the PC all he can before then. He will up the price to 100d if the PC is reluctant, but he cannot force the PC to accept. He will offer the other PCs 10d each for acting as his servants.

Actually, the knight has been bragging quite loudly about his new squire, and in the process insulting the other squires. His squire is actually quite an impressive fellow, but is unfortunately a drunkard. On his way to the city, the squire got drunk and mouthed off to some rough sorts who rolled him and took all of his gear. The squire showed up yesterday, beaten, bruised, bedraggled, and utterly penniless. The knight immediately sent the squire away to avoid embarrassment. He knows the PC will have to deal with some hostile attitudes, but doesn't expect any real trouble.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 58

1) If the PCs refuse, the knight will sigh, walking off and muttering about how it's probably best.

2) If the PC accepts, the knight will lead him to a small house in the city. He will show the PC how to properly address other knights, will describe the looks and heraldry of important figures, and will cover an endless and convoluted list of do's and don'ts. The PC will also be provided a chain habergeon, coif, kite shield, and broadsword for the charade. They will be taken to the tournament the following morning.

3) If the PCs attend, they will be treated to a good breakfast and quick introductions are made. At every turn the "squired" PC will be asked trick questions and encounter several attempts by other squires at making him misspeak or otherwise embarrass himself or the knight. The animosity towards the squire is ignored by the knight, but obvious to everyone else. After a long, tense breakfast, the call to make ready for the tourney is announced.

4) If the PC hasn't run off crying, he is sent to the field to help the knight ready for the tourney. As he is sent here and there to perform his duties, other squires and knights constantly harass and question him, trying to trip him up and test his knowledge. If the PC stands up to someone, they had better keep their calm and be respectful (of the knights especially). The hiring knight performs respectfully, but does not win.

5) If the PC loses his temper, or otherwise comes off as being incompetent, one of the other up-and-coming squires will insist on a friendly duel. Should the PC waver in accepting, the knight will pull him aside (pretending to give him permission to accept) and quietly offer another 20d.

6) If the PC accepts, he will be in the center of the gathered knights, nobles, and squires after the tourney has finished. The fight will not be to the death, but will be with real weapons and will be called off after a few good hits on either side. It will also be ended after a single severe wound or with the incapacitation of one of the fighters. The challenger is skilled, and will toy with the PC again trying to make him look foolish (which may backfire if the PC is also skilled).

7) If the PC manages to pull off the charade without drawing a challenge, or wins the challenge, the knight will make a great deal of his "squire" in front of the others. The dinner feast will find the others watching the PC with grudging respect and the PC will be toasted (though not celebrated). The next day the knight parts ways as he returns to his duties some distance away. He will thank the PC greatly and offer his hospitality in the future.

8) If the PC makes too great a fool of himself or the knight, or loses the duel badly, the knight will be very angry and chastise him publicly, "stripping him of his squirehood" and boots him out.

9) If for any reason the PCs are discovered as fakes, the knight will have lost an immense amount of face. The PCs will have the knightly gear taken and be excused. The main onus of the situation is on the knight. No true disciplinary action is taken, but the knight has lost what political clout he had.

Note: At the GM's discretion, the knight may actually offer the PC the opportunity to become his squire if the PC *really* impressed him. It will also help solve the problem of knights asking where the squire went later on. Of course, the PC may well be recognized at a later date by one of the knights or squires, leading to some obviously uncomfortable questions.

Great Walls of Fire...

As the PCs are traveling through the busy streets of the city, a rush of people begin running away from where the PCs are heading. A few moments later thick black smoke drifts in between nearby buildings and the flickering of flames can be seen down the street!

A soot covered, elderly man approaches the PCs from the smoke, coughing and wiping his eyes. He pleads with them to save his collection. Talking quickly, and still coughing, the man explains that his house is not yet on fire, but is too smoke filled for his old lungs. The old man offers 50d if helped.

Fires are a common occurrence in medieval cities, often destroying large portions of the city. The reason for this accidental fire will perhaps never be known, but the man's offer is genuine. He is master illuminator and has collected several priceless works in his small home. The fire is right next to his home, and spreading.

1) If the PCs decline, the man will curse at them before running off to find someone else to help. His home and works will be destroyed.

2) If the PCs accept, they will have to be quick. The man describes a large, leather-bound tome that must be saved. There are many other works he wishes saved as well, as much as the PCs can get.

3) If the PCs enter the house, they will notice the fire starting to spread against the scribe's home. It is a small, single room in a two-story building. But it is full of choking smoke and clutter that makes the PCs job difficult. Appropriate awareness rolls should be made for each item. The PCs have 1d6 turns to search before the fire spreads to the inside of the building.

From this point, the fire will quickly spread as the room has ample fuel in the form of stacks of paper. It is up to the GM what exactly they find, but in the room is a small chest with the scribe's money (243d and the deed to the home). The man didn't think about his money, and is what he planned to pay them with.

4) If the PCs return with at least 3 "handfuls" of works, including the ancient tome, the man will pay them. Or at least offer to pay them after his home is cleared when he realizes where his money is. If the PCs give him the money, he will pay them 65d for their honesty.

5) If the PCs don't return the money, the man will feel bad for not being able to pay, explaining his money is in the burning building.

Sword-crossed Lovers...

As the PCs walk around the city, they have occasion to come across the path of a group of nobles. One is an older male, the others are a male and female in their twenties. The female is a very attractive sort, and bats her eyelashes at one of the male PCs before moving on.

Some time later in the day, the young noble lady appears and cozies up to the PC. She flirts and hangs on him shamelessly, giggling with delight at every nicety shown her by the PC. Nothing will convince her to leave, and violence against a noble lady is always frowned upon.

Some time after that, the two male nobles show up and angrily warn the PCs to never speak to her again. They gather her up with little resistance and storm away.

The older knight is the girl's father, and the younger is a respected knight courting the noble lady. The young woman is rather flighty, and has taken a genuine interest in the PC. She will constantly show up until some resolution is found.

1) If the PCs leave the city within the next day or so, they will not be bothered by the lady or her betters.

2) If the PCs don't actively hide, the lady will find the PC and hang on to him, explaining her father and brother are just trying to protect her. She will not leave the PC unless her father or courted come and gather her, or they do something covered below.

3) If the PCs are caught by the nobles with the lady, they will increase the severity of the warning each time. After the third time, the young knight will come with a handful of men-at-arms and rough up the PCs a bit to make sure they get the point. After that, the PCs will be escorted from town by force.

4) If the PC slaps or otherwise roughs up the lady in an attempt to get her away, she will run off crying. About an hour later, her father and several town guardsmen will appear and arrest the PCs. They will be fined heavily and jailed for assault. But the lady will not bother them any more.

5) If the PC is very rude, or hurts her feelings, the lady will slap him and storm off. They will hear nothing more of the woman.

6) If the PC accepts the forward intimate suggestions of the lady, she will passively object to full intimacy, but can be easily persuaded. Regardless of how far it goes, she claims the PC is a lecherous lout and slaps him on the way out for not being a gentleman.

7) If the PC had fully intimate relations with the lady, she will become ashamed and tell her knight that she was taken advantage of. The family doesn't wish any proclamations of rape to be made public, so the knight will challenge the PC to a duel for the lady's honor. Regardless of the outcome of the fight with the skilled knight, which will probably not be to the death, the PCs will be told not to return to the city.

Of Warriors and Words...

As the PCs walk through the city, a young man dressed in a page's tabard approaches them. He says that his master, a knight in residence of the city, has asked for some of their time. If asked, the page will simply state his master has an opportunity to earn some silver.

The page leads the PCs to a small house in the city. Inside a knight of the realm offers them a seat while he explains his offer. A somewhat despicable knight warrior has been challenging his peers to friendly duels, and making fools of them all. He uses some sort of unknown fighting techniques that have proved very successful. In his arrogance, he has even taken to hiring a scribe to write down record his own "greatness" for prosperity's sake. He has made a challenge, and the knight wants to be ready.

The job of the PCs will be to get close to the warrior, with the aid of a knight's letter, and perhaps playing on the warrior's greatness, and steal the manuscript before the duel. The hiring knight must travel to his estates to deal with some matters, so the PCs will have about a month before the duel is to take place. He'll pay 200d for the manuscript.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 60

The knight is being honest in the fact that the warrior-knight has won several duels recently. But he is actually an honorable, likable fellow who is just a fine warrior. He has recently returned from Hepekeria, and is incorporating the skills he learned there with those of his homeland. The hiring knight simply wishes to be the first to beat him in these friendly duels.

- 1) If the PCs refuse, they will be rudely dismissed.
- 2) If the PCs accept, they will be given a note from a friend of the knight that introduces the holder as friends who would be greatly interested in learning the warrior's skills. They will also be given directions; the warrior lives about a day away with a manor lord.
- 3) If the PCs travel to the manor, they will be greeted and granted an audience with the warrior. Showing the letter, and some good manners, will cause the warrior to accept the PCs as students temporarily. An aged scribe constantly makes hurried scribbles during each training session. It is a good opportunity for the PCs to get some training, and will be made guests in the manor if they agree to help with chores. Otherwise they'll have to stay at the inn, or elsewhere.
- 4) If the PCs tell the warrior of their employer's plan, he will respect them for their honesty and thank them. He will order the scribe to quickly make up a fake manuscript.
- 5) If the PCs agree to take this manuscript back to their employer, the warrior will continue to train and host them for another month after the duel.
- 6) If the PCs refuse to take the fake manuscript back, the warrior will understand, but ask them to leave. No mention of their false credentials will be made, though he may remind them of it should they object.
- 7) If the PCs steal the manuscript, which will prove relatively easy, as the scribe is a bit addled, they will be the prime suspects. While they may be able to convince the warrior it was the scribe's absent-minded nature, it would be best to leave quickly.
- 8) If the PCs flee with the manuscript and don't give it to their employer, both knights will do what they can to make the PCs miserable. The manuscript will be helpful for some minor training bonuses, but is not very helpful without instruction.
- 9) If the PCs return a manuscript to the hiring knight, he will pay the PCs their due. He will also make a large deal among his peers about the upcoming duel and many will attend. The warrior will win the contest in either case, but if the PCs gave him the fake manuscript, the knight will try to emulate the nonsensical stances and moves within, making a great fool of himself.

10) If the PCs refuse to give their employer the manuscript, or didn't steal it, he will make life very uncomfortable for the PCs; especially if they speak of the scheme.

Bargain Breaker...

A young, beautiful woman dressed in revealing violet robes and wearing jewelry bearing the regalia of Halea approaches the PCs. In a friendly manner, she asks the PCs if they would enjoy a nice meal and the opportunity for a lucrative bargain. She has recently been made a full priestess of the church, and was cheated out of some money. Should the PCs accept, she will lead them to nice lodgings belonging to the Hanean church, which will depend on the influence of the church in the city. She will have servants serve them a fine meal, during which she will flirt with the party and make innocuous small talk.

After the meal she will get down to business. The snotty son of a powerful noble has recently cheated her out of large sum of money. He had claimed to wish to convert to worship the Lady of Luck, and as is custom made proper donations for his own personal priestess. This priestess was of course the PC's hostess. Her temple is holding her responsible for the loss. What she wants the PCs to do, is help figure out a way to make him pay for breaking his bargain. She does however state that overt violence against him is not the way of Halea, and that is not what the PCs are hired to do. She will offer 50d (negotiable up to 70d) to each PC if they can help her with her problem (and will be willing to discuss more intimate forms of payment instead).

The priestess is being honest about her plight. She accepted the first donation and moved in with the noble. He convinced her to stay another month, continually coming up with reasons he hadn't yet paid, but promised to do so. When after a little over a month she demanded payment, he laughed and had her physically tossed from his home. Claiming, "the whore's services are not worth the coin", he has not answered any summons from her. He simply wanted to amuse himself with an attractive priestess, and has now decided the price is too high. The noble is the son of a powerful lord, who grants his protection and wealth. The lord has no ties with the Hanean church, and neither cares what the priestesses think. He has a bad gambling habit, and even when cheating he is not particularly good at it.

Normally the church would deal with it using its great wealth, as this is not the precedent they want to allow. But as the woman is a new priest, the local Hanean priestesses have decided to see how she handles the situation.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 61

1) If the PCs refuse the lovely priestess, she will understand and thank them for their time. She may approach them later and try to bribe or seduce one or more of them.

2) If the PCs accept, the priestess will be very happy, but unable to offer any suggestions. Her main goal is to either separate the noble from his father, or cause him severe financial trouble.

3) If the PCs confront or discuss the situation with the noble in any form, he will simply scoff and dismiss the PCs (he has a few bodyguards that are constantly present). He will not speak with them.

4) If the PCs ask about the noble among his peers or neighbors, they will have no useful information. The GM may allow the PCs to come across someone in an inn that makes an offhand comment on the noble's gambling.

5) If the PCs follow the noble around discreetly for a few days, they will see him enter a shady part of town and then into a filthy building. Investigating the building will reveal the presence of several underworld sorts, and a few throwing dice in the corner with the noble. It is apparent the noble has lost a great deal of money and is short on the payment.

6) If the PCs speak to the other gamblers after the noble has left, they will threaten and try to rough up the PCs. But PCs who convince (or intimidate) them to speak, the PCs will be informed the noble is in deep debt. But has promised to get money from his father, the payment will be coming in two days.

7) If the PCs can intercept the payment (via robbery, trickery, or perhaps a gambling challenge...), either before it gets to the noble or before it gets to the gamblers, the stiffed Lia-Kavair will take action against the noble. This can range from extortion to murder, as determined by the GM. In any case, it will satisfy the priestess, as the noble will have lost money and favor with his father after having to shell out more silver. She asks for half of the money they took, if the PCs have it and let her know about it, to recoup her losses (and to keep the PCs identity secret). She will still give the PCs the agreed payment. Despite her "bargain" for half of the noble's money, the priestess may be a useful ally to the PCs. The situation (including the blackmail) has earned her favor with the local church hierarchy, and she owes the PCs in part for her success.

Happy Murder Day...

As the PCs go about their day in the city, a young woman approaches them. She sounds desperate and a bit frightened, glancing carefully around as she speaks. The woman says she can pay for the PCs help, which she pleads for. She has come to the PCs because they have no ties to her husband.

The woman says she is in fear of her life, threatened by her noble husband. She explains that she is a commoner, married to a local minor knight. She knows that her husband has been informed by his superpowers that his commoner wife is hampering his status. Her husband has been having strange guests lately, not allowing her to speak to them. Strange men have also been shadowing her while doing her business about town, watching her shopping and following her to friends' homes.

The wife is convinced that her husband is plotting to murder her so he can advance up the social ladder. Even though she is his wife, she is of common birth and making such an accusation would prove dangerous. If she can find some proof however, she can bring charges against her husband or at least convince the local church to give her sanctuary. If the PCs can provide this proof, she will pay them 150d.

The wife unfortunately has utterly misunderstood her husband's intent. After a marital spat, she over heard her husband speaking with a friend who made an innocuous comment about marrying a commoner. Between the fight, her own discomfort at marrying a noble, and misunderstanding the friend's comment, the wife has come to the conclusion that her husband is planning to have her killed.

The knight is actually planning on throwing her a large birthday party. He has hired people to find out what she looks at while shopping, common friends that she would like at her party, and to track her movements so he knows the best time to set up the party. He is still quite enamored with his lovely wife, and is trying to make up for the time he has been away from her while doing his duty.

1) If the PCs refuse to help, the woman will understand and look for other help. She will suffer a minor breakdown as her fears overwhelm her and the PCs may hear of it later.

2) If the PCs confront the knight and hint they know his plans, he will threaten them not to interfere with his "surprise." Should they be more direct, and accuse him of plotting to kill his wife, he will have them arrested. He will accuse them of planting such ideas in his wife's head and they will be fined and possibly flogged.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 62

3) If the PCs follow the wife around and look for those who have been watching her, they will eventually notice a couple of men who seems to constantly follow her.

4) If the PCs try to assault or confront any of the men, they will flee and call the town watch if able. Should the PCs be able to catch one, any threat of violence will make him talk. All the men know is that they are to follow the woman and note what she looks at while shopping and who she visits. If released, the victim will report the PCs to the local authorities.

5) If the PCs follow any of the men, they will notice nothing out of the ordinary until the third day. On that day the men gather at an inn to talk to the knight, who waits for them in a darkened corner.

6) If the PCs successfully eavesdrop on the knight's conversation, they will learn of his true plans about the party.

7) If the PCs inform the knight of his wife's suspicions (after they have learned the truth), he will be shocked and dismayed. He will ask them to keep the party a secret and ask them to assure her she is in no danger. The knight will ask the PCs to help by leading her to the party in two nights.

8) If the PCs tell the wife about the party, she will be horrified at her own fears. With teary eyes she will ask they tell no one, especially her husband, of her suspicions. She will pay the PCs just the same.

9) If the PCs bring the wife to the party without informing her of the truth, she will get increasingly nervous. The wife will begin to believe her husband has hired the PCs if they are not convincing. This could lead to anything from hysteria to an attempted suicide. All will be forgiven, and the PCs paid, should she be finally led to the party.

Embargo Cargo...

As the PCs stop to dine in a popular establishment, a rather plain and commonly dressed man approaches them. Offering to pay for their meal, he calmly asks if he can join them. PCs who refuse will find the man pestering them until they finally hear him out.

The man introduces himself as the representative agent of the royalty, who has been set on a secret mission and needs help.

The agent will not disclose precisely for whom he works, but claims that the stars and his own observations have led him to believe the PCs are the ones that can help him.

The PCs are offered 200d each, as well as food and board while employed, if they will help him search out a merchant transporting foreign goods that would have a devastating effect on all of Harn. The agent will describe the merchant as a known criminal who is selling his goods to unscrupulous sorts, and it is believed the man is unknowingly spreading a plague. Because the agent wishes to keep the public from panic, it is essential the mission remain secret. The agent will carefully show them a vaguely worded royal writ, though doesn't allow the PCs to see the signature.

The merchant is believed to be heading to the city or the surrounding area. He doesn't know what the man looks like, but the merchant should be noticeable for his accent, dress, or wares. With royal authority, the PCs will help arrest this merchant and confiscate his wares. The agent makes it very clear the PCs shouldn't fool with the man's goods, lest they too fall victim to the plague.

The agent is partially telling the truth. He is a local agent for the Council of Eleven and was contacted by a Savoryan Shek-P'var. This woman has used her powers to track down the merchant, but for some reason her auguries are not clear. They have led her here however, though no details are forthcoming. She is actually in charge, and contacts the agent as need be. The Shek-P'var remains hidden at all times, keeping her presence secret from the PCs. Any information she gleans will be passed to the PCs via the agent. It was her scrying that determined the PCs would be of use. The PCs will be the ones to prove her right or wrong.



HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 63

The agent is has no special powers, but is an intelligent, skilled, and very dangerous man.

The merchant has willfully bypassed the Melderyni embargo on dangerous goods. The merchant is originally from Azeryan. He was at a time a mavari in Melderyn, but was banned from learning due to his blatant disregard for Shek-P'var laws and traditions. Though his family has a long tradition in the esoteric arts, these connections could not help him and word was sent to all chantries to deny any further instruction. The merchant has little or no magical abilities, though he knows the academic precepts taught by the Shek-P'var.

The story of the plague is a fabrication to get the PCs involved and to keep them from investigating the merchant's inventory. The merchant is carrying such things as heavy crossbows, articulated steel gauntlets, a few books on alchemy, and a subtle poison unknown to Harn. Most important to the Council of Eleven is a powerful Earth-master artifact (it is causing the interference with the Savoryan), of unknown abilities. The merchant is traveling across Harn trying to sell his goods to any "backwater, island barbarians" that can meet his price. The merchant is familiar with the Shek-P'var abilities, and the efforts Melderyn may go through to stop him. He is very careful, and is indeed in the area.

The merchant is traveling with a loyal guard. When the merchant enters an area he seeks to find buyers in, he hides his small wagon at least one mile away and leaves his guard to protect his goods. He is already in the city and has started making contacts. The merchant will leave within the ten day.

1) If the PCs refuse, the man will try to persuade them two more times. Continued refusal may lead the PCs to suddenly not remember much, if anything, about the encounter.

2) If the PCs accept, the agent will set them up in comfortable lodgings in his home, where his wife will feed them, but not talk to them much at order of her husband. The agent will tell the PCs to scour the city and keep their eyes open. He suggests it might be helpful to ask likely customers. The agent will be doing his own investigations and leave the PCs to their own devices.

3) If the PCs question local merchants, they will have no information. The merchant is not interested in selling his goods to such common peddlers.

4) If the PCs inquire at the local Guild of Arcane Lore, Save K'nor temple, or other prominent scholars, they will find out nothing. These people have already been contacted by the agent, and have agreed to not tell the PCs anything and report the merchant to the agent.

5) If the PCs get suspicious about the GoAL, temple, or scholars and post a discrete watch, they will notice the agent visiting them from time to time. They may be able to follow the agent to the Shek-P'var, but only if they are very, very careful.

6) If the PCs manage to discover the Shek-P'var, she will simply state she is a simple fortuneteller. Under no circumstances will she do anything to reveal her true nature or mission.

7) If the PCs ask about (or are familiar with) the local people of wealth and power, they will find that one knight in particular is known as being an avid collector of rare weapons. It is unlikely the PCs will be able to speak with the knight unless they are noble, and if they can the knight will deny any information about the merchant as he doesn't want others interfering with his unique collection. But if the PCs are able to speak to the knight's servant, she will tell them that indeed a "silly" sounding man offered rare weapons. She doesn't know if he'll be back though as she had to do chores.

8) If the PCs can manage to make contact with the Lia-Kavair, a bribe of 100d will buy them the fact that a foreign merchant had come to them offering a powerful, unknown poison. The leader of the Lia-Kavair agreed to meet the merchant again with the goods. The merchant set no time, but the LK set the location. Another 100d will buy the location, as they don't really trust the merchant and coins is always more valuable than promises. The agent will provide, or compensate, the PCs with the money needed.

9) If the PCs watch the various locations, they will eventually see a man, who is probably the merchant, carrying his goods in a sack. The location, time, and contents of the sack is up to the GM. Should the PCs simply watch one location (the LK meeting place is the most assured) constantly, they will likely find the merchant.

10) If the PCs confront the merchant, he will flee and try to lose the PCs in the streets. If need be, he will drop his goods to escape. The merchant is fast and wily, and will try to get back to his wagon. If cornered on his own, the merchant will surrender and try to escape later. He will also try to bribe his captors with his foreign goods.

11) If the PCs quietly follow the merchant, he can be tracked back to the wagon. Stealthy PCs can surprise the merchant and guard.

12) If the PCs chase the merchant to the wagon, they will try to flee. If forced they will fight, using the heavy crossbows. The guard is a tough veteran.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 64

13) If the PCs bring the merchant to the agent, he will dismiss them, and will disappear with his prisoner from the city. They will find their equipment and payment at the agents house. The wagon will also be taken, as the information is tortured from the merchant.

14) If the PCs search the wagon, they will find the goods. Unless they are blatant about taking any items to the agent, the PCs can probably manage to sneak something away. The only thing the agent and Shek-P'var know about for sure is the Earthmaster artifact. The agent will ask them about the wagon however, and is skilled at detecting lies. If the PCs are caught having taken items, the agent will first offer them 200d for the items, then will use assassination to get the goods back.

15) If the PCs fail to find the merchant, or he escapes them, the agent will pay them and dismiss them. To prevent the PCs from spreading rumors about a plague, the Shek-P'var will try to secretly use her powers to make the PCs forget as many details as possible. Most likely she will pose as a card reader and use her magicks during her performance.

16) If the PCs accepted a bribe and let the merchant go, the Shek-P'var knows that what they did. She will continue her work and leave for the next place he's likely to visit. The agent however, will try to systematically assassinate the PCs. The PCs will be paid however and the agent will pretend he doesn't know, to lull them. They will find him a cunning and deadly foe. He doesn't like being crossed.

The Odd and the Old...

While making their way through the town, one of the PCs is accosted by a very intense, and equally disheveled, old man. He grabs the PC and demands in a low, desperate voice: "You must find the child, you must protect her from the watchers! They will kill her, then they will kill us all!" The man glances side to side with squinted, suspicious eyes before clutching his chest and collapsing to the ground. With a final effort, he whispers, "Please find her...."

The man is newly arrived to the city, and is simply suffering from (possibly drug induced) serious delusions. His death, while mysteriously timed, is simply coincidental and due to generally poor health.

1) If the PCs investigate, they will encounter an endless and frustrating series of dead ends. No one knows the man, know one knows about a missing a girl. Its up to the PCs how long they pursue the matter, but they will never find anything.

2) If the PCs ignore the man, they will have saved themselves a bunch of wasted time.

Sticky Pockets...

While walking along a moderately busy street, the PCs are surprised by a young man that bolts from a nearby alley. The young man bumps into one of the PCs and shouts of "Halt!" and "Stop that man!" echo from the alley. The young man mutters a quick apology and continues his escape down another alley.

Moments later three members of the town guard show up running and race past, chasing the young fugitive. The young man quickly loses the guards in the crowd however.

The man has just been caught stealing a fine jewel set from a jeweler. A powerful local noble commissioned these jewels. The thief has dropped the jewels into one of the PCs pack or pouch, in case he gets caught.

1) If the PCs follow the chase, or later inquire with the guards about the man, they will be informed he is a wanted thief with 200d on his head.

2) If the PCs grow suspicious and search their goods later, the PC that was bumped into will find a small pouch with two jeweled rings, a silver ring, and a silver necklace on his person.

3) If the PCs return the goods to the authorities, they will be paid 50d in reward.

4) If the PCs try to keep the goods, the young thief will return at some point and try to steal it back from them. He will not attempt violence, but will instead follow them about.

5) If the PCs try to sell the goods in town, they will be arrested as the rings are distinctive and word has spread to the merchants who might buy them (unless the PCs have a reliable fence or other shady source to sell to).

6) If the PCs realize the thief will be back, they can try to set a trap. The man is cunning and too obvious a trap will make him walk away or wait until later. If the trap is successful, the PCs will be paid 200d for the bounty (250d if they also turn in the goods).

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 65

Bar Room Brawl...

As the PCs are enjoying a quiet respite at the local inn, the room quite suddenly erupts into a fight between two burly men that are obviously deep in their cups. Despite the best efforts of others nearby who are unable to restrain the two pugilists, the fight quickly gets out of control as others get caught up in the swinging and combatants lunge across tables at one another. It turns into a full-scale brawl.

The PCs will be hard-pressed not to get involved as crockery, chairs, and bodies come flying at them. As the fight continues, there is a small chance (5% is suggested each round) that someone draws a knife or some other deadly weapon.

1) If the PCs try to leave, they will have to make their way through the swirling mass of fists (A move or dodge roll would be appropriate, with a failure resulting in a minor bruise or two). Once outside, others will follow and it will only be a few minutes before the local law enforcers show up.

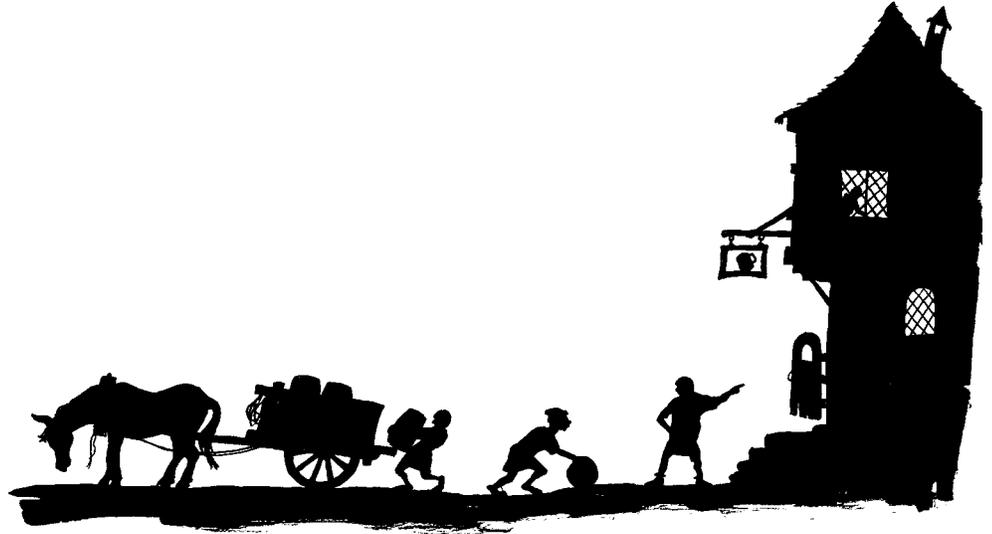
2) If the PCs stay inside, the guards will show up shortly and put an end to the tom-foolery. While the two who started it will be hauled off, those still inside are likely to be roughly handled by the guards and the innkeeper will demand partial payment for the damage.

3) If the PCs refuse to pay or at least help clean up, the innkeeper will get rather cross. The remaining guard tells him to quiet down, as the two in gaol were the ones responsible. The PCs will probably not notice whatever foul substance is occasionally put in their drinks and food the rest of the night.

4) If the PCs offer even trivial coinage or help clean up, they can eat safely.

The Strong Arm of the Law...

When the PCs return to where ever they are staying, they will find it full of local guards milling over an unfamiliar sack of pennies conspicuously spilled on the floor. The PCs are arrested and hauled down to the local gaol/guard house.



As the PCs protest their innocence, they are informed their transgression can be overlooked if they assist the authorities in efforts against the Lia-Kavair. If the PCs refuse, they will face the full penalty of the law.

What has happened is the LK have added some new, ambitious members who are exceeding the tacit agreement the LK has had with the local guard captain. These new members have taken it upon themselves to break into the captain's home and steal a treasured heirloom (a picture, urn, medallion, et.) as payback for harassing them. The captain wants it back. He has heard that the heirloom is to be sold, and one of the PCs is to play the part of the buyer.

1) If the PCs refuse, true to his word, the captain will prosecute the PCs and with his clout will ensure the PCs are fined and jailed. Even if they manage to argue their case, they will still be delayed and confined for a couple of weeks before the matter is fixed.

2) If the PCs try to escape (a monumental task to say the least), and succeed, they will be hunted down within the city and be wanted for several years. Failing to escape will result in a severe drubbing, and still being forced to help.

3) If the PCs agree (with little choice...), one will be ordered to meet with one of the LK at the end of a dark alley one night. They are to buy the item with silver provided by the captain and try to keep the engagement going as long as possible while the captain moves his men in.

4) If the PC is able to convince the LK member they are legitimate, and haggle convincingly, the guard will have time to surround the scene. They bust in and capture the LK fence, several nearby LK observers, and get the heirloom back.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 66

5) If the PC quietly warns the LK fence of the trap, or is unconvincing, the man will send secret signals to nearby observers. All will escape, and the PCs will be blamed, beaten, and locked up. It is up to the PCs to free themselves, but the chances of getting a fair trial seem slim.

6) If the PCs are locked-up and warned the Lia-Kavair fence, a man dressed as a guard will set them free late one night, and will have arranged for the PCs to leave town unseen. He will say nothing but "The Brotherhood never forgets a favor, or a folly.."

7) If the PCs helped jail the LK, they will be made unwelcome in town. The thieves know the PCs were forced to do what they did, but a couple of angry members may try to rob or murder the PCs.

The Gauntlet is Thrown...

On a short jaunt through the market square, or local weapon shop, the PCs notice two knights. They are looking over the goods of a weaponcrafter, their voices growing ever louder in a heated dispute. The argument appears to be over the proper name of a particular type of sword.

Unnoticed by the enraged nobles, a crowd has gathered. One of the PCs hears a woman ask her friend if one of them isn't the son of the city warden. Another answers that it is indeed, and the other is a close cousin of a baron. The PCs may already know the knights' identities if they are local or involved in kingdom politics.

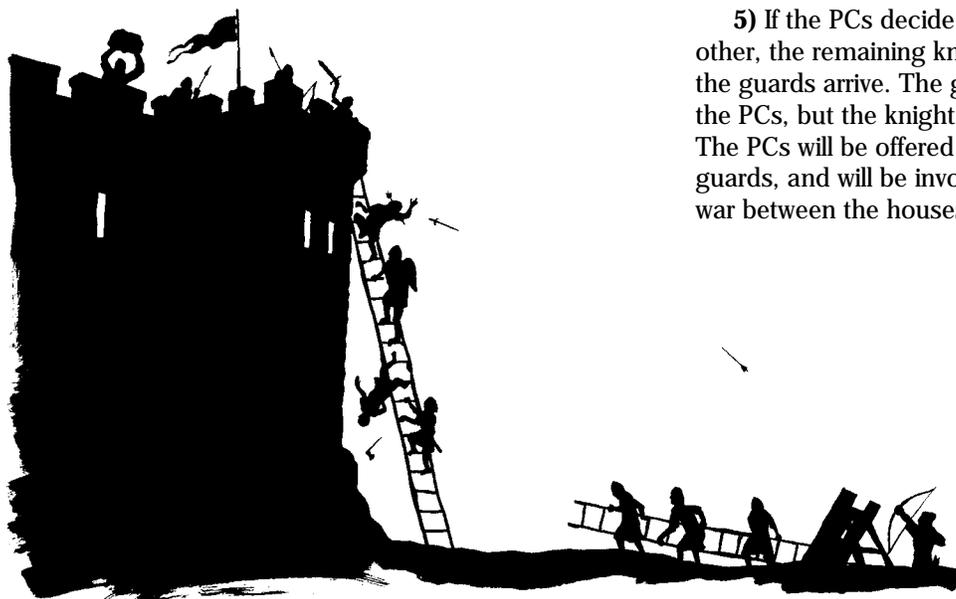
1) If the PCs sit back and watch like the rest of the crowd (probably the wisest course of action), one of the knights will "throw down his gauntlet", figuratively speaking. Swords will be drawn and the scuffle will have little resemblance to a gentleman's duel. After a few minutes of circling, a few good hits, and a string of curses guards will burst through the crowd. They will break up the fight before realizing who is involved, and will be chastised severely for it by both parties. Both knights will pose and gloat, each claiming victory several times before storming off in opposite directions.

2) If the PCs let the knights fight uninterrupted, a street war between the two factions will erupt, involving servants and soldiers of both families. While never rising above the level of small group conflicts, it does result in the occasional death. The feud will grow and soon become deep rooted in both sides. This war will provide much to talk about in the months to come.

3) If the PCs manage to distract the knights enough to halt their fight before the guards arrive (perhaps by staging their own fight, or loudly declaring some fact about a sword they would disagree with), the lords will speak angrily to the PCs before laughing at one another and making up. They will walk on peacefully.

4) If the PCs decide to force the knights to stop fighting, both will immediately stop fighting each other and attack the PCs. Unless one of the PCs is of a noble status or local guard, they will fight for several rounds trying to injure them. After several rounds the city guards will arrive and the PCs will be arrested for assault. They will most likely simply be fined, but if either of the knights were severely injured, they will be charged with assaulting a noble.

5) If the PCs decide to help one knight over the other, the remaining knight will fight them off until the guards arrive. The guards will attempt to arrest the PCs, but the knight they aided will intervene. The PCs will be offered employment as servants or guards, and will be involved in the resulting street war between the houses.



HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 67

When Churches Collide...

The PCs are walking through the streets of the city when a wagon drawn by two large horses barrels towards them. They manage to step out of the way as the wagon thunders past, splattering mud and debris. The driver's face is hidden deep in a voluminous cowl.

As the crowd directs various curses at the wagon, one of the PCs notice a bundle of clothes fall from the wagon. If they are fast enough, they can grab the bundle before someone else in the crowd (who are still shaking their fists).

The clothes are rather heavy, and turn out to be wrapped around an item. The item is an important relic to one of the churches in the city. The driver is a priest from a rival church who just stole the relic (the churches will depend on the city, as will the relic). A long brewing feud between the two churches has escalated. The victimized church has yet to notice the theft, but will shortly. If the PCs have the appropriate experience with the church, they will realize the importance of the item.

1) If the PCs leave the item there, or don't investigate the bundle at all, some other person will pick it up and the PCs will hear nothing of it.

2) If the PCs try to sell the item, they will get little for it as it has little value outside of the church. If they do accept the paltry sum, they will be described to the church authorities a few days later when the victimized church puts out the word. Should the PCs still be in town several days after the theft, they will be found and questioned. The church has their artifact and believes the PCs, so there will be no troubles. The PCs will be called to testify against the other church, which is the real suspect anyway.

3) If the PCs return the relic to the original owners (assuming they can figure it out before being arrested), they will be given a small reward and asked to give their testimony to the church officers.

4) If the PCs manage to find out who stole the relic and return it to them, they will be paid a hefty sum of 200d to keep quiet. If the victim church manages to find out about the PCs involvement (perhaps if the PCs tried to sell it), they will be brought up on charges along with the thieves. This will lead to a long, drawn out legal battle that will occupy the PCs life for some months to come. Depending on the outcome, they may spend some time in the gaol, be fined, and certainly become unpopular with the victim church.

Pugilists and Pick Pockets...

Meandering around the city, the PCs come upon two men who start yelling at each other. One is a large rough looking fellow, the other a small man dressed in clothing that was once of fine make. The smaller fellow suddenly starts punching the larger and a full blown fist fight starts. The crowd closes in to watch and pennies are wagered on the outcome. The fight drags on, neither combatant seeming overly affected by the other's blows.

The fight is actually staged by a small group of the local Lia-Kavair. The two fighters are pulling punches and dragging it out so that a few cutpurses can work the crowd.

1) If the PCs simply watch the fight, it will end rather undramatically and each PC has a 20% chance of being targeted by the thieves, more if they are particularly well dressed or rich looking. The crowd will soon start to disperse and cries will go up as the crowd realizes what has happened.

2) If the PCs watch the fight closely, especially those skilled with unarmed combat skills, they will notice the blows are being pulled and that it is staged. Why they may not know, but may lead them to watch the crowd more carefully.

3) If the PCs watch the crowd closely, successful rolls will allow them to notice there are one or more people moving around the crowd, suspiciously eyeing purses and belts. They might even see a purse getting cut.

4) If the PCs break up the fight, they will get subtle and quiet warnings from the fighters to keep their noses out of it. If the PCs forcibly stop the fight, the spectacle will end and the thieves will all depart quickly. The PCs may get a visit from angry Lia-Kavair in the next few days...

5) If the PCs call the guard or try to apprehend the cutpurses, they will only manage to catch one or two; the rest will flee with the crowd. While the PCs will be offered no fiscal rewards, news of the event will quickly spread and they will be something of local heroes for a while. The Lia-Kavair may or may not retaliate, messing with heroes' usually just leads to unwanted attention. But it can also act as a valuable lesson for any future heroes.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 68

WILDERNESS ENCOUNTERS

Dream Quest of the Unknown Kubora...

As the PCs travel along the lands between peaceful Harnic villages, they suddenly find a Kubora tribesman smiling at them, splitting his heavily scarred face. He holds his weapons in his hands, but not in a threatening manner.

Surprisingly the fierce barbarian speaks to them in halting Harnic, offering them some fresh rabbit meat and water. He explains he has an opportunity for them to see the very gods if they agree to help him. The Kuboran makes his way a short distance to a campfire he has made.

As the PCs join him, he begins to explain that he is on a quest, set to him by spirits in a dream. In the dream a ruined city of mysterious origin held riches and knowledge. He was told to travel far and find a man among the farmers who bore a mark given by the gods that ruled the ancient site. This mark is a star shaped scar above the left eye.

The Kuboran found such a man, a farmer in a nearby village, with such a scar. He approached the farmer, but must have offended him because the man went screaming from his field. When the Kuboran approached again, the farmer summoned many men that drove him away. The Kuboran is unfamiliar with the ways of the people in this area, and needs the PCs help to get the information from the farmer.

In exchange for helping him, the barbarian will allow the PCs to travel with him and share in the experience of meeting the gods and share in the treasure.

The Kuboran has indeed had a vision, describing the farmer and the ruins. He has been traveling for almost two years on his quest. The tribe's shaman advised the Kuboran to seek out his vision, and advise him that not all of the southrons would try to harm him.

The ruin does indeed exist; it is a long lost Khuzdul frontier post from the time of the Codominium. The ruins are atop a mountain peak, to be determined by the GM. The ruins are a simple two story crumbling tower, about 20' by 20'. The wooden interior is rotted and unstable in many parts. It is inhabited by a single hirenu (hippogriff), who has lived there for many years. The farmer in question found the ruins when he was younger, having wandered away from a pilgrimage. The hirenu chased him away, and he tripped and fell against a rock, before sliding down the mountain. That is how he got his scar.

The trip to the ruins should take at least a week, with difficult terrain and other survival obstacles. Anything else that happens along the way is up to the GM.

1) If the PCs decline to help the Kubora, he will understand but be disappointed. The PCs may hear rumors of a wild barbarian killed trying to kidnap a local.

2) If the PCs agree, they will be given a description and location of the nearby farmer.

3) If the PCs approach the farmer and ask about the ruins, he will vehemently tell them he won't speak of the matter. Nothing short of torture, which will present legal problems if discovered, will get him to talk.

4) If the PCs observe the farmer, or ask about him in the village, they will discover that he is known to drink too much and has a fondness for wine especially.

5) If the PCs buy wine for the farmer until he gets drunk, he can be convinced to give directions. As it was a traumatic experience, the farmer describes landmarks remarkably well.

6) If the PCs tell the Kubora the directions, he will thank them and ask them to join him.

7) If the PCs agree to follow, they will have to travel through the wilderness to the mountain. The hirenu will defend his lair viciously, dropping down on the party unseen if possible. It will flee to the tower if wounded. The Kubora says that to learn the divine lore, they must kill the guardian.

8) If the PCs make the climb to the tower, they may have to finish off the hirenu. There is no hoard of treasure as the Kubora described, but there may be some left over Khuzan relics. The Kubora finds everything that may be inside as a valuable and holy object, but shares with the PCs. He will return to his home, making an invitation for the PCs to make the long journey with him.

A Bloody Patrol...

As the PCs walk past a copse of trees, an arrow flies past, followed by a shout of "Stop it! They ain't them savages." A helmeted head of a local soldier pops out from behind a tree.

"You best get hidden or hunker down with us! We just got bloodied by them nasty < barbarian tribe/gargun > and they still be about."

The soldier is not lying. Some hours ago an appropriate local barbarian tribe or gargun ambushed the 10-man patrol. Now only 5 men, in various states of injury, are readying for the next attack. The attackers are indeed in the area, and searching. There are about 12 attackers (more or less at GM's discursion).

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 69

1) If the PCs ignore the soldiers or try to flee, they will hear the sounds of battle about 10 minutes later. The soldiers are killed to a man. Some time after that, the attackers will have picked up on the PC's tracks, believing them to be escaped soldiers. The party will either have to flee at top speed through the woods, hide (difficult against the skilled attackers), or face them.

2) If the PCs accept the soldier's offer, they will be warmly welcomed, as the battered men need all the help they can get. Some time later, the attackers will come again. The position has good defenses, allowing missile fire from within, but making it hard to fire into. The attackers are skilled, and the soldiers are wounded, but with the PC's aid and the defensive position, victory is certainly possible.

3) If the PCs seek out the enemy, they will find them huddled together readying for the attack. Stealthy PCs should get a few rounds of surprise if they attack.

4) If the PCs seek out the enemy and attempt to negotiate, they will be scoffed at. Offering a heavy tribute will allow the PCs to go free, but no amount of bribery or diplomacy will prevent the enemy from attempting to kill the soldiers. If the PCs try to leave without resolving the issue, they will be attacked.

5) If the PCs and soldiers survive the attack, the soldiers will suggest they leave quickly. They promise each a 20d payment and hospitality if the PCs help them haul the fallen back to their outpost.

Star Gazer...

Deep in the wilderness, on a relatively clear hill, the PCs find a solitary figure and a small camp. It is an eccentric astrologer in the best place to watch and study a particular alignment/meteor shower/event on Yael. If the PCs approach, she will quickly take something from a small tripod and hide it in her cloak. It is a rare and expensive telescope from Shoju that she will guard with her life.

She is friendly and willing to tell the PCs what she is doing. But she has a problem. This perfect site, has an unfortunate infestation of Shaga biting gnats. These critters are rather interfering with her study. She knows an apothecary in a village a days walk from the site who makes a balm that keeps the gnats away. After an entertaining conversation (assuming the PCs don't act violently), she will ask if they would be willing to get her the balm. She will feed them and offer to read their horoscopes and tell them their futures when they return.

1) If the PCs decline, she will remain pleasant but will soon return to her studies (but she won't bring out the telescope until they leave) and ignore them. Should the PCs be slow to leave, she will drop polite hints about needing to get back to work undisturbed.

2) If the PCs accept, she will give the silver to buy the balm and give directions to the apothecary she wants the balm from

3) If the PCs walk away with the money, 3d, they will hear nothing else about it and should feel guilty for cheating an honest woman.

4) If the PCs take the money and follow the directions, they will (at the GM's option) have an uneventful trip with little problem. Upon return, the woman offers to "read their futures in the stars" at no charge and will let them look at Yael through her telescope.

5) If the PCs try to take the telescope, the woman will struggle fiercely, even to the point of risking bodily harm and death. This rare and well-crafted item is worth upwards of 1,000d to the right buyer.

The Wall of Fire...

The PCs have noticed smoke from ahead for some time when they come to an area in their path that is engulfed in a wall of flame. The entire visible route along the trail is engulfed in a huge forest fire covering several square leagues.

Suddenly from the smoke runs a small group of robed men. From their attire it becomes obvious they are pilgrims of Peoni. The leader, a middle aged priest, warns the PCs of the rather large and obvious fire. He also begs their help. He and his three brother mendicants are leading a group of lepers on a pilgrimage across the island. They accidentally started the fire and have been running from it since. Unfortunately, some of the lepers are not able to keep up and need help. The priests have been supporting them, but are getting too tired to keep it up. The leader asks the PCs to help them, and their charges, escape the fire.

The priest's tale is true. While camping yesterday, one of the lepers caught his robes on fire while cooking and tossed them away before he got burned. Unfortunately the robes caught the nearby underbrush on fire, and the fire has been raging since. They are all very tired, and don't know exactly where they are. The best place to seek cover would be across a river or lake, if one is handy, or to cleverly get behind the fiery wall. The fire is large enough to prevent a simple circumvention, and is conveniently (for the GM) moving towards the PCs. How exactly they survive is left up to the GM.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 70

1) If the PCs refuse to help the pilgrims, they will still have to flee themselves. The pilgrims will eventually succumb to the fire.

2) If the PCs offer to aid the pilgrims, they will be asked to support the weaker lepers while they walk and to help lead the pilgrims to safety.

3) If the PCs are willing to help the priests, but not the lepers, the priests refuse to leave the lepers and seem offended by any attempts to abandon them. They remind the PCs that even lepers have the grace of Peoni. Without help, the priests and lepers fall too far behind and eventually collapse from exhaustion and smoke inhalation. They are burned alive if not otherwise saved.

4) If the PCs are willing to help the lepers, they need to help shoulder the weaker ones and aid them in walking. PCs doing this should check to see if they catch the disease. Despite common Harnic belief, leprosy is not very contagious, though often times many disfiguring diseases are incorrectly labeled as leprosy. Leprosy takes a long time, up to six months, to develop. So even if any PCs do catch it, they probably won't know for a while.

5) If the PCs manage to get the pilgrims to safety, they will find respite and rest at the nearest Peonian shrine. They will be welcomed by the Peonians and considered blessed by the goddess herself.

Chaos and Ruin...

As the PCs are walking through the wilderness of Harn, they come upon a blood-smeared tree. The surrounding flora and underbrush indicate there was a struggle. Bloody tracks lead to the east. The trail and blood are about 3 days old.

Nearby is a crumbling one-story ruin. The stone architecture looks as if it may have at one time been a manor house or the remains of an ancient tower. Stones have been piled up outside the ruin, and other signs of recent housekeeping are evident. Also evident is a large black circle with 13 spokes painted near the front doorway.

The ruins have recently been inhabited by a cult of Morgathians, who escaped from the nearest large city when they were discovered. The priest has taken his flock to this remote ruin so he can perform his rites without fear of the law. They have been using members of the local barbarian tribe as sacrifices. The priest may be a Morvus at the GM's discretion.

1) If the PCs follow the bloody trail, they will come upon the ruins and no one appears to be around.

2) If the PCs enter the ruins, they will find a body that has been slip open with its limbs still bound with rope. The trappings on the body show it to look like one of the local barbarian tribes. A bloodstained, make shift altar of stacked stones surrounded by Morgathian paraphernalia sits against one wall. Two small doorways lead to rooms obviously lived in with straw mats and black robes. There is nothing of value within.

3) If the PCs wait and set up an ambush, the Morgathians will show up just before dark, dragging their next victim. They feel safe in their new place, and it will be easy to initially hide from them. They are murderous, but not particularly skilled warriors. The cultists are however fanatic, and will fight to the death, and the priest may command of Morgathian rites.

4) If the PCs leave any trace (tracks or destroying the altar) and leave before the cultists return, the Morgathian priest will be enraged. He will order 8 of the cultists to track down and kill the PCs. He will stay behind and perform his rites.

5) If the PCs simply walk away, the cultists will continue on for another couple of months. The local tribe is afraid of the now cursed ruins, but they will finally overcome their fear and attack. Perhaps the priest will escape...

The Wild Child...

As the PCs march through the woodlands, or are ready to pitch camp, they come across a young girl who looks to be about 12 years old. She sits in the crook of a tree crying, and doesn't notice the PCs. Next to her is a burlap sack with food, water, and a blanket.

Her father, trying to save her from the lord of their village, dropped off the girl. The lord has taken an unnatural attraction to the young girl, and has a history of molesting the young girls of the village; including the girl's mother. While the girl has yet to be touched, the lord has made quite clear his intentions to the parents.

1) If the PCs let the girl alone, or she runs away (if the PCs are too intimidating and flees), they will not see her again.

2) If the PCs approach her in a friendly manner, she will tell them what has happened, though she only knows she was abandoned and knows nothing of the lord's intentions.

3) If the PCs offer to take the girl home, she can help them with general directions, but she rode with her father for almost two full days on a mule and is somewhat lost. A skilled tracker could follow the mule tracks with relative ease.

4) If the PCs make it to the village the girl will lead them to her cottage, which is on the outskirts of the village. Some villagers will glare at the PCs in anger, as they know why the girl was taken away. The mother will be very angry at the PCs though happy to see her daughter. She will bid the PCs to take the girl back to the woods. She will beg, plead and even offer to pay what pittance she has.

5) If the PCs accuse the mother (or even make a snide comment) of abandoning her daughter, she will pull the PCs aside so her daughter is out of sight and show them fresh lash wounds given by the lord when he found out the daughter was missing. She will then tell them the full story in angry sobs. About this time the father will have returned from the fields, having gotten word from a friend. He too bears wounds and will implore them to leave quietly with their daughter. Subtle questioning of some other villagers will find some verifying and others denying. Overt, public questioning will result denial from all asked.

6) If the PCs let the lord know about the girl, they will be paid 50d for returning a run away serf. He will be very concerned, acting in a very different manner than the parents have described. The lord is the foul molester as accused, and the little girl has a horrid future to face. Due to his power, position, the subtle nature of his assaults, and the social status of his victims, there will be little the PCs can do unless they wish to risk physically harming him. The ramifications will be severe in that case.

7) If the PCs do sneak the girl back out, they must do so quickly and quietly. The lord will hire bounty hunters and levy charges against them if he finds out. PCs who get away quietly must now either adopt or abandon the girl, though there is probably a Peonian establishment somewhere nearby who would accept her given the situation.

8) If the PCs leave the girl at a nearby village, the bounty hunters will find her about a week later and return her.



The Man, the Monster...

As the PCs make ready for camp in the wilderness, they encounter a monstrous looking man. His head is bulbous and lumpy, his face twisted with gnarled teeth. Foregoing any immediate conflict, the man timidly offers his food to them. He is a skilled trapper who lives in the area and provides a filling amount of rabbit and wild fruit. The man is an amiable host, and is happy to have people to talk to. He will aid the PCs if he can, possibly pointing out comfortable camp sights or water supplies.

The man doesn't wish to leave the area and will wave the party farewell when they move on.

The man has a severe genetic condition known to modern Earth as Proteus Syndrome (mistakenly called "The Elephant Man's Disease"). His parents hid him as a child. They lived some distance from the village proper, and claimed the child was still born.

Some years ago his parents were killed when their cottage burned down. The then young man fled to the village for help, the villagers were shocked and horrified at his appearance and did not believe he was the child of the farmers. Investigation led to finding the boy's parents dead, and mutterings of "demon-child" turned to mob rage. The boy fled and hasn't been back since.

1) If the PCs stop in a nearby village, and speak of their encounter with the man, they will cause alarm in the locals. They know the man, who was possessed by evil spirits after practicing witchcraft.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 72

2) If the PCs investigate the story further and speak to the local physician/wise/wise elder, the PCs find that person has a different story. The PCs will be told about the monster-boy claiming to be the son of those killed, but the village wouldn't listen. The physician is had never seen such deformity, but knows such conditions exist. Most die very young, but it doesn't seem unreasonable the boy was telling the truth.

3) If the PCs stay in the village for more than a few days, or talk more about the man, the villagers get the lord's permission to hunt down the man and kill him once and for all. If the PCs won't cooperate, they will be thrown out of town.

4) If the PCs attempt to save the monster-man, they will either have to warn and hide him (evading the mob won't be overly difficult) or fight or facedown a scared, pitchforked mob of about 20 men. Obviously injuring the lord's peasants will not particularly endear the PCs to him.

5) If the PCs ignore the peasants, or fail in their attempt to save the man, he will be beaten to death when he tires of running and stands up to them. The corpse will be burned and buried in a shallow grave.

Lost Treasure Hunter...

As the PCs hike through the wilds of the Misty Isle, they smell the smoke of a small campfire. Upon investigating, they come across a young woman warming herself by the fire. She looks bruised and scratched, and her clothes are worn. She will look up; apparently ready to run. When she sees the PCs, she lets a tentative sigh of relief, and simply asks them what they want.

The lady is the servant and lover of the youngest son of a minor noble. Having no hope of inheritance, the noble has squandered what little wealth he had on fruitless hunts for lost artifacts. His latest attempt has led him to seek the Bow of St. Saeg, lost many generations ago in a gargun attack (magical bows don't rot after all...). After following obscure clues and the advice of half-drunk inn patrons, the noble led his servant to these remote hills. They were set upon by a small gargun hunting party. The noble was captured, and the girl barely escaped.

The gargun who have captured the young treasure hunter are a small long-range party out to collect game for the upcoming winter. The noble of course sees their presence as more proof of the bow's existence.

1) If the PCs back away and leave the terse woman alone, her master will be eaten in a day or so.

2) If the PCs inquire as to her welfare, she will explain about the expedition and the probable fate of her master. She will plead with the PCs to help find him, as she knows her master was not killed outright.

3) If the PCs agree, the lady will fearfully lead them to the area they were captured, then she will return to her small camp. Careful investigation of the area will show gargun spoor in various forms. A skilled tracker will guess there are over a dozen gargun in the area.

4) If the PCs scout the area, they will come across a camp with some crude lean-tos, a rack with game on it, and a stripped, beaten man. There are about 20 gargun to be seen, who will notice PCs who aren't careful.

5) If the PCs attack directly, they will have to face all of the gargun, including several archers.

6) If the PCs try to sneak in during the day, the gargun will be less attentive, but will all be there, as they prefer not to hunt in the day.

7) If the PCs try to sneak in during the night, there will only be a handful of gargun about, but they will be more alert. The PCs will also have to evade the various gargun hunting parties who are out at night.

8) If the PCs manage to rescue the man, he will be grateful, but has nothing to pay. The lady will be very happy as well, and the noble decides he's had enough of treasure hunting. He will offer 100d for payment if the PCs escort them home, which is about a week away. Whether the gargun chase them down is up to the GM.



Barbarian Games...

As the PCs make a trail through the untamed forests of Harn, they come upon a wounded man from the local tribe. He has lashed to a tree with leather thongs and is bleeding from several wounds on his body. The barbarian moans softly. When the PCs approach to investigate or help, the man opens his eyes, shouts in surprise and dies.

Suddenly the bushes come alive with movement and the PCs find themselves surrounded by angry sounding, and well armed, barbarians. They don't attack outright, but demand the PCs surrender (one of the barbarians speaks halting Harnic, or local civilized language). The PCs are informed they have interrupted an important ceremony, and must prove themselves worthy or their spirits must be released to help the spirit of the man they interfered with.

The man the PCs found was considered somewhat of a prophet by the tribe, and was on a spirit quest. By bringing himself close to the spirit world by coming close to death, the man was seeking wisdom from the spirits. Unfortunately the shock of seeing the PCs was enough to push him over the edge. The man would have died anyway, but the PCs are now to blame in the eyes of the tribe. To prove themselves, the PCs will have to compete with various members of the tribe in a series of events. The tribesmen are playing to win, but try to be fair. If the PCs lose, they will all be ritually sacrificed.

1) If the PCs refuse, attempt to flee, or attack the barbarians, they are in for a fight. They must fight at least two-dozen angry and well-armed warriors. Should the PCs win, it would be wise to leave the area.

2) If the PCs surrender, they will be stripped of their weapons and packs and escorted to a nearby barbarian camp. They will be under guard, but provided shelter and food until the next morning. As they are closely watched, just about any attempt to sneak away will fail, leaving them to fight or flee for their lives.

3) If the PCs wait until the following morning, they will be awakened and brought out for the whole tribe to see. Five men come forth and stand before the PCs. One carries 3 throwing axes, one carries a bow and quiver, one carries two knives and handful of bone needles, one carries a handful of small, colored stones, and the final man wears nothing but a breech cloth. The barbarian translator informs the PCs that they must compete with three of the five men (or all of them at the GM's discretion, and the PCs may choose who competes with whom. They will be given no details to the exact nature of the match however, and the PCs cannot change their minds after they have chosen one of the men.

If a PC is chosen to represent the party in multiple events, they will be given time to rest fully (but not for serious healing, the event must finish before sunset). If the PCs win more events, they can go free. Otherwise... well no details are given except that their spirits will be released.

4) If the PCs challenge the man with throwing axes, the PC chosen will be led to a large tree and their back placed against it. From six paces away the barbarian will throw the axes, hitting next to the PC. If they flinch away (Will test) from any of the axes, they lose. If they don't flinch, the PC wins. That PC will also get the chance to do the same to the barbarian. If the barbarian flinches (he's very brave...), it becomes a draw if the PC also flinched, or a victory if they didn't. Hitting the opponent (either PC or barbarian) however, results in an instant loss, as well as some sort of reparations; not to mention the wound!

5) If the PCs challenge the man with the bow, the one chosen must compete in a straight archery competition. Both will use the same bow, and the PC will be given 5 shots to familiarize themselves with it. The target is a tree stump at 15 yards, with a one foot circle carved in it. Each gets 5 shots; the one with the most hits wins. Ties result in a re-shoot from 5 yards further away. The tribes bowman is very skilled, but no master.

6) If the PCs challenge the man with the knives and needles, the PC chosen is in for a painful time. The PC and the barbarian are seated across from each other. This is a test of pain tolerance, and done in turns. The PC gets one knife and half of the needles to pierce, cut, and stab themselves with. Whatever one participant does, the other must do as well. Then the other will do something that must be imitated. The loser is the one that cries out loudly, or refuses to take their turn. The barbarian is a tough fellow, but will not do anything that will leave permanent damage, such as severing finger, poking out eyes, or anything involving his gentiles.

7) If the PCs challenge the man with the colored stones, the PC will be led to a patch of dirt. The barbarian will draw a series of circles in the dirt, place the colored stones, and explain the rules of the game via the translator. The PC will be given two chances to play the game before it counts to allow them to understand the game. The barbarian will play foolishly, allowing the PC to win at least once. The winner of the third game wins the match, and the barbarian plays at his best ability. GMs can play a game of mancala with the player (rules and pieces are very easy to get), or can allow a contest of gaming skills or intelligence to resolve the game.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 74

8) If the PCs challenge the man in the breechcloth, the PC will be led to a game trail. The trail is easy to follow and three miles long. At the end is a tree with a rabbit fur hanging on it. They must race the barbarian to the end. In the middle of the path is a watering hole that has stones across it that must be used to leap across, or the water must be swam across. The barbarian is a very fast runner and is familiar with the trail, and will leave the PC in the dust. The PC will come across him with his leg stuck under a log, and writhing in pain. It appears he simply slipped and jammed his leg, but has actually stopped and pulled the log over his leg. This is a test of honor in reality, and not a race. Any type of cheating or dishonorable action results in losing the race, though the PCs won't be told this...

9) If the PC runs past the barbarian, or acts dishonorably otherwise, he will win the race but lose the event. The tribesmen will brook no arguments about the results, and explain the PC lost because he took advantage of his opponent.

10) If the PC helps the barbarian, he will get up and leave the PC in the dust again, running to the finish line. The PC will be informed he has won by acting honorably and not taking advantage of the fallen runner.

11) If the PCs win a majority of the events, or won the race by acting honorably (#10), they will be found worthy, treated to a night of celebration where they are the guests of honor, and be allowed to leave the next morning with their things.

12) If the PCs lose the majority of the events, they will be rounded up and tied to trees unless they flee or fight their way free. They will be sliced and allowed to bleed to death while lashed to the trees. Those who manage to escape will be tracked down for three days before the tribe lets them go.

Come on, Lover...

As the PCs are traveling through the wilds of Harn, they suddenly notice one of their number is missing (the most attractive). Calling their name will get no response.

The missing PC has fallen victim to a dryad, whose tree they passed some time past. The GM should allow the PC a chance to resist, but the dryad is very careful to not be seen by the others. If the PC manages to resist, the dryad will follow for a short time, trying twice more to seduce the PC. If she is unsuccessful, the dryad will simply return to her tree. The PC has been taken back to her tree and is now whiling away his time in a mindful bliss.

1) If the PCs don't back track for at least an hour (or for some reason simply don't look for him...), they will have no chance of finding their fellow. He will awake a year and a day later, remembering nothing.

2) If the PCs backtrack at least an hour, they will find the area the PC disappeared. A skilled tracker will notice the PC's tracks lead to a tree.

3) If the PCs pitch camp by the tree and make a fire as they look for their missing number, the tree will transform into the dryad. She will attempt to convince the party to leave, that the PC doesn't wish to leave. Trying to convince the PC otherwise will be fruitless.

4) If the PCs attack the dryad, she will fight back with a staff or one of the PCs weapon. Note dryads are immune to non-magical damage. She does not wish to harm any PCs, but will fight until they leave or surrender.

5) If the PCs threaten to burn down the forest, she will release the PC and order the rest to leave.

6) If the PCs do have magical means to harm the dryad, she will release the PC and flee after taking any injury.

The Prophecy...

As the PCs are making ready to camp down for the night, a man in traveler's clothes hails and cautiously approaches. He is unarmed and cooperative. He introduces himself as a priest of Save K'nor, who is on a mission of great importance to the PCs, and indeed all of Kethira.

The priest is amiable, intelligent, and earnest as he begins presenting "facts" to the party. He explains that he has long studied the archives of his temple in the course of his duties. Withdrawing a text in an unrecognizable script with a nearly unreadable style, the priest begins reading the prophecy of Alador of Lytos. He begins to prattle off a long list of events prescribed in the writing. Without taking a breath, he also explains that each of these have happened, with painstaking details of his interpretations and conclusions. Finally he notes the final passage describing how a hidden holy man of the misty island place shall come to know Yael as no other. This will bring about the "closing of history for all life on Kethira."

The priest further explains that he came to hear of such a holy man, a hermit priest of Ilvir, that claimed to speak to Yael. Yael imparted all of its secrets to the hermit. With great effort and time, the priest found the hermit and tried to explain how dangerous his actions were. The hermit used some power to drive the priest from his hill-ock, and threatened death to him should he return.

The priest asks the PCs for their help in saving mankind. Realizing that not everyone is as intelligent as him, he will offer 100d and a pearled ring (45d) in exchange for their help. The only way to save the world is to kill the hermit.

The man is indeed a priest of Save K'nor, and well respected for his research by his peers. The scroll he has does indeed describe the list of events that will lead to the end of the world. The man is utterly, completely wrong however. He has misinterpreted the signs, and the prophecy was written by a drug-crazed quack. The Iviran hermit is also a harmless, innocent drug crazed prophet whose euphoric trips to Yael are little more than drug-induced insanity. The "power" that sent the priest down the nearby hill, was little more than a case of clumsiness.

1) If the PCs refuse, the priest will continue hounding on the importance of the task. Should the PCs still refuse, he will call them blind fools and leave.

2) If the PCs accept (either for the good of mankind or the money) the priest will lead them to the hill. He is too afraid of the hermit to go up again.

3) If the PCs go up the hill, they will find the hermit pleasant if intoxicated. He rambles on endlessly, and is harmless and defenseless.

4) If the PCs pay careful attention to the priest's interpretations of the prophesy, a skilled and intelligent debater can convince the priest he is wrong. The priest will pay 50d for keeping him from committing foul murder.

5) If the PCs kill the innocent priest, they will get their payment if one was agreed upon.

Rights of the Family...

While the PCs travel through the outlying wilderness of the kingdom, they notice a small plume of smoke rising above the trees. Upon further investigation, they discover a dilapidated cottage with signs of recent repair. As they approach, a small girl carrying a basket of herbs sees them and screams. She runs into the cottage and a moment later a man emerges wielding a woodsman's axe.

The man looks frightened and demands the PCs leave, adding there is nothing of value in the cottage and they have no food. A woman can be seen cowering with the young girl in the back of the cottage.

This is a family of escaped serfs, who has left to the wilds to live in peace. The father was wrongly accused of a murder and fled with his family before the lord could hold the trial.

1) If the PCs leave the family alone, they will be grateful but won't offer any compensation (as they have none).

2) If the PCs subdue the man, he will plead with them and tell them the truth in hopes they will take pity and leave him be. He will try to defend his family, but is not particularly adept at combat. They have nothing of value. Returning the family to the aforementioned lord will result in the lashing of the father and a small reward for returning the fugitives. The family will try to escape if escorted back.

Bear and Basket...

The PCs have pitched camp and most are sleeping. As they snooze, a large brown bear enters their camp and begins rummaging around for food. Any aware guards will notice this activity rather quickly. If no guard has been posted, sleeping PCs may eventually hear the noise (at an appropriate penalty for sleeping). The bear will notice any PCs that are up, but look at them with disinterest before returning his attention to the food.

1) If the PCs leave the bear in peace, it will eat several days' worth of food and then wander off into the forest. The bear will visit again each night the PCs stay at the same camp.

2) If a PC tries to attack or scare off the bear by yelling, the bear will stand and fight (the subsequent roaring will awaken the remaining PCs, probably) until at least 2 more PCs join the fight or until severely wounded. As the bear flees, it will snatch up a bag or pack as it runs off.

3) If the PCs hit the bear with an arrow or try to scare it off with a sizable open flame (like a torch), the bear will roar its disapproval and run off into the night, snatching a pack or bag as it goes.

4) If the PCs track the bear (very hard at night) to get their pack back, that will by chance have something valuable to them, they will find the tracks lead to a cave. The bear will defend the cave viciously, but if the PCs wait until the bear leaves, they will be able to search the cave in relative safety. They just might find a couple of extra items inside...

Terror from the Forest...

As the PCs travel through remote forests, they hear crying from a nearby gully. It sounds as if several people, women and children mostly, are close together and scared. A few voices can be heard trying to calm the others, but unsuccessfully.

Upon further investigation, the PCs find that the gully has about two dozen women and children huddled together (who let a short scream when they first notice the PCs), weeping and in various states of injury.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 76



Two men are lying on the ground, bleeding from several deep wounds. A single woman, brandishing a primitive spear in wavering hands, challenges the PCs. When she realizes the PCs aren't there to harm them, she begins speaking frantically in her native, and probably unknown by the PCs, tongue.

Realizing the PCs can't understand her; she uses hand signals indicating large men with big teeth and claws have hurt many. She also manages to get across that several children are still in the village, and asks for the PCs help. It is up to the GM as to how much they want to pantomime in real life.

The small band from a local barbarian tribe has been attacked by a group of five vicious Aklash who simply came across the small village. The village hunters were no match for the creatures, and many were killed or driven away with wounds. Three children were hidden in a cave near the village, but the Aklash seem to have taken up residence in the village and the tribesmen have not been able to return or save the children. Four Aklash now skulk about the ruined village, one having been killed by the village hunters.

1) If the PCs don't help, the children will eventually die, as will many of the women who finally decide to try drive off the monsters themselves. It is a bloody failure.

2) If the PCs indicate they will help the wounded, the less injured women will lead them around and calm the patients. While the communication barrier will be an issue, the tribeswomen will aid the PCs by fetching herbs and water as able.

3) If the PCs indicate they will help fight the monsters, one of the wounded men offers them his primitive spear. They will be pointed in the direction of the village.

4) If the PCs find the village, they will see the rampaging Aklash have ransacked it. The simple huts and cottages lay scattered, and half eaten bodies of barbarians litter the ground. The cave can be seen nearby.

5) If the PCs search the village to attack the Aklash, they will have to face two at a time, and possibly all four at once, depending on how long the battle lasts. Where the Aklash are exactly is up to the GM, but they are usually within hearing distance of one another.

6) If the PCs try to sneak to the cave, it must be done carefully. The Aklash are not the brightest of creatures, and aren't watching the cave, but

they are alert for noises. The children will follow the PCs, but might take to loud crying or other noise if the PCs don't keep them quiet.

7) If the PCs are driven off by the Aklash, or simply decide they need help, six tribeswomen will volunteer. They are not warriors, but are probably decent stalkers and brave enough to help with ambushes and fetching.

8) If the PCs return the children but don't kill the Aklash, the villagers will thank them and decide to resettle elsewhere.

9) If the PCs drive off the Aklash, the villagers will throw them many celebrations and offer them wives. The PCs will become heroes in the barbarians' tales for generations to come.

The Master Game Master...

As the PCs make their way through the wilderness of Harn, they come across a stranger. He has long hair, a beard and mustache, and is dressed oddly. He wears a tunic that buttons up the front with a bright floral pattern that only goes to his waist, a pair of pants that seems to be cut off above the knee, and thick sandals. He seems to be shaking something in his hand, which sounds like it might be dice.

The man seems to be very confused and awed at the same time. He does not speak Harnic or any other language recognized by the PCs. The man finally points to himself and speaks very slowly. The language is odd sounding, but the words sound like "Rubeen Krussbee." He repeats the words and points to himself again.

Rubeen starts making more gestures, making a fist sticking his pinky and thumb out and putting them against the side of head. As the PCs look at him strangely Rubeen shrugs and stares at the PCs.

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 77

Suddenly a small band of orcs run by, carrying a tall blue, sarcophagus with small glass on the outside. While the PCs can't read the runes on the front, the sarcophagus apparently belongs to a king named TARDIS.

Rubeen starts making his pinky and thumb gesture again and starts giving chase, waving for the PCs to follow.

The real story is just too strange to describe. A game designer from another world was traveling to a far off island called "Jamaica", when his plans ran into a hitch. He entered a booth to make arrangements, and found himself in the middle of a strange forest.

1) If the PCs don't follow, there will come a time in the near future where Rubeen takes over all of Harn with unmatched, magical powers. With a simple quill, he is able to summon armies, make nations disappear, and seems to be able to alter reality in its extremes.

2) If the PCs follow, Rubeen chases down the gargun. They finally drop the coffin and turn to attack the wayward man. Suddenly he starts throwing dice at the charging foulspawn, which explode and kill many of them. There are too many however and Rubeen will soon be overrun.

3) If the PCs aid the stranger, they will most likely be able to drive them off between their efforts and Rubeen's magical dice. The gargun will flee, leaving the coffin where it is.

4) If the PCs fail to save Rubeen from the gargun, a group of six young people appear. The leader appears to be woodsman with a magical bow, one looks to be a knight with a magical shield, one is a scrawny boy in robes, one is a young boy with a large club, one is a

young woman with a long cloak, and the final young lady has dark skin and wears only underclothes. A small, noisy unicorn accompanies them. With their powers they save Rubeen and abscond with him.

Soon the isle of Harn becomes dotted with immense castles and dungeons, and hordes of monsters run rampant across the now alien landscape. Lunchboxes are invented that have paintings of these young people on them.

5) If the PCs kill the man in a sudden pique of ormeriness, reality starts to fade away. The landscape shimmers and slowly becomes translucent before everything turns pink. Suddenly the PCs find themselves standing on what appears to a huge table covered with books and large dice. Several unbelievably huge giants sit around the table staring down with shock and wonder at the PCs. Before the PCs can do anything, a giant female approaches the table and screams. The PC's can make foreign words that sound like "Devil Worship" before being crushed by a giant rolling pin.

6) If the PCs are able to drive off the gargun, Rubeen will seem mused but unhurt afterwards. He will shake their hands and smile, leaving one of them with one of his magical dice. The exact abilities of the die are left to the GM. Rubeen stands the coffin upright and opens the door. He pulls a small black handle from within and puts it against his head. Suddenly Rubeen's eyes roll up into his head and he disappears in a Matrix style flash of light. The coffin vanishes shortly thereafter.



HÂRN ENCOUNTERS 78

HÂRN ENCOUNTERS CREDITS

WRITTEN BY
Aaron Kavli

CO WRITERS
Ed Gantt

The Pious, The Wayward...
Caravan to the Torch...
A dying Request...
A Pale Lady with a Pale Hand...
So Goeth the Flock...
It wasn't me...
The Odd and the Old...
Sticky Pockets...
Bar Room Brawl...
Come on, Lover...

Florian Eiber
Pirates...
Bear and Basket...

Nabil
The Healing Lass...
Unclean...
The Gauntlet is Thrown...
When Churches Collide...
Pugilists and Pick Pockets...

Adrian
Alms for the poor...
A Hero Remembered...
Rights of the Family...

Anders Bersten
The Strong Arm of the Law...

ILLUSTRATED BY
Richard Lushek

GRAPHICAL FORMAT
Patrick Nilsson

