



# Deadwood

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*Book Nine of the Lost Books of Talislanta*

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# Deadwood



Deadwood is a small settlement nestled on the border of the Wilderlands of Zaran and the Plains of Golarin. Founded by a group of Pharesian merchants who made a wondrous discovery here, this small village has swelled in recent months as scores of individuals hungry for wealth and power come to claim what they can.

The surrounding area is largely harsh and unforgiving; a fact that has helped to keep the population of Deadwood from reaching much higher than six hundred souls. On the hills scattered around the village are a countless number of deadwood trees; while the town does take its name from this strange flora, there is little else that these oddities of nature produce. At the edges of the deadwood forest are scatterings of other plants, such as barb berries, gall oak, hangman's tree, ironwood, and thornwood. The hills of the area are quite rocky as the close presence of so many deadwoods has discouraged the growth of the

tall grasses that cover much of the Plains of Golarin to the north. Without those grasses, much of the soil has washed away in storms both natural and unnatural. As a result, many of the hills are covered in small, sharp pebbles and stones; those who venture away from the scanty trail that serves as the road to Deadwood risk twisted ankles and broken limbs at the very least.

A variety of predators stalk the region, many of whom have thrived on the steady influx of prospectors, treasure-hunters, and mendicants striving to reach Deadwood. Flocks of hecklers follow people moving through the area, and their cries inevitably bring packs of omnivrax. The hecklers will often depart if given enough food; if they are not fed, they simply wait and pick over the leavings of the unavoidable struggle.

## Chapter 1

# A Hidden Past

Untold centuries ago during the Second Millenium, the Archaen city-state of Osmar was renowned for its enchanted creations. The pinnacle of Osmaran craft were individually crafted suits of battle armor and expertly made blades. Aside from their magical enchantments, these items were also valuable because they were made entirely from blue iron. Modern Talislantans know of this fine metal; however, it is only accessible to them through the efforts of Vajra engineers who smelt the metallic feathers of shriekers and iron shrikes. The ancient Archaens of Osmar did not rely on such crude contrivances; instead, they pulled blue iron directly from the ground.

Utilizing sorcerous means, the metalsmiths of Osmar discerned the location of a unique vein of metal deep below the surface of Archaeus. Obtaining some of this material, Osmaran alchemists were able to purify it, creating a workable ore that was far stronger and simultaneously lighter than any other existing metal. As many arcane arts, in particular alchemical hybridization, were only just being developed, the Osmarans were at a loss on how to adequately mine enough of this wondrous substance quickly enough to meet the demand from the other Archaen city-states. Early attempts to create a neomorph, through alchemical hybridization, to delve so far beneath the surface proved disastrous on many occasions. Eventually, the Osmarans turned to the burgeoning practitioners of Invocation. Through various bargains, pacts, and convoluted deals, the Osmarans were able to secure the services of a score of diabolical entities. These strange devils would toil in the adverse conditions, extracting blue iron from the rock, and transporting it to the surface. They were effectively immortal, indestructible servants who were still intelligent enough to

deal with a changing, dangerous environment. As the blue iron was brought to the surface of Archaeus it was stored in a series of huge warehouse-like vaults; the devils rarely saw the light of day.

However, as the Second War of the Sub-Men began to rage across the continent of Talislanta, the Osmaran city-state's power waned. Soon, it was overrun, sacked, and destroyed. The score of devils, however, knew none of this. They toiled in their underground mines, dragging ore from the earth and bearing it to the vaults. The vaults were impervious to the Sub-Men assault; unopened, they were soon forgotten. Passing from memory, the very structures themselves were overgrown by the shifting of the landscape. And still the devils toiled.

In time the vaults, now little more than huge hillocks covered with scattered trees and vegetation on the edge of the Plains of Golarin, grew full and the vein of blue iron that had existed was diminished. The score of devils debated amongst themselves about their task; some argued that they had been abandoned and should therefore quit the place to return home, others maintained that there had been no time limit specified in their original contracts, and still others believed that their contract had been fulfilled to the letter as they had mined nearly all of the blue iron and kept it safe. Of the score, a scant five remained behind, skulking and lurking in the shafts and tunnels beneath the earth.

Above the buried vaults, a copse of deadwood trees soon began to grow. Related perhaps to the nearby confined presence of diabolical entities, the trees spread rapidly, overtaking all of the native plants and covering many of the hills above. The only



other plants to remain were hardy, sometimes sinister, species apparently able to tolerate the malevolent influence of the deadwoods.

During the Third Millennium, when the Archaens took to the skies, much of this region was claimed by competing tribes of Sub-Men. Over time, such clans as the lost Sideways Wailers and the still extant Ur and Beastmen all claimed parts of the surrounding area as their own. The sparsely forested hills here are held in superstitious reverence by

### **Devil's Due**

The five devils that still lurk in the Osmaran blue iron mines are a paranoid, insular lot. For the most part, they argued for staying here because they feared returning to their homes; devils carry grudges for a very long time. They each have their own domains carved into the shafts, caverns, and tunnels. Some of these passages connect to the Underground Highway, a series of passages that wind their way beneath Talislanta. Furthermore, these five have done their best to conceal the mines, even from the vaults above. Since part of their original bargain was to protect the source of the blue iron, they have cunningly decided that the mines are the source; the vaults are simply no longer part of their concern. Should the mines be discovered, these five devils are unlikely to work together; incriminating accusations and paranoid conspiracies will rule them. At least at first; should intruders make a concentrated effort to reach the lower depths of the mine shafts, the devils will likely band together to drive out the invaders.

The other fifteen devils have long since scattered to the far reaches of the Omniverse: at least one pair now dwell among the horned devil-men of the southern Wilderlands, while three more dwell in the Midnight Realms, the rest could be anywhere at all.

several packs of Beastmen; these claim that the hills themselves are alive, howling out to the moons at night. Furthermore, they assert that these howls have occurred ever since the Beastmen drove the Ur from this region many, many generations ago. As a result of their attitudes towards this place, it is not uncommon to find numerous small packs of Beastmen roaming around the forests of Deadwood; sometimes they are content to carve strange markings into the trunks of the trees, other times they are out for the blood of trespassing Archaens. For countless generations since, the Beastmen have claimed these hills as part of their territory. While they do not like to camp here, superstitiously terrified of the trees themselves, the Beastmen are proud that they can roam so close to the Fangs of Golarin, another local land formation, without fear of reprisals from outsiders.

### **The Vaulted Mounds**

The various vaults into which the Osmaran blue iron was deposited were designed with durability in mind. However, as the devils toiled, the warehouses slowly but inexorably filled. By the time some of the devils fled their servitude, many of the vaults had little to no space within them. As the roots of various grasses and trees bored through the roofs of the vaults, loose soil and water trickled down inside, filling the various cracks and crevices between the hunks of unprocessed ore. In time, the roofs were weakened enough to collapse, creating an irregular layer of iron and rock beneath the soil and grasses.

The mound discovered by the Pharesians had been shattered by a bolt of lightning, scattering its contents across a wide area. The original outlines of the vaults had long since vanished into the mists of time and history.



## Chapter 2

# A Recent History

The Hills of Deadwood lay on the edge of the Wilderness of Zaran overlooking the western Plains of Golarin. Something of a contested area, it was not uncommon to find Beastmen, Za bandits, or Ur renegades wandering these hills in the recent past. However, given that there is little to be had amongst the hills of deadwood trees, most of the natives left the area alone. More than one tribe of Beastmen, however, has been known to craft arrows, javelins, and spears from the shed limbs of deadwood trees.

### The Beastmen

Principally the native peoples of the area, the Beastmen and their culture deserve some degree of attention. Known for a frenzied style of battle and a pack-like social structure, the Beastmen live a nomadic existence on the Plains of Golarin. Strength, cunning, and skill at hunting are exlempary values amongst them: strong leaders are to be obeyed, cunning trappers are able to take down prey without injury to themselves, and skillful hunting is the primary means of survival on the Plains.

By and large, the Beastmen are creatures of instinct. They do not read or write and their culture is something that is both innate and learned when young. The desires of a Beastman are simple: enough game to eat, the thrill of the hunt, and the companionship of a pack. Their social structure is similar to that of predatory pack animals everywhere – a strong, dominant hunter wields absolute authority over his brethren. This hunter, who can be either male or female, is often the most threatening among the pack. The leader of the pack expects their orders to be obeyed, especially during a hunt or combat, and can mate as often as they like with whomever they like. In return, the leader is expected to

continually provide game for the pack by leading them ever onward, following the various herd beasts, such as ogront, megalodons, and behemoths, which roam the Plains of Golarin and northern Wilderlands of Zaran. When game is scarce, the Beastmen are known to hunt Men. While they only rarely eat the meat from such hunts, the thrill of hunting prey that is intelligent and unpredictable makes up for it in excitement alone.

All members of a Beastman pack know where they stand in relation to their brethren; each is either dominant or submissive any other. Superior Beastmen always get first choice of any spoils, food, or weapons taken in a hunt. It is possible for one Beastman to challenge another, and such challenges happen fairly often. Furthermore, when two packs of Beastmen encounter one another, a challenge is unavoidable because the Beastmen equate territory with survival. For the most part, challenges are often gratuitous displays of physical prowess, aggression, and intimidation. Bared fangs, fierce growls and howls, wild leaping, the clashing of weapons and beating of chests are common and indispensable elements of a strong leader's repertoire.

However, among the Beastmen it is better to admit defeat and submit to another during a challenge than it is to enter a fight where one is sure to lose or be seriously injured. After all, an injured hunter cannot bring in game, and a dead one is of no use to the pack. Thus, the vast majority of challenge displays end in one Beastman submitting to the other. Displays of deference take a variety of forms, such as: baring the back of the neck, lowering down to the ground, rolling over onto one's back, or even offering a boot or cloak.

Although Beastmen do admire cunning, they despise treachery and would not even contemplate using a submissive posture to get close enough to attack a superior or to attack without warning. Scent is also an important part of these rites of dominance and submission; a submissive Beastman or one unwilling to compete for territory or game will often crouch down, creep forward, and present a hand or foot to be sniffed. Such behavior ensures that the dominant is able to track the submissive's movement nearly anywhere in their territory should the latter prove untrustworthy.

Unfortunately, many strangers neither comprehend nor know of these various rituals in Beastman culture; the resulting mishaps invariably lead to violent encounters as the Beastmen perceive others as intruders who wish to challenge for territory or dominance.

## **A Time of Chaos on the Plains**

As is common amongst their people, the Beastmen rampage about the Plains of Golarin for many months of the year, crossing from one end to the other while hunting a variety of beasts and men. During these times, they attack almost everything that they encounter: bands of Ur, roving ensembles of Orgovian traders, merchant caravans. In such conditions, it was almost safer to travel in small groups and trust to stealth to avoid the Beastman packs than it was to trust to large numbers in a display of strength.

Such was the case with a group of Pharesian peddlers. Having traveled to distant Dhar, city of the Gryphs, in order to trade and barter for a variety of exotic wood, feathers, and pelts, the Pharesians eschewed returning to the Seven Kingdoms by way of a large caravan or expensive windship and attempted to move their goods south on the backs of a few equus and lopers. Nearing the drier climes

of the Wilderlands one sunset, the Pharesians espied a large cloud of dust on the horizon. Fearing a possible band of Beastmen, the peddlers took refuge in a shallow, sheltered valley between forested hills. After setting up camp for the night, disaster seemingly struck. A huge storm, periodically punctuated with black lightning, raged over the Pharesian encampment. The Pharesians cowered in the valley while the abberant weather pounded the hills above them. By the light of the twin suns the next morning, however, the Pharesians made an astonishing discovery: several of the hillsides were littered with fist-sized nuggets of blue iron. Attributing the various rock-slides and muck to the ferocity of the storm, the Pharesians deduced that the hills around them must be a naturally occurring deposit of blue iron.

Realizing that the blue iron was likely more valuable than their current cargo, the Pharesians unloaded the various boards of timber and sacks of feathers and hide. Using these, they built a crude structure. Two of the Pharesians stayed behind in this ramshackle hut while the rest carried sacks of blue iron back to the Seven Kingdoms. The pair staying behind would both gather up as much ore as they could while simultaneously trying to keep the secret of the hills.

That might have been the end of things – the Pharesians making various trips to bring small quantities of pure blue iron ore to the Seven Kingdoms over the course of months of years. However, the Pharesians who were conveying the first load of their discovery south encountered problem after problem. From food spoiling to animals going lame, from attacks by Za raiders to an incident with the Danelek, it seemed as if they would never be able to reach the safety of the Seven Kingdoms. Each time though, Fortuna smiled (as the Sarista say): a group of passing Orgovians bartered with them for food, a passing Sarista caravan sold them a new equus,



a band of Aamanian knights and witch-hunters fought off the Za, and the timely passing of a Cymrilian windship pulled them from the salt flats. Lacking barterable goods, the Pharesians traded the only thing they good to repay these deeds: pure blue iron. By the time they actually reached Cymril nearly half of their find had been sold or bartered away. The Pharesians were able to sell the remaining blue iron ore for a substantial profit and outfit themselves for an extended excursion back into the Plains of Golarin. By the time they returned however word of the discovery had somehow spread; now, instead of just a few Pharesians, small bands of other treasure-hunters were on the move towards the Plains.

Unbeknownst to the Pharesians who had returned to the Seven Kingdoms, their compatriots had experienced a run of bad fortune as well. Several days after the group split, one of the Pharesians at the camp was out picking barb berries when he was seized by a hangman's tree. To his fortune, he was rescued by an Aamanian witch-hunter. The Aamanian was traveling with a group of his countrymen on a pilgrimage to the Watchstone when he saw the brightly colored Pharesian spinning in the wind. Concerned about not only the welfare, but also the souls, of these two brave strangers alone in the wilderness, a number of the Aamanians stayed behind while their caravan progressed across the Plains of Golarin. Shocked at the modest simplicity of the tiny shack that the Pharesians were living in, the Aamanians set about felling trees and clearing land. The first true structure they built was a simple monastery and prayer house; surprisingly the felled and stripped deadwood bleached to an astonishing white under the light of the twin suns, a fact that the Aamanians took as a sign of blessing. However, later attempts to use local lumber to build a simple wall or palisade invariably failed for one reason or another. By the time the Aamanian pilgrims passed again, returning to Aaman, the Aamanian monastics had

learned of the presence of the blue iron. Having bartered a sizable quantity from the Pharesians in exchange for water, food, and shelter, the Aamanians originally planned on exploiting this new resource as rapidly as they could, hoping for an edge at last against their Paradoxist rivals. More of the pilgrims remained behind and gave the small settlement its name.

As entrepreneurs from the Seven Kingdoms began arriving, there were a few, perhaps inevitable, clashes between them and the Aamanians. However, the Cymrilians managed to press their claim to the land more fiercely than the white-robed monks, insisting that since Pharesians had originally settled the land, that it was under the protection of the Seven Kingdoms.

## **The Early Days of Deadwood**

At first, the small mining camp that would become Deadwood was a relatively peaceful place. There were fortunes to be made and seemingly enough to go around. Yet before two months had passed a sizable portion of the initial find had been collected, carted, and shipped off to various markets. The original Pharesians, ousted from their opportunity by sheer numbers, decided to take advantage of their misfortune by catering to the numerous individuals coming to the region.

And people were coming. A small group of Aeriad Botanists, Alchemists, and metal-smiths arrived to study the deadwood and how it might relate to the scattered blue iron ore. A delegation of Kasmirans arrived, along with a land ark filled with construction supplies that they proceeded to sell. Construction of a Kasmiran tower was the talk of the budding town for several weeks, particularly when the Kasmirans purchased a group of Marukan laborer-slaves from an Ispasian. The Ispasian was to be part of an embassy the Quan Empire was sending to the west; however, when the Ispasian heard about the discovery of blue iron he ventured to Deadwood instead. Having bartered blue iron all across the



western Wilderlands, Orgovian traders arrived shortly before the Djaffir merchants. Destitute Marukans looking to make a fortune trickled in along with a variety of indigents from across the region, principally Ur laborers and Arimite miners. Many individuals found pockets of blue iron buried in the crumbling, rocky soil were later robbed, attacked, or murdered. Soon afterwards, a variety of body guards, bounty hunters, and their ilk arrived to sell their services. Through it all, Beastmen and Za roamed the surrounding areas, occasionally raiding the settlement. Many of the troubles the town experienced, such as missing miners, rockslides, or spoiled food-stores, were blamed on the Sub-Men whether proof existed or not. Yet, despite the ill-will most of the inhabitants felt towards the Sub-Men, on the rare occasion when a lone rider or two would ride into town they were treated with the same gruff wariness that most newcomers received.

Eventually, the society of Deadwood stratified. The wealthier members of society, typically Cymrilians, began demanding better treatment, better services, and better protection. All too often the village was attacked by Beastmen, or shipments to and from Deadwood were ambushed by Za raiders. Through persistence and political clout, they managed to convince the Seven Kingdoms to build a small fort here, much like the other Borderlands Legion outposts. While the Seven Kingdoms officially declared the fort and its environs a protectorate, Deadwood was largely too far away to be adequately policed. Too many of its residents were from places other than the Seven Kingdoms, and did not recognize the sovereignty of Cymrilian law. As a result of this political chaos a strange legalistic abyss developed in Deadwood. While it was nominally a part of the Seven Kingdoms, slavery was accepted and even tolerated. Citizens of political enemies of the Seven Kingdoms, such as the Farad and the Ur, were

welcomed to Deadwood because of the services they could provide. The less fortunate in Deadwood often wound up deeply in debt, typically having lost most of their supplies on the long way here. Then, once in town, they were separated from what little they would have earned scrounging the hills and creeks for blue iron by the high prices on such necessities as food and shelter. A number of people fell prey to some unscrupulous Farad, signing contracts providing them with all the necessary supplies to begin looking for blue iron, only to later discover that almost everything they found went directly to the Farad or had to be sold almost immediately in order to pay their debt. Those who could not pay either wound up skipping town or being sold as slaves to other prospectors. Debtors who skipped town in order to avoid paying their debts often find themselves wanted in various nations across Talislanta. Citing Cymril's legal claim to Deadwood, a few Farad have even pursued their quarries into the Seven Kingdoms.

Back in the Seven Kingdoms, reports of life in Deadwood are greatly exaggerated. Much as the Borderlands Legion are viewed with awe, admiration, and respect deep within the Seven Kingdom's borders, so too do the common populace view Deadwood as a place where even the meek and meager can earn a fortune and live like kings. However, such a viewpoint seldom matches the truth and rarely aligns with the political realities in the courts of the kingdoms or elsewhere. Still, such fanciful and romantic notions of frontier life in places like Deadwood are only fueled by stories that filter in from travelers, are scribed out as books, or are performed by wandering players and minstrels. Such presentations often leave out such interesting tidbits as lack of food, attacks by barbaric Sub-Men, outbreaks of corpse rot, and other similar misfortunes. When such maladies are mentioned, they rarely happen to the virtuous and beautiful or if they do they are obstacles easily surmounted.

## Chapter 3

# Deadwood Today

Deadwood today is a town ripe for change. While the Seven Kingdoms claims the area as its own, the town lays so far from her traditional borders and so deep in what has traditionally been hostile territory that any power they have there is diluted at best, a farce at worst. While the Aamanians and a few others struggle to keep the peace and maintain order, Arimites brawl with knives in the taverns, competing magicians face off in the streets, bandits are a constant hazard outside of town, and Sub-men roam the countryside beyond.

## The Town of Deadwood

Deadwood itself resembles less of a town and more a disastrous collection of housing from around the continent. There is essentially only one street worthy of the name, anchored at one end by the Aamanian monastery and at the other by the Seven Kingdoms barracks. Between these springs a variety of shops and houses built from an assortment of materials, but mostly stone and wood. Beyond the shops are scatterings of tents and temporary, ramshackle huts that must be rebuilt after every hard rain or windstorm.

Among the buildings on Deadwood's main street are numerous structures that serve as temporary shops and housing. In most cases, new arrivals come and build a new structure, only to later accrue so much debt that they cannot afford to stay in town. At that point, someone either purchases the building to sell to someone else, it stays abandoned, or someone randomly moves in and claims it for their own.

There are a number of permanent fixtures in town that have grown in prominence because of their longevity.

## Aa's Guiding Hand, Aamanian Monastery

Squatting at one end of town like a land lizard on a salt flat is a large stone and wood building, partially covered with baked mud and bleached by the sun. Both a house of worship and a fortress in its own right, Aa's Guiding Hand, as the monastery is known, is a landmark throughout the area. Aamanian pilgrims on their way to the Watchstone frequently stop off here. Furthermore, it is within the monastic cells of these halls that law-breakers, criminals, and the inebriated often awaken. After several lengthy sermons and a warm meal, many are released onto the street outside.

Aasutek Erdok, head of the monastery, is appalled by the lack of order and structure in Deadwood, but has yet been able to convince Hoell ap Crythor of the need for immediate and drastic action. While others worry about the ever-increasing raids by Beastmen and the looming threat of Urag to the west, Erdok is concerned that the moral and civil decay in Deadwood will be its ultimate doom, and is awaiting Aa's guidance to reform it.

## Absolute End, Shipping Cartel

If goods simply must reach Deadwood, they arrive at Absolute End. Owned and operated by a Pharesian merchant who takes a personal interest in every load of cargo that moves through his doors, Absolute End transports anything and everything from "civilized lands." Every cargo of food, every herd of erd or durge marched across the plains, every shipment of wines brought to Absolute End arrive by way of small caravans. Distrustful of wagons, the proprietor Sharlingus frequently hires small bands of capable individuals to carry loads or guard herds on the long march south. While



not an entirely profitable venture for those who sign up in his employ, Sharlingus makes sure that they are well-equipped to handle almost any emergency along the way.

### **The Black Saddle, Tack and Corral**

Situated well off of the main street of Deadwood, the Black Saddle consists of several small buildings surrounding a large fenced-in paddock. Numerous equus stroll within the enclosure, tended to by a number of individuals. In addition to equus mounts, the Black Saddle also sells a variety of riding equipment, including saddles crafted to fit a wide variety of mounts.

A somewhat despondent Orgovian is one of the primary care-givers for the animals here. Although he does not take coin for his job, the owner of the Black Saddle allows him to room above one of the stables and time to conduct business of his own. Ordavu, as the Orgovian is known, frequently trades goods with a variety of townsfolk and people have come to expect him to have any number of odd curios that cannot be found in the other shops in town.

### **The Blue Diamond, Tavern and Inn**

Decadently appointed, the Blue Diamond is an exclusive tavern located near the Cymrilian military fortress. Many of Deadwood's well-to-do citizens, and those who wish to emulate them, frequent the tavern. The Diamond does offer entertainment in the form of exotic dancers or gambling from time to time, but many of its patrons are interested in more enlightened pursuits. That fact notwithstanding, the owner of the Blue Diamond, a Tanasian named Bertamos Oathtaker, also owns a local brothel and the Black Saddle. Bertamos fancies himself as the ruler of Deadwood, and does his best to present a regal air, going so far as

to have all of his clothing enchanted to ward off dust, dirt, and grime of any sort.

His spotless clothes do little to clean up his reputation as a heartless and power-hungry exile. A number of the town's worst characters are rumored to be supported, directly or indirectly, by Bertamos. For his part, Bertamos recently announced his conversion to the Aamanian faith and his sincere desire to have Deadwood become a prosperous and civilized city.

### **The Blue Hand Smithy**

Some days it is difficult to tell if the pounding ring of iron on iron comes from within the walls of the Seven Kingdoms fortress or from the nearby forge. Often hired to repair tools rather than create them, the current owner of the Blue Hand Smithy is a Zandir known as Zarquillian who has become obsessed with blue iron and its amazing properties. When not working the bellows for the forge or hammering out the damage to a pick-axe or plow, the tall, soot-stained Zandir can often be found in the yard outside, reading various scrolls and books. Having recently learned that the ancient Archans once crafted enchanted blue iron blades and suits of armor, Zarquillian is now attempting to learn everything he can about their works. He will pay almost any amount for verifiable texts about Osmar, particularly if it concerns their techniques on metalworking or enchantment. He is a little less concerned with the techniques that the Vajra have been practicing in the Quan Empire because he feels that those secrets are but pale modern imitations of earlier arts; still, he will gladly purchase any texts dealing with such secrets if the price is within his means.



## **The Chained Star, Pharesian Market**

A well-lit shop sits in the middle of main street beneath a sign composed of a large wooden star from which dangle a number of chains. Financed, owned, and operated by one of the more prominent Aamanians in town, townsfolk know that honest deals can be found beneath the Chained Star. When Aastar is around, he makes time to talk to every customer that walks in, inquiring after their health and disposition; however, if engaged in conversation for too long, he inevitably turns the conversation first to religion and then to the worship of Aa. While some suspect that he is attempting to be duplicitous in his inquiries, in truth Aastar really is concerned about the health and well-being of everyone in town. It is also true that he believes that conversion to the worship of Aa would greatly improve the lot of most of the townsfolk. Many of the locals buy goods here, but only the Pharesians are asked to sell things to the store. As a result, in addition to the various standard supplies one would expect to find in a border-town, there is also a crystalline curio cabinet nearly filled with oddities from around Talislanta.

## **The Durge Yard**

Actually a series of corrals outside of town, each situated beneath a small fortress-like homestead, the Durge Yard is where the various droves and herds of durge and erd spend their evenings. Each day, a group of drovers and herdsman take a group of animals out into the tall grass fields beyond the Deadwood Hills; however, because of raids from Beastmen, these expeditions are often fraught with peril. Since these creatures provide a great deal of materials for the fledgling town, their safety is of utmost concern. Durge and erd leather are commonly seen as clothing, patches, and roof-tarps; their meat is served on tables of the poor and wealthy alike; their dung is used as both

fertilizer and heating fuel. The various herds are owned by different individuals in town, and it is rumored that some of the Beastmen raids are actually staged ploys to steal a rival's stock.

## **The Flying Veil, Dance Hall and Pleasure Palace**

A glorified tavern, the Flying Veil does boast a number of additions that make it a local attraction despite the poor quality of the grog. Of primary note is a backroom complete with stage where dancers in various states of undress perform nightly. Some say that they also perform in the rentable rooms above the tavern as well. Furthermore, the Veil's owner, Millerrium Trakos, trades in a variety of goods and services. He is not averse to offering credit, but only to those who have no where else to go. Many in town whisper that Trakos is one of the main informants to the Aamanians, but that doesn't stop the poor and the destitute from spending what little they have in his establishment.

## **The Green Tower, Cymrilian Government Halls**

Situated at the opposite end of town from the Aamanian monastery, the Green Tower is a huge structure of stone and emerald-colored crystal surrounded by a number of squat military buildings erected by the Seven Kingdom's military. The compound surrounding the Green Tower causes many of the non-Seven Kingdom citizens who live here in town to mumble that the town is occupied, not ruled. Capable of receiving a windship at a dock on its top floor, the Green Tower serves as both an administrative complex as well as a military stronghold. However, most of the troops who are stationed here spend their time patrolling the road from Deadwood south to Karfan. Such duties leave them little time to police Deadwood itself, much less the surrounding hills and plains.

### **The Grey Tower, Inn**

Rising even above the two fortress-like structures at each end of town, the Grey Tower is a stone structure where many temporary visitors to Deadwood find residence. The tavern below is operated by the inn's owner, Balerimos. A somewhat sullen but eager host, Balerimos offers hot meals and cold drinks five times a day; between meals, he sells watered-down chakos and grog. Known to accept unconventional forms of payment, such as bartered goods, temporarily bound elementals, and promises of future favor, the Grey Tower finds itself a frequent haven for all manner of travelers, mendicants, and ne'er-do-wells.

Stories perennially circulate that Balerimos keeps a number of minor elemental entities imprisoned somewhere beneath the Tower, and that those strange creatures are responsible for the upkeep of the building, the cooking of the meals, and countless other occurrences. Some even speculate that Balerimos himself is not the elementals master, but actually their slave.

### **Tent Town**

Nestled between a pair of hills on the north side of town lies a scattered collection of tents in a variety of shapes and sizes. Called Tent Town, or just the Tents, this outgrowth of Deadwood is home to a variety of itinerant miners, laborers, escaped convicts, and destitute mercenaries. Since a fair portion of the criminal element of Deadwood hides itself amongst the other denizens of Tent Town, many of Deadwood's more prominent citizens loudly express their dislike of the camp. The Aamanian monastery sends missionaries through Tent Town fairly regularly, distributing food, water, blankets, and the wisdom of Aa. As a result, the Aamanian Witch-hunters can often glean information from the inhabitants of Tent Town, whereas the Seven Kingdoms Legions cannot. The ultimate fate of Tent Town remains a point of

serious contention between the Aamanians and the Cymrilians of Deadwood.

### **The White Hand, Tavern and Gambling Hall**

Erected by a Cymrilian with a wicked sense of humor, the White Hand is decorated with an Aamanian theme in mind, assuming that the Aamanians in question were drunken, lecherous gamblers. All of the tavern-wenchies in the White Hand wear skin-tight white robes that tend to be quite revealing; the walls are painted a scintillating, opalescent white; gambling tokens have the Ever-Watchful Eye on one side, an engraved hand on the other; wall-decorations and carvings resemble towers, priests, and eyes. It goes without saying that the monastics of Aa's Guiding Hand down the street do not find humor in the parody; frequently, witch-hunters will lie in wait outside the White Hand in order to apprehend particularly flagrant heretics.

### **The Yitek's Tent, Healer and Chiurgeon**

There are always individuals who do not trust magic enough to allow priests (or others) to cast healing magics upon them. Too, in a place like Deadwood, where the vast majority of those capable of such magics are associated with law and order, there are also those who wish to stay as far from the legal establishment as possible. Instead of visiting the hospitality wing of the Aamanian monastery, many of the ruffians and rogues visit the Yitek's Tent in Tent Town. The Yitek in question is Yato Naj, but few of his patients bother to remember his name. While being "mended" in the somewhat grimy and crowded tent, patients are encouraged to describe their experiences working in the hills outside of town – 'to walk the mind off the path of pain' is the typical excuse given by the Yitek.



## **The Hills of Deadwood**

The land surrounding the town of Deadwood is sometimes more important than its main street. Situated amongst seven strangely shaped hills, Deadwood is largely sheltered from view of the nearby countryside. While this does mean that it is spared the worst of the periodic windstorms that rush across the Plains of Golarin, it also means that residents have little warning in the event of raids from Beastmen or Za. Fortunately, the layout of the hills does allow water from the periodic rain storms to run away from town and into various gullies and gulches along the outer edge of the Deadwood Hills. These watering holes are frequently watched and used by the locals as no wells dug in the vicinity of town have yet yielded any appreciable amount of liquid.

### **Hanged Man's Hill**

High above Deadwood rises Hanged Man's Hill where Balerimos was once attacked by a hangman's tree. Though its lower slopes are sparsely covered, a copse of hangman's trees and deadwood surmount its summit like a stark pale crown. The hangman's trees occasionally catch other prey; sometimes vigilantes in town drag accused criminals up the hill and leave them to their fate. The summit also provides an excellent view of the surrounding land being the tallest of the Deadwood Hills; Yato Naj has jokingly quipped that the view must be wonderful since so many criminals roam around Deadwood waiting to be caught.

### **Valley of the Suns**

Two of the lowest hills in the area are known frequently called the Greater and Lesser Suns for they seem to mimic the heavenly bodies above. Greater Sun Hill is covered on its southern side by a heavy deposit of thick reddish dust; some say that it blows all the way from Caranthium, but there are no red iron deposits in it. In counterpoint,

Lesser Sun Hill is covered in dry, yellowing sickleweed and a few scattered deadwood trees. In the shallow valley between these two mounds runs a small creek used by many of the local animal herders.

### **Skullcap Gulch**

A shallow valley running off of the Valley of the Suns, Skullcap Gulch is known for the profusion of skullcap and other mushrooms which periodically spring up along its sides. Some of the local packs of Beastmen know how to make a potent poison out of the various fungus that grow here; however, they also believe that the poison is only effective if the soil is periodically fed warm blood. Because of this belief, the Beastmen often attempt to capture miners, herdsman, or farmers during their raids.

### **Silence Hill**

Overlooking the stretch of grassland between the Deadwood Hills and the Dead River Chasm, Silence Hill is thought to be haunted by many of the locals because of the unnatural silence that blankets its apex. Some of the magicians who now reside in town claim that the effect is the result of magical energies released by aberrant weather or perhaps a strange acoustical effect created by the alignment of the hills and the dampening effect of the deadwood trees. Despite such assurances, it is possible to find any number of people who instead claim that the spirit of a dead resident wanders the hillside, seeking the warmth and companionship of the living. However, the deceased is described as being a variety of different people: a young Pharesian pining for her lost love; an Orgovian trader looking for his lost goods; a Beastman who howls silently before charging; a Cymrilian windshipman waving a signal light.



## **Knotnay Hill**

Situated not too far from the Aamanian monastery, Knotnay Hill was the original site of the Aamanian encampment in the Deadwood Hills. Because of this, the top of the mound has been completely cleared of vegetation; there are still wagon tracks that wind their way amongst the dry gray foliage to the summit that are kept clear by the labor of penitents. Amongst the sparse soil at the top of the hill the Aamanians bury the recently departed; in most cases, the deceased are covered with a cairn since the soil rapidly turns to a hard pack layer of stone laced with black iron. In preparation for this, the monastery frequently buys scrap stone brought to town. Rumors that some of the stones still contain blue iron have led to several instances of graves being disturbed, a condition that the Aamanians point to as indicative of the town's moral decay.

## **Jewel Cave**

Excavated from the far base of Knotnay Hill is a winding cave that extends down into the ground beneath Deadwood. Discovered almost by accident when an attempted well collapsed, the winding passage is dotted periodically with faint traces of blue iron, silver, and random assortments of gemstones. The Cymrilians have publicly barred its citizens from entering and exploring the cave since several corpses were found near the cave's mouth. Miners grumble over their mugs in Deadwood's taverns, imagining the riches that must lie deeper within; despite such mumblings, no one has ever successfully taken enough material from Jewel Cave to buy much more than a dinner in town. On top of the warnings from the Cymrilian government, the periodic unearthly moans and howls that issue from the cave serve to keep all but the most desperate and brave from daring to enter the darkness below.

## **Hapapasa**

The largest of the Deadwood Hills in terms of width, Hapapasa is now little more than a widening, pock-marked stretch of rubble and discarded rock. This hill was the one struck during a lightning storm; that strike blasted open one side of the hill, throwing chunks of blue iron ore and stone across the valley floor. Since that time, numerous individuals have scabbled across the storm-blasted hillside and attempted to dig shafts down into the mound in search of more ore. Due to seasonal rains, the various holes and pits have caused an excess of water to seep into the hill resulting in various dangers such as rockslides and sinkholes. Hapapasa is a name taken from the language of the Beastmen; they have been known to occasionally stop pursuing prey that begins climbing to the summit of the hill, instead riding away at top speed shouting "hapapasa." So far, no one has discovered exactly what this means, nor the inexplicable behavior of the Beastmen. Wanderers in the area are advised not to trust too much to tavern tales; while the Beastmen rarely ride up onto the slopes of Hapapasa, they will still fire arrows, javelins, and spears at victims who attempt to run up the hill to escape them.

## **Torquar Hill**

Torquar Hill is so named because it has a dark and sour reputation amongst the laborers of Deadwood. To date, every attempt to pierce the stony soil of the hill has ended in disaster. Furthermore, the proximity to Silence Hill and the Wailing Wind Cave only serve to add to the sinister feeling around this mound. On the hill's eastern face, only barely visible, is a stone dolmen that just barely rises above the tall grasses. Although broken and defaced, many recent arrivals in town swear that the dolmen is the grave marker for an unnamed Xambrian whose tragic but inspiring story was recounted in several publications in Cymril.

## Wailing Wind Cave

Only a cave in the strictest sense of the word, Wailing Wind Cave is a deep shaft on the eastern extremity of the Deadwood Hills. Presumably a well in times long past, the fifteen-foot diameter hole has polished marble sides that make climbing a well-nigh impossible task. While no water, indeed no bottom, has ever been reached by those at the top, curious individuals still periodically journey here to investigate the hole. Some in the town believe that the shaft is perhaps an entrance to the Underground Highway. There is a steady flow of chilled air that issues from the cave which causes a distinctive keening cry that some claim sounds eerily man-like. Greyfang once remarked that his people used to throw captured victims down the shaft to appease the spirits of the depths; he claims that the wailing only occurs because the hole has not been fed recently. While many in town openly scoff at the crippled Sub-man's words, others remember nights when the shaft is silent and wonder if he might be telling the truth.



## Sample Encounters

A variety of individuals from all across Talislanta visit Deadwood. Aside from the various citizens of the Seven Kingdoms, notably Pharesian peddlers, Tanasians, or Cymrilians, other traders and merchants such as Orgovians, Djaffir, Farad, and Zandir can all be found here. Furthermore, wandering races like the Rahastrans, Yassan, Yitek, Bodor, and Kharakhan giants all pass through the area. Nagra trackers, Ur laborers, Arimite miners, and Marukan workers can all be found in the camps, and Aamanian pilgrims, knights, and witch-hunters visit the monastery frequently.

## Flora and Fauna

Deadwood trees are ubiquitous in the area as are ironwood trees, thornwoods, gall oak, and hangman trees. Barb berries and provender plants are common forms of undergrowth. The sparse farms scratched out around the Hills commonly grow provender plant, as well as the creations of Chi-Kree.

Aside from the periodic assaults of the Beastmen and Za, Ferran scavengers and Danelek nomads occasionally visit the Deadwood Hills. Adventurers can encounter horned devil-men, nightstalker, enim, necrophages, and manrak outside the Deadwood Hills, while omnivrax, heckler avir, land crabs, azoryl, and batranc are all commonly found within the borders of the hills. Behemoths, ogronts, axe-heads, megalodonts, oruk, and duadir can be found within several days of the Hills, and cattlemen commonly keep durge, urd, striders, land lizards, lopers, and equus.



## Chapter 4

# Deadwood Adventure Hooks

Deadwood is chaotic place. While there are people attempting to enforce their own views of order here, there is no one unifying goal among its residents. Instead, each individual is likely pursuing their own goals, their own fortunes, and their own futures. A number of powerful or charismatic personalities have managed to create small factions in an attempt to enforce their own beliefs on others, but with the lack of a strong central power to enforce a set of laws or moral values, disorder rules the streets of Deadwood.

Player Characters starting in Deadwood likely here for a variety of reasons and by a multitude of means. Some may have come to seek their fortunes; to run away from troubles at home; to seek the romantic, adventurous life out on the Plains; or simply to find ready work. Numerous merchants transport goods and materials here; PCs could have hired on as caravan masters, drovers, or simply guards for the dangerous passage north. Alternately, PCs could have journeyed here in style, expecting to find a wondrous city at the end of their journey or perhaps an easy method of earning wealth, only to arrive to find they are ill-equipped to deal with the harsh realities of a near-lawless frontier town.

### Note to GMs and Players

This section of Deadwood deals quite specifically with a variety of NPCs. Each of these NPCs are listed later in the book, but this chapter presents a variety of story hooks for GMs to use in their games. However, it is not expected that you will use all of these ideas, nor should you feel pressured to using the NPCs as presented. If there are changes that will make your Talislanta more fun, feel free to make them. With that caveat in mind, realize that the rest of this chapter may not be suitable if you are the Player of a GM planning on running Deadwood.

## Not like it was in the book...

A series of short publications have been circulating throughout much of Cymril, the Seven Kingdoms, and Zandu. Picked up by Sarista caravans, where they are occasionally turned into plays or puppet-shows, the small books have been carried as far as Dracarta and the Quan Empire. These books present a romanticized version of life in a Deadwood that is clean, law-abiding, and prosperous. While there are calamitous occurrences, the brave and resourceful successfully deal with them before the end of the tale so that the honest, hard-working citizens of this fictitious Deadwood never have to worry about unscrupulous merchants, disastrous crop-failures, or fear attacks by packs of Beastmen.

These books have become so wide-spread and popular that other writers have begun to pick up and imitate the style, and as a result, 'frontier literature' has gained a foothold in the popular culture of several nations. These books are not necessarily always about life in the wild spaces between civilized lands, but always deal with unlikely heroes, hope, and the triumph of "good" over "evil." As a result of their popularity, a new expansion of Archans into the lands of the Sub-Men is underway in many areas, but Deadwood receives a majority of these hopefully settlers.

## As Much a Victim as the Next Guy

The man indirectly responsible for the creation of frontier literature is perhaps as totally oblivious to its success as the rest of the world is to his existence. Marik is a crippled Marukan now residing in Deadwood who periodically writes letters to his extended family in Maruk. In these missives he waxes



poetical about life on the Plains and has developed quite a talent for irony, satire, and caricatures. Unbeknownst to Marik, however, all of these letters are being routed to Cymril where they are being cleaned up and published by a Zandir charlatan by the name of Zartin. Zartin has grown quite wealthy from Marik's work; while he does send Marik money every three to four weeks, the few lumens he sends are nothing compared to what Zartin has made. Zartin has grown quite famous from the texts, which he claims are from a trustworthy and respected source which he will not name out of respect for the author's wishes. Thus, while Marik has heard of Zartin's Tales of the Plains and even seen more than a few copies around town, he does not know that they are largely his own writing. Marik has enough trouble eking out a living in Deadwood to spend time reading frivolous fiction.

Characters who have been in Deadwood for more than a few months and have noticeably been active in town may soon find themselves appearing in the latest Zartin Tale from the Seven Kingdoms, albeit an overly exaggerated view of themselves. Alternately, someone else in town may have recognized themselves in a recent text and wants to hire some investigators to determine who exactly has been following them around. Contacting Zartin in Cymril does little good; he knows that the missives originate in Deadwood and are signed "M." However, aside from the Green Tower (which gets its supply by the Seven Kingdom's military), there are few individuals in town who purchase ink in any sizable quantities. Marik is among these. He uses what money he can spare to buy ink, and can often be found sitting outside the various inns and taverns of Deadwood scribbling notes on parchment.

PCs could find Marik at his work fairly easily. What they do then, however, could change everything. Even should they keep his secret, he will wonder why people are curious about his writing and likely begin

investigating on his own. If told about Zartin's Tales or shown a copy, Marik will at first be flattered, but then become incensed as the stories were to be private things to bring joy to his own family back in Maruk. He may beseech the PCs for help, either in getting his letters home, getting restitution from Zartin, or simply asking for a hand-out to do it himself. Afterwards, with the primary source fueling Zartin's fortune gone, Zartin himself may come looking for the source... and why it suddenly stopped.

### **A Legend Walks the Streets**

The Cymrilian Warrior-Mage Wilemerion has become quite well-known, not only in Deadwood, but across the civilized West as well. Presented in Zartin's Tales as Wil Merion, a dashing hero who is quick with both sword and spell in the name of Justice and Truth, Wilemerion doesn't know about his wide-spread fame. There are several instances of individuals newly arrived in town seeking him out, either with a request for aid or in order to challenge a living legend. While Wilemerion is understandably flattered by the former, the latter often disturb him greatly. He's already had to injure, even kill, while defending himself from strangers while in Deadwood. Since he spends much of his time working for Sharlingus or attempting to keep the peace in town, he doesn't have a lot of time for reading. He's heard of Zartin's Tales, but hasn't actually read any of them himself.

Player characters could arrive in Deadwood having read Zartin's Tales themselves. Perhaps they've been sent to ask the great man to investigate a serious matter, rescue a wagon train from bandits, or otherwise bring some order to a dangerous situation. PCs could also get caught in the crossfire as outlaws looking to make a name for themselves attempt to ambush Wilemerion on Deadwood's main street.

If someone gets Wilemerion to read one of Zartin's Tales for himself, at first he will not

believe that the character of Wil Merion is actually himself. Claiming coincidence, it's not until someone takes the time to point out the numerous similarities in the backgrounds of the two that Wilemerion will accept the fact that the books could be modeled on his life. However, he claims that he is not the author, nor does he know whom it could be. Wilemerion is too busy dealing with day-to-day crime and dangers in Deadwood to go off searching for the source of these flattering, if false, tales, but he would like to see a stop to them or at least to his inclusion in them. Wilemerion will blame the deaths and injuries he has had to cause on the books, and will not look very kindly on their author should he discover Marik's identity.

## Aa's Guiding Hand

The Aamanian monastery is one of Deadwood's anchors. While the vast majority of people who come to town do so only with the intention of striking it rich and moving on, the Aamanians seem ready to put down roots and remain. In fact, they have gone so far as to clear land for settlers.

Chi-Kree, a Green Aeriad Botanomancer, has worked with the Aamanian settlers to produce some crops, but the yield of these farms remains small. The Aamanians have also taken it upon themselves to enforce the laws of Deadwood – or at least those that coincide with the Dictates of Aa. As long as the peace is kept, the Aamanians' keep their cudgels restrained; they do not bother slave-owners; merchants who traffic in alcohol, fine foods, or fancy clothing; nor do they interrupt the various business dealings that go on in backrooms and secluded alleys off of the main street. However, public drunkenness, brawling, and open licentiousness in the streets often draw heavy stares, harsh words, and ultimately swift blows. The lower monastic cells of Aa's Guiding Hand have never been fully inhabited by the monks, and so they have gladly converted the cells of prayer into cells of penance. Once confined and awake,

the monks give simple meals to offenders and preach to them continuously of the forgiveness, glory, and might of Aa. While they have won few converts, their efforts have reduced crime in Deadwood somewhat; there are considerably few repeat offenders in town, most troubles are started by new-comers and visitors.

## Business as Usual

Aastar Solirrion is a veteran warrior-priest of Aa. Although not commercially-minded, he has had the fortune of choosing ventures that have been increasingly profitable. He chose the site for the original monastery, and the town has grown from its front gates, drawing not only faithful pilgrims, but those curious about Aa's firm guidance. More recently, he has helped to fund a Pharesian mercantile exchange. With his influence, the Pharesian brings in a sizable amount of cargo and goods from Aaman that are then sold to the faithful. Solirrion has noticed lately that fewer and fewer miners seem to be arriving in town; in reaction to this he has sent letters back to Aaman encouraging the re-settlement of pilgrims in the area.

In preparation for their arrival, however, Aastar realizes that more land will have to be cleared. Land that some miners might have claim to or be tempted to dig up in search of blue iron. In order to accommodate, Aastar wants to attempt to buy up as much land near the monastery as he can. However, he also knows that there are many in town that would resist the idea of a large number of Aamanians settling here. The PCs may come to Aastar's attention – perhaps they are picked up and confined in the cells, or maybe he witnesses them helping someone else – and when they do, he will arrange to meet with them discreetly. His proposition that the PCs take a large sack of gold lumens, split up, and each individually attempt to purchase plots of land from others in town is a risky one. Should the PCs abscond with the lumens, however, Aastar has a number of witch-hunters at his



disposal to track them down. If the PCs let slip exactly why they are buying the land, and for whom, Aastar will be displeased, but he will deal with the Green Tower himself should any problems arise.

### **The Hand of Justice**

When Aasutek arrived in Deadwood, the town was a rowdy encampment of lawlessness and vice. The day after his arrival saw the Green Tower releasing a suspected murderer who was a wealthy Tanasian and friend of Bertamos Oathtaker. Once released, the Tanasian was spirited away via a fast carriage, presumably headed towards the Seven Kingdoms; miners in town were incensed since the Tanasian's victim had been a miner involved in a land dispute. Aasutek could not believe that justice was not being meted out fairly. With his military background and long years of service as a witch-hunter, Aasutek felt himself highly qualified to bring justice to the town. After stirring the passions of some of the townsfolk, Aasutek found himself in demand for a position as Deadwood's chief enforcer of laws. Quickly earning a reputation for fearlessness and confrontation, Aasutek has so far managed the task of imposing law on the lawless without causing a single death.

Should the PCs seem to be honest, law-honoring people, Aasutek may temporarily employ them. There are several individuals in town that he suspects of fostering criminal behavior, but since he cannot legally intrude or even investigate if no crime is apparent, his hands are tied. He may order the PCs to spy on various individuals, such as Jasper Blade, Porthos, Daniyyel, Sebastian Bae Rovenclop, Mellerrium Trakos, or even Bertamos Oathtaker. Alternately, he may temporarily ordain the PCs as witch-hunters in order to assist in bringing in a dangerous band of criminals. Ultimately, Aasutek may be recalled back to Aaman to take a position of power at the head of a monastic order, leading a portion of the Aamanian Army, or becoming a monitor. At

such a time, he will definitely attempt to find someone capable of handling both Aa's Guiding Hand and the protection of law and order in Deadwood; he may even consider splitting the two positions.

### **A White Cloak Over a Black Heart**

Bertamos Oathtaker is one of the more prominent and visible converts to the Aamanian faith. Prior to his open acceptance of Aa, Bertamos was well on his way to forging a reputation as a cunning, manipulative, and immoral businessman. Having arrived in Deadwood to make a fortune, Bertamos disdained the coarse and menial work of digging for blue iron. Using his innate political acumen, Bertamos struck deals and bargains until he had established himself at the top of a small mercantile empire in Deadwood. Dealing in goods and services both illicit and legal, Bertamos has been a rival to all the Pharesians in town simply through the application of political power and monetary might.

Bertamos may approach PCs who exhibit a tendency to operate on the wrong side of the law, perhaps first meeting them in the Blue Diamond or one of the seedier locations of town. Individuals in need of aid are of occasional interest to Bertamos; if he can help them at little cost to himself, he will gladly do so with the intention of having one more person owe him their future. While such ventures do not always work out (sometimes the people Bertamos tries to help wind up perishing during their adventures), he typically invests so little in them to start with that he does not miss the difference.

Seeing himself as the ruler of Deadwood, Bertamos will do almost anything to ensure that his position of prominence and power remain unchallenged. PCs who begin to become too popular in town may find themselves targets of Bertamos' ire. Although he will not strike directly, he will use his influence and wealth to arrange for accidents.



Miners may assault the PCs for the slightest display of rudeness, or they may find themselves the target of a campaign of vicious rumors to besmirch their reputation. While Bertamos will often stop short of outright murder, he is still a dangerous individual. His conversion to the Aamanian faith has done little to temper his proclivities. Although he owns gambling halls, taverns, and brothels, he sees them solely as commercial ventures and does not soil himself by associating with such crass company. He claims that the prostitutes who work for him are all slaves, and thus he can employ them in any way he sees fit. These days Bertamos parades around town in spotless and gleaming attire, his head polished to a reflective sheen. Some of the other Aamanians feel that he goes a bit too far in his professed piety, but they do not often speak such thoughts aloud.

## **The Pharesian Cause**

The original inhabitants of early Deadwood were a group of Pharesian itinerant merchants. Having settled in town, many of these individuals sent for their wives and children to join them here, some in the hopes of having a "normal" life and others with the dream of establishing a Pharesian city-state where their own political agendas, moral beliefs, and cultural influences could take hold. However, after years of political and cultural repression by the Koresians and Tanasians, the Pharesians who came to Deadwood, while unified as a group, had vastly different priorities and ideas about governance. As such, the dream of a Pharesian city-state of their own has fallen aside to be replaced with a struggle for day to day life, the acquisition of wealth, and a continuation of life as it was before the settlement.

## **The Grey Tower and The Hanged Man**

Balerimos, an older Pharesian, owns and operates a structure known commonly as the Grey Tower. Balerimos has run several different inns over the brief history of the town, but the current one has survived the longest. Modeled after the towers of the Kasmirin, but on a much grander scale (not too mention being more comfortably appointed), the Grey Tower is relatively secure against even the worst storms and parching heat of Talislanta's twin suns. Politically, Balerimos is something of a neutral party in town, though he does tend to look more kindly upon the Aamanians than the Cymrilians because of the aid given to him in the past.

Balerimos will happily listen to traveler's tales as well as trade food and lodging for the strange and bizarre that travelers may bring to town. As such, he is one of the unacknowledged sources of both gossip and wisdom locally. He will often arrange odd jobs for individuals down on their luck, or set up meetings between those needing aid and those able to provide it. Balerimos will tell curious PCs about many of the personalities in town if asked, as well as provide knowledge about the ruins of Osmaar far to the north or the Fangs of Golarin to the south-east. He is one of the few townsfolk to have befriended Greyfang; resultingly, he also knows a fair bit about the habits of the Beastmen, though he is far from being knowledgeable enough to act as a guide.

## **Rebels Needing a Cause**

Cymeer ran Cordiran is a brash, young Cymrilian living in Deadwood. A recent arrival, Cymeer is not here for the wealth to be earned, but is instead a political idealist. He will throw himself whole-heartedly behind any endeavor sponsored by the local Pharesians. As a result, many townsfolk see him as being an inconstant and reckless youth.

Should any Pharesian PCs approach Cymeer, he will gladly help them in any way he possibly can. He will also bring them information at random times. Sometimes such tales deal with possible discoveries of blue iron, buried ruins, or incoming Beastmen attacks; other times, he arrives whispering strange and almost non-sensical rumors about the town's population. Cymeer will do little for Koresians or Tanasians; but other members of the Seven Kingdoms are treated cordially enough.

A local Pharesian bartender by the name of Gwilym has grown increasingly disillusioned with the frontier lifestyle. Heavily indebted to others, Gwilym knows that others have fled their debts by leaving town; he, however, has no where else to go. Recently, Gwilym has become enamored of the Aamanian ideals. He is not so much interested in converting to the Aamanian faith as he is with the idea of individuals working for the betterment of an entire society. Nevertheless, he has met with difficulties when trying to help the town because he owes too much to too many. Still, he occasionally has interesting ideas for helping others, if only he could find someone to help him. If the PCs seem willing to help, Gwilym can tell them of a group of Ur, new in town, plotting together to attack small groups of merchants outside the town.



## I Swear It Worked Before

Alecondros arrives just after a Sarista caravan has departed Deadwood and claims he is carrying secrets unimaginable. While many of the more permanent residents of town no longer really believe in his wares, there are always gullible newcomers who are willing to buy the concoctions he offers.

One of the products that Alecondros offers this time is an elixir that Alecondros claims is made from the oil of pressed serpis gathered from the Dark Coast. Although he charges what many believe to be an extravagant price, the Sensational Serpis Oil actually does have some very beneficial results. When a number of purchasers begin to grow ill, however, Alecondros feigns ignorance. According to his claims, the serpis oil was purchased from a band of Farad merchants traveling along the Dead River Chasm; Alecondros himself tested a sample and found the elixir to be quite harmless, beneficial in fact. If the PCs can find the Farad merchants, they can possibly acquire more of this substance at a substantial discount. Alternately, if one or more of the PCs are skilled at alchemy, they may attempt to deduce the ingredients, reproduce the product, or even improve upon it in order to remove its harmful side-effects.

Alecondros could secretly be the local distributor for all manner of narcotics, poisons, powders, and elixirs. Although he claims that his route takes him along the Dead River Chasm down to Danuvia and back, there is little to no substantial proof that this is in fact his itinerary. There is just enough time between his visits for him to travel south and east to the lands of the Djaffar. While in Deadwood, Alecondros does avoid Djulan, as well as any other Djaffar and Dracartans he may see. Could he be smuggling goods from the desert lands? And if he is, why bring them to Deadwood?



## **The Green Tower and the Seven Kingdoms**

The Green Tower and the border-fortress that surrounds it are the symbol of the protection and might of the Seven Kingdoms in Deadwood. More bureaucracy than military, the administrators at the fortress find themselves understaffed and ill-equipped to handle the numerous disputes over land and petty crimes. Primarily concerned with ensuring that a route from Deadwood to the Seven Kingdoms stays moderately clear of dangers, the soldiers of the Green Tower are few in number.

## **The Velvet Hand in an Iron Glove**

Tasked by the Wizard-King with bringing some semblance of order to Deadwood and securing its riches for the Seven Kingdoms, Hoell ap Crythor. An ineffectual leader at best, Hoell is used to having servants, administrators, and able assistants to carry out his wishes and is at something of a loss as to how exactly to manage what amounts to an over-sized mining camp inhabited by peoples from all across Talislanta. Somewhat easily swayed, Hoell's seizure of the town in the name of the Seven Kingdoms led to a series of near riots by miners who feared that their claims and fortunes would also be seized. In the time since, Hoell has set up a convoluted bureaucracy that has tried to keep track of who has a claim to which parcel of land. One of the over-worked clerks in Hoell's office has begun to notice patterns emerging – miners claiming specific parcels of land, subsequently going missing, and the land being claimed by someone else. So far, Hoell has relegated this to simple desertion, murders, and mistakes amongst what he sees as an illiterate and immoral population.

Hywel Wynne was an itinerant priest, traveling from city to city in the Seven Kingdoms, preaching in their streets, and

debating philosophy with their wisest. He arrived in Deadwood some time back, and has been preaching of the Creator's glory and helping the poor ever since. Although not as strict as the Aamanians, Hywel does believe that the various "dens of vice" throughout the city – the gambling halls, brothels, and taverns – are largely responsible for the unfavorable characters and their behavior. On multiple occasions Hywel has been threatened and ordered to leave town by masked figures, but his resolve and faith have kept him here.

## **Green Grows the Grass of Home**

Enlisted by the Court of Cymril at the request of Hoell ap Crythor, Chi-Kree is a renowned Green Aeriad Botanomancer. Tasked with creating a hardy strain of wheat-grass and provender plant that will thrive on the hilly Plains near Deadwood, Chi-Kree has instead become entranced by the properties of the native flora. Only nominally under the auspices of the Green Tower, Chi-Kree can often be found in the unlikeliest of places outside of town, simply wandering amongst the vegetation. Her placid demeanor and evident ardor for all things arboreal have kept her relatively safe from the coarseness of the miners in town who see her as something of a good luck charm. Periodically, she brings bags of strange fruit to town, but never the same variety twice, that she claims are the results of experimentation.

Recently hired by the Aamanians to assist in the clearing of large plots of land, Chi-Kree may approach PCs who seem capable of dealing with the harsh realities of the native plant-life. Thornwood, hangman's trees, and deadwood all must be negotiated and cleared away. However, the dryness of the area prohibits widespread burning lest the town itself succumb to a devastating fire. Instead, the PCs must endeavor to cut down each plant while simultaneously avoiding such dangers as packs of curious Beastmen, land crabs, and omnivrax. Should the PCs prove capable, she may enlist them to remove a manrak nest at



the far end of the Deadwood Hills; there are some extraordinary examples of ironwood on the hillsides above the nest, but the presence of the insectoids prevents Chi-Kree from getting too close.

### **The Glass Blade**

Daniyyel is known to be the short-tempered and occasionally violent barkeep at the Blue Diamond. He looks up to Bertamos and often tears off to complete Bertamos' wishes, occasionally in unintended ways. Recently, as Bertamos has become more and more pious, Daniyyel has been left to his own devices. Now, Daniyyel's addiction is being fed by Trakos, and soon his loyalties may begin to shift.

PCs may find themselves facing Daniyyel's blade, mainly if they have run afoul of either Bertamos or Trakos while in town. Though not particularly well-liked, the locals do see Daniyyel as one of their own. If the PCs kill him, even in self-defense, they may find themselves under the scrutiny of litigators from the Green Tower. PCs may be able to draw out the long buried kind-hearted side of Daniyyel, though it would definitely take a great deal of work. A few years of harsh living and hard choices, coupled with an addiction to narcotics, have left an indelible mark on the youth; however, soon he may crack. When he does, it is impossible to predict if he will repent his wicked youth or embrace it whole-heartedly and become the blackest of villains.

### **The Yellow-Skinned Foreigner**

The Quan Empire is quite interested in the blue iron coming from Deadwood. Having long had a monopoly on the material, they are understandably quite concerned about the claims that the Seven Kingdoms or others are making in the region. Ispergon, a representative from the Empire, maintains an office in the Green Tower. However, most of his business is conducted in town. Through various contacts and middlemen, he is

attempting to purchase as much of the blue iron that comes out of the Deadwood Hills as he possibly can.

PCs in Deadwood to mine, or PCs seen purchasing multiple plots of land to work, will rapidly come to Ispergon's attention. He will endeavor to secure the land they have purchased or, failing that, perhaps have the PCs targeted by various rogues and scoundrels. Characters from the East will find Ispergon to be a dedicated servant of the Empire; everything he does, he does in order to preserve the power and prestige of his homeland. He will finance almost anyone who has a solid plan for profit – whether it's the surety of a new field of blue iron or the possibility of a long buried tomb – in exchange for a percentage.

### **Pirates, Rogues, and Scoundrels**

The Bold Jasper Blade is reputed to be a famous pirate of amazing exploits. At least, according to his own tales, he is. In truth, Jasper is often indecisive, rarely sticking to any one idea, scheme, or plot for very long. The only thing that can be counted on with Jasper is that he is always extremely loyal to his friends. Rumored to have once been wed to the Danuvian Galadia, Jasper intends to keep a low profile; however, when presented with any opportunity to expound upon his greatness or skill, he has a hard time resisting the temptation. As a result, Jasper has already been involved in several magical duels on Deadwood's main street. PCs may encounter Jasper in any of Deadwood's drinking or gambling establishments armed with a plan to free "his" land ark from the top of a stand of deadwood trees some distance from town. Complicating matters, however, are the mated pair of azoryls and their newly-birthed young. PCs may also encounter a nervous Jasper hiding out in a bar while avoiding an angry miner or mage who is waiting to duel the recalcitrant Gao.

## Chapter 5

# Deadwood's Futures

Deadwood is an ideal starting point for Talislanta campaigns. Player characters can use Deadwood as a launching point for travel to a variety of locales. Furthermore, races and cultures from all across the continent can be found in Deadwood. Governments and powers seek to control the source of the blue iron; the remarkable metal is light enough to be used for a variety of arms and armaments, including weaponry aboard wind-ships. Individuals come with the hopes of making a fortune prying the nuggets of blue iron from the ground. The lawlessness of the frontier town draws in a dangerous and desperate group of people, some who seek to take advantage of the chaos and others who hope to end it.

This chapter contains two separate plots that GMs can use to make Deadwood the focal point of a game. While previous chapters provide a number of individual story hooks, those are intended more to spark ideas or run as single sessions; the plots in this chapter instead serve to function as the focal point of an on-going campaign, one which might change the very shape of life across Talislanta. Ultimately, however, the plots in this chapter deal with the origins of blue iron under the Plains of Golarin and the impacts of that discovery. Each plot is intended to be run individually, however they have been written so that they could also be used concurrently.

A Talislantan scholar-savant once said that Fate is like a charging uruk; individuals can evade its approach, but can never hope to stop it. The following stories offer Talislanta groups the ability to change the future of the continent. Each leads to events that will definitely have a long term impact on the world, however there are opportunities along the way for PCs to reduce the amount of

change or even completely turn it aside. Each story is therefore broken up into manageable pieces, each with its own adventure seeds for PCs from a variety of backgrounds. GMs should not assume that if the PCs alter things so greatly in one section of an adventure path that events in the next section reset to normal. Should the PCs do something that invalidates a later event – perhaps they prevent the Seven Kingdoms from establishing a military fort in Deadwood, for example – the GM does not have to assume that the fort is built in the next section. Perhaps instead of a large fortress, the Seven Kingdoms merely reinforces a small homestead, or builds a simple stone building instead. The PCs should be the important people in your story; the cast of characters in Deadwood should take a backseat to your own stories. These stories do not necessarily assume that the PCs will be from a particular race, but does propose that they have at least some connection to Deadwood at various points in its brief history.





# A Wind from the West

Deadwood lies almost eighty miles from the edge of the Seven Kingdoms, but less than half of that from the edge of Urug. As the population of Deadwood grows, they inevitably draw the attention of various groups of Sub-Men, including the Ur. Beset on all sides by enemies, it is only a matter of time until the city falls. The more of its secrets that are uncovered, the quicker its doom hastens upon it.

## Early Days

In 603, a cabal of traveling Pharesian merchants discovers blue iron in the Deadwood Hills. Within a few months, prospectors and fortune-hunters from around the continent begin flooding the Hills looking to make a fortune of their own. PCs arriving in Deadwood at this time find life in the town to be both harsh and rough. There is nothing in the way of a governing body, and vigilante violence is common for even the slightest of offenses. There are few, if any, shops or businesses at this point. While many of the miners do share some sense of camaraderie while in camp together in the evenings, for the most part it's an every-man-for-himself locale.

In the early days of the camp, a small group of Arimite miners set up camp at one edge of Knotnay Hill. Outraged at the exorbitant prices in the burgeoning camp, the men attempted to sink a shaft for water near their own tents. However, after laboring to pierce the hard soil and metallic substrata, the shaft and a small part of the hill collapsed burying at least two of the miners alive. Unable to get their countrymen out in time, the other Arimites set about slowly digging their bodies free, piling the stones aside for building cairns. In so doing, the Arimites discovered what at first appeared to be a shallow cave. Recognizing some of the

### Wind from the West Timeline

603 N.A. – Blue Iron discovered in the Deadwood Hills.  
605 N.A. – The Green Tower built in Deadwood; the Seven Kingdom's claims the land as a protectorate.  
606 N.A. – Beastmen packs unite to wipe out Deadwood.  
607 N.A. – Za raiders, accompanied by Stryx scouts, begin to attack caravans heading towards Deadwood.  
608 N.A. – Increase of aberrant weather near the Deadwood Hills.  
609 N.A. – Ur warbands cross the Dead River Chasm and head towards Deadwood. Deadwood besieged.

excavated stone as unrefined silver ore, the Arimites set out to excavate the entire site. After assembling a furnace for extracting the silver from the ore however, most of the miners apparently died as a result of an accident. At least that is the claim made by the sole survivor of the endeavor, another Arimite miner by the name of Jankin Cadmus. Recently hired by the others, Jankin was in town at the time, settling some outstanding debts with his initial pay.

Now, Jankin is desperate. It is widely known in town that the Arimites had set up a large smelting furnace on the far side of Knotnay Hill. Jankin knows that the find there is likely worth a great deal of money, but he also knows that he'll never be able to simultaneously work and protect it by himself. With this in mind, he will attempt to hire the PCs. A grimy and somewhat nervous Jankin will first approach one of the PCs at a moment when they are alone.



## Jankin's Plea

Cornering a solitary PC, Jankin will stammer out the following, all the while glancing over his shoulder and darting his eyes from place to place. It is quickly obvious that he is afraid of someone or something and is in desperate need of help.

*"H-h-hey there partner. C'n ya help out a feller? Be worth yo'r while? See, I gots a claim over on the far side of the hill, but my partners, ya see, they're dead. I ain't lookin to get rich, just wanna get enough outta that hole to get home, maybe get a house or a wife. After that, the claim'll be yours. But, we might need more th'n the two of us. You got any folks with keen eyes and empty pockets? I can't pay ya much up front, but I reckon that hole I got 's got at least enough in it for any five men."*

Should the PC agree, Jankin will meet the group outside the monastery at dusk the following day with a pair of equus and lead them to what will later be called Jewel Cave. At this point, it's little more than a rubble filled hole with a set of six cairns on the hillside below. Jankin explains that he plans on using the equus to drag heavier blocks from the shaft, while doing the rest by hand and pickaxe. It is important, he says, that he get down and look at the rock personally so that he can be sure of getting quality ore. Players can accompany Jankin to the shaft and set up a small campsite. There's already a sizable fire-pit with a few cords of split deadwood as well as the forlorn silhouette of the blast furnace. From time to time, an immature azoryl may land on the top and eye the group below like some great carrion-avir.

## Young Azoryl

These young azoryl are quite famished. A storm of wind demons has been hounding them for some time, and as a result they are quite ready to attack anything that seems easy prey. The smokestack of the furnace simply provides a ready place to perch; while the PCs could be easy prey, the azoryls are more interested in the equus tied up below.

**Size:** 30 ft. wingspan, 180bs.

### Attributes:

INT -1 PER +4 WIL +0 CHA n/a  
STR+1 DEX +3 CON +0 SPD +7\*  
(\*airborne; -4 on the ground)

### Ability Level: 2

**Attacks/Damage:** Beak: DR 8, Talons: DR 5

**Special Abilities:** Flight, glide for unlimited periods without requiring rest

**Armor:** PR 2

**Hit Points:** 14

Jankin estimates he'll need several days of digging to get the amount of ore he needs. During that time, he'll be an over-bearing taskmaster, ordering the PCs around and sending them off to town to fetch various supplies (and always promising to pay them back later). On the third day of digging, Jankin finds a large cavity inside. He will excitedly call the PCs down to marvel at his find. A quick scan of the area above shows little movement; even the azoryls have left during the heat of the mid-day suns. However, out on the edge of the plains, some miles away, a small plume of dust can be seen rising to the sky as if something were rapidly moving towards the Hills.

Down in the cave, Jankin stands with a recently lit torch. At eight-feet in height, the open cavity is tall enough to accommodate most individuals. The walls that stretch away into the darkness throw back numerous reflections from the myriad number of gemstones, predominately clear zircon, emeralds, carnelians, and strangely enough

quaga, which protrudes from them. The cave narrows to a thin crack in the very back; a slow, faint breeze emanates from this crevice and the occasional glint and glimmer of hidden wealth is barely visible (PER roll at -5) to those who peer in with sufficient light behind them. In the cave, most of the stones are several carats in size, but seem to be firmly lodged within the rock. Furthermore, there are small bands of metallic ore visible along the floor and ceiling.

PCs with ranks in **Arcane Lore**, **Geography**, or **Mining** can make a skill check with a difficult of -10.

A **Partial Success** will reveal that the variety of gems and metallic ore in such close proximity is an astounding and unusual find.

A **Full Success** also provides that the arrangement of stones almost seems to be purposeful, perhaps to catch outside light and focus it inwards, or simply as a strange form of decoration.

A **Critical Success** will further reveal that the stones are traditionally those associated with spiritual protection and defense and that they seem to have been arranged in parallel sequence in order to both keep something out as well as locking something in.

When Jankin comes out of his stupor of surprise, he will insist that the PCs help him begin chipping out some of the stone as well as pieces of the floor; he leaves the ceiling alone, fearing another collapse. If any of the PCs refuse, the Arimite gets angry and attempts to chase any recalcitrant individuals from the cave with curses, shouts, and a wildly waved torch. PCs can attempt to talk Jankin out of taking the crystals if they suspect that the crystals are important; however, later that night, his greed will get the better of him and he will attempt to sneak back into the cave with a hand-pick to pry loose some of the stones.

After multiple stones have been removed, whether during the day or the night, a blast of

stale and dusty air erupts from the cave. Anyone inside should make a CON roll; Failure means that they have been forced out of the cave in order to get fresh air while a Partial Success allows them to stay even if they have to spend a few moments choking and sneezing from the dust. Jankin will dismiss this oddity as the result of another cave-in further back beyond the narrow crevice and suggest that everyone stay out of the cave for a day or so while the rock settles. Outside the cave he will begin the task of smelting down any ore pulled from the site as well as attempting to free any gemstones that may have been retrieved.

### A Mystery Unsolved

Two days after the stones have been removed, a fierce wind kicks up out of the east, blowing a huge cloud of dust and debris before it. Unused to the strange weather but remembering tales of Deadwood's past, Jankin will attempt to get the PCs and as much of the equipment as possible inside the cave. The descent into the darkness makes it difficult at best to get any mounts down within; Jankin will urge leaving them above as he attempts to hammer tent-spikes into the walls in order to hang one of the camp tents across the opening.

Once the opening is covered in this manner, Jankin will crawl back down the passageway to the cave and moodily begin to brood. Before too long one corner of the tent rips free in the wind as a blast of dust-laden air swirls down into the cave. The first sign that things are amiss comes when the dust doesn't settle to the floor, but continues to whip around the room in a swirl of hot, dry air. The next sign comes when a cacophony of gibbering voices seems to erupt from within the wind. Characters with knowledge of Archaen or Elder Tongue can make out a few words; most notably "mistake," "wards," "too long," "destruction," as well as several Archaen sounding names. An **Arcane Lore** roll at a -5 reveals that this is actually a Dust



Demon, though precisely why it is here is unknown. The demon will attack the PCs by drawing the air from their lungs; hurling them about the room with Move Mode spells; Transforming the air in the cave to thick, choking dust; and occasionally striking them with concussive blasts of air.

Should the PCs be unable to deal with the demon's attacks, they can retreat out of the cave and back outside; should they do so, the demon forces itself through the crevice in the back of the cave and vanishes.

If the PCs are capable of binding or restraining the creature, they may be able to learn that the demon has an ancient grudge against a devil and is attempting to reach it. They may be able to bargain with the creature; it simply wants to be able to enter the cave and descend into the earth beyond the opening and it will willingly take any destructive action the PCs may require if they agree to let it do so.

#### **Dust Demon**

**Size:** 10', 15 lbs.

**Attributes:**

INT +6 PER +3 WIL +7 CHA -6

STR +6 DEX +4 CON +10 SPD +6

**Ability Level:** 5

**Attacks/Damage:** Suffocation: DR 5

**Special Abilities:** Aeromancy (Move +5, Attack +5, Defend +5, Transform +5), flight

**Armor:** Largely Insubstantial: Most physical attacks only cause 1-2 points of damage plus any enchantment bonus. Dust demons are susceptible to water-based attacks and spells of Aquamancy which deal double damage.

**Hit Points:** 20

Should he survive, Jankin is rattled by the attack; perhaps he suffers several attacks by the monstrosity, perhaps he's just never encountered a demon before. Afterwards, he'll quit the cave and make his way back to the more populous mining camp outside the monastery with whatever ore and gems he's

managed to get so far; all of it will be spent in a drunken, debaucherous attempt to forget the demon and its sibilant, insinuating voice.

If he dies during the melee, the PCs should at least attempt to dispose of his body. Eventually, there will be someone asking after Jankin, be it another Arimite miner whom he owed money or even one of the Aamanians. Should the PCs come up with some tall-tale, or even simply relate the truth, the invariable result is that folks in town soon claim that the area is haunted or cursed. Jankin had already told a number of folks about the site and with the PCs ferrying supplies out to it during the digging, a number of townsfolk suspect that there may be something out there. If the PCs want to keep the cave for their own, they'll have to deal with everyone from the overly curious to claim-jumpers to Arimites claiming a share of the site because of the monies owed them by Jankin.

## **The Raising of the Tower**

By 605 N.A., the majority of Deadwood's inhabitants are Cymrilians. Following months of bandit raids on the supply caravans from Karfan, brawls and attacks in the middle of Deadwood at noon, and concerns over the increasing sightings of Sub-Men near the city, the population of Deadwood seeks protection from the Seven Kingdoms. Some of the miners resent the intrusion, however, fearing that their claims and property might be confiscated or seized by the Seven Kingdoms began to prepare to either leave Deadwood or take up arms against the forces sent to take the town.

The Seven Kingdoms did indeed send a formidable military force to take control of the situation in Deadwood; however, the governmental support to manage those troops was sadly lacking. This was not a mistake; the rulers of the Seven Kingdoms knew that if they were to make a sudden, competent grab for the resources found beneath the Deadwood Hills that there would be reprisals from half a dozen governments and powers.



Thus, they decided to send a noble to officiate over Deadwood anticipating that he might fail. This was done with the hope that as the noble floundered the enemies of the Seven Kingdoms would reveal themselves at which point the military commander of the garrison would assume command and seize the city and its resources for the Seven Kingdoms and its allies.

Hoell ap Crythor, the noble tasked with securing Deadwood, knows none of this. He arrives in Deadwood on a windship accompanied by a sizable military force and an engineering team. Shortly after arriving, the engineering team maps out the local area in order to determine the best possible placement for the fortress and tower. After choosing a location, the military units clear it of not only trees and debris but also force a number of miners to relocate as well. When a group of the miners attempt to seek restitution from Hoell, he is less than forthcoming. His haughty demeanor does little to impress the frontiersmen who have already been residing here for some time. As a result, by the time the supplies to construct the fortress are arriving from the south by way of a caravan of land arks, there is a great deal of simmering unrest between the locals and the Seven Kingdoms military.

### **Espionage**

The locals are highly unhappy with the arrival of the Seven Kingdoms. Their unrest is only fueled by the work of agitators from rival nations; in particular, the Farad and the Rajans. Long covetous of the resources of the Quan Empire, the Farad have been attempting to smuggle quantities of blue iron out for some years with little success. The Rajans would like an edge against the red iron used by their age old foes in Carantheum; the current Khadun has been informed of the discovery by one of his junior priests and now envisions hordes of icy-blue death's-head

shields crashing like a wave across the desert lands.

The night that the land arks arrive outside of Deadwood there are several attempts to sabotage the crafts and their cargoes. If the PCs are townsfolk, they could be inspired by a Farad speech, recruited by a band of Arimites, or pressed into service by Rajan assassin-priests.

Expected to sabotage the axles on several of the land arks, the PCs are given amberglass spheres of alkahest intended to be placed beneath the land arks, poured on the axles, or placed surreptitiously beneath the wheels. Such a task will involve numerous Stealth rolls versus the Perception scores of the Seven Kingdom's soldiers as well as Sabotage rolls to place the orbs of acid at the proper locations. Avoiding the wandering patrols of Thrall guards, Aeriad scouts, or Aamanian witch-hunters is a difficult task; one mistake could easily result in a deadly melee.

Alternately, the PCs could be working for the Cymrilian military or simply hired hands on one of the land arks. In such a case, they will have to make several PER rolls to foil multiple stealthy assaults or even attack saboteurs to stop a few direct ones.

### **Thrall Border-Guard**

STR +3 DEX +2 CON +4 SPD +1  
INT -3 WIL +2 PER 0 CHA 0  
CR +6 RC +2 MR -4 HP 32

**Ability Level:** 3

**Armor:** Full Garde, PR 5

**Attacks/Damage:** Halberd, DR 10; Dagger, DR 4; Short Bow, DR 6

**Special Abilities:** Immune to Fear

**Notable Skills:** Weapon: Polearms +3, Bows +3, Small Blades +3; Evade +3; Mounted Combat +3; Scout +3; Signal +3; Tactics +3

### **Arimite Saboteur**

STR +1 DEX +2 CON +2 SPD 0

INT 0 WIL 0 PER +2 CHA -1

CR +2 RC +2 MR 0 HP 28

**Ability Level:** 3

**Armor:** Leather Armor, PR 2

**Attacks/Damage:** Dagger, DR 4; Throwing Knives, DR 3

**Special Abilities:** Arimite Knife-Fighting, Tough

**Notable Skills:** Weapon: Thrown +3, Short Blades +2, Hafted +2; Evade +2; Brawling +2

The engineers are a group of Yassan, Gnomekin, and Sindarins who are assisted by a troupe of Monad laborers. When the land arks arrive, they are carrying a sizable amount of green crystal, dressed stone, and viridian timber. A number of miners are hired to help with the unloading, but unfortunately a winch breaks, perhaps as a result of sabotage, and crushes a number of hired workers. The military commander expresses his regret and sacrifices part of his pay to provide burials for the victims. However, the next day, when one of the bureaucratic staff gets kicked by a wild equus he is almost instantly given a number of costly healing elixirs courtesy of Hoell ap Crythor.

With the tensions already simmering in the mining camps, this act seems more of insult to the non-Cymrilians than it does an act of kindness. Agitators in the camps use this as more ammunition. While the tower is being constructed, the military conducts drills outside of town. During the nights, periodic brawls erupt in the scattered taverns between off-duty soldiers and the "local" miners.

When a dead Blue Aeriad scout is found in the middle of the street one morning, Hoell is infuriated and orders martial law to be instated in town. A number of townsfolk, including some of the Pharesians, protest loudly and vocally, but Hoell will not be swayed. Townsfolk PCs could be part of a

delegation sent to convince Hoell to lift the nightly curfew; negotiations become all the more tense when Daniyyel assaults a pair of Cymrilian sentries after dusk. PCs could have sympathies with the miners and continue to sabotage the construction of the tower and military camp; agitators from Farad encourage a conflict of attrition hoping to drive up the cost of keeping a military force of any size in Deadwood. Seven Kingdom PCs are affected as much by the curfew and military law as the townsfolk; however, as each day passes and the military troops are preyed upon nightly by various pranksters, saboteurs, and assassins, tensions begin running high and it seems that things will only get worse.

Convincing Hoell that his heavy-handedness is only making things worse might be a suitable course of action for anyone seeking to open a business, settle a family, or continue a long and scar-free career in the military. Characters with skill in Diplomacy and Etiquette are the best suited for this course of action.

### **Violence**

Eventually, the inevitable happens. A riotous mob storms the military encampment of the Seven Kingdoms. The Green Tower is nearly complete, but the surrounding fortifications are still something of a patchwork affair. The mob is rapidly spotted by the vigilant, and perhaps paranoid, soldiers; when the groups are perhaps one hundred feet apart, Hoell sends out the military commander, a cunning but affable Cymrilian Warrior-Mage and his Thrall second-in-command.

Under a flag of truce, the PCs may find themselves involved in resolving multi-party political disputes: the Cymrilians want a peaceful, law-abiding town as do the Aamanians; the Farad want open-trade and the freedom to business; the Quan want a hard limit set on the amount of blue iron exported from the city; the miners want their land claims protected; and so forth. When a band of disguised Rajan assassins attempt to disrupt



the meeting, perhaps by assassinating the military commander, unleashing vials of poisonous gasses, or simply summoning horrid and unspeakable shades from beyond the grave, what will the PCs do and whom will they trust afterwards?

A rioting mob in the Deadwood has the possibility of causing widespread damage, possibly even enough to warrant abandoning the town completely. Intelligent PCs or their NPC friends who live and work in Deadwood will quickly realize that if the Seven Kingdoms military becomes engaged in a skirmish with miners in town that things could quickly get out of hand. PCs may attempt to calm the riotous mob from the townsfolk's side of the walls. If a GM wishes a calamitous end to a story, the burning of Deadwood while scores of combatants battle for their lives in the moonlit street could well be it.

## **The Call of the Wild**

In 606 N.A., the population of Deadwood begins to outgrow the meager boundaries of the town. Farmers using plants bred by Chi-Kree begin to move onto the nearby Plains of Golarin; miners begin exploratory digs on most of the other Deadwood Hills; ranchers and their herds of durge, erd, or equus spend days grazing their livestock far and near.

However, as civilization grows and more and more comforts are available in Deadwood, many of its inhabitants begin to ignore the fact that they are but newcomers to these lands. The Beastmen packs who roam the Plains of Golarin and the bands of Za raiders who wander the Wilderlands of Zaran both have taken advantage of the springs and creeks that emanate from the Deadwood Hills and flow into the lands beyond; neither of these groups is pleased with the presence of settlers in and around the Deadwood Hills. The Za still claim that these lands belong to their people by right of ancient pacts forged long ago between their ancestors and the

Archaens, whereas the Beastmen simply see the settlers as potential prey.

## **The Thrill of the Hunt**

As Jhang chases Drome from the sky, a number of packs of Beastmen happen to come together near the Deadwood Hills. Ranging out from beneath the great shadows of the Fangs of Golarin, the Beastmen display a cunning use of primitive tactics, traps, and mounted raids that surprise many of the civilized citizens of Deadwood.

When the initial Beastmen packs gather near the Deadwood Hills, they first begin raiding the outlying farms and herds. Most of the packs do their best to stay hidden, even going so far as to set snares and traps along their planned escape routes. Therefore, at first the number of packs outside the Hills remains somewhat mysterious. PCs who are friends with the settlers may hear word of attacks or even have someone they know killed. Attempts to track the Beastmen may lead inquisitive PCs into a number of ambushes with Beastmen of both increasing numbers and ferocity. PCs who continue to track the Beastmen or attempt to scout the areas around Deadwood will find a variety of traps of different styles or small packs of Beastmen that fight with different tactics and different weapons.

Should they ask Greyfang, the crippled Beastman who lives in Deadwood about these things, he will appear shocked and then get very quiet and sullen.

If the PCs have been kind to Greyfang in the past, exerted their dominance over him in a non-demeaning way, or displayed some knowledge and acceptance of Beastman culture, then he will tell the PCs to arm themselves well and leave town as quickly as possible. By way of explanation, Greyfang will begin hobbling away as rapidly as he is able, motioning the PCs to follow him. He will explain that each pack of Beastmen often

specializes in a particular style of fighting, a specific weapon, or the making of a specific trap. The fact that the PCs have run into so many different traces around Deadwood can only mean that a pack of packs has formed and that the Beastmen are riding to war.

If the PCs have been less than kind to Greyfang before, mocking him or abusing him, he will grudgingly admit that the evidence means that there are a sizable number of Beastman camped somewhere beyond the Deadwood Hills and that an attack on the town is likely. He will then attempt to tear himself free of the PCs and hobble away as fast as he can. He will never be seen in town again.

### **A Red Day Dawns**

Migrating across the Plains of Golarin, the Beastmen packs have spread word of Deadwood's excesses, its weaknesses, and its riches. As the city has grown, the native game animals have been driven further and further afield causing a number of disruptions to the migratory patterns of the Beastmen. Resultingly, a number of packs begin to gather not far from the Deadwood Hills, hoping to raid, pillage, and plunder all that the citizens of Deadwood have. However, a number of factors are in the townsfolk's favor. First, many of them have long worried about the dangers posed by the Sub-Men and have therefore set aside extra food, water, and weapons in case of an attack; second, the habits of the Beastmen work against them as the various packs squabble amongst themselves seeking to establish a hierarchy of dominance amongst their members. As the Beastmen rage on the edges of the Plains, the villagers and settlers have ample warning of an impending assault.

However, competing interests in town may prevent Deadwood from mounting an adequate defense. The only structures in town that are truly fortified enough to stand much chance of surviving an assault are the Green

Tower, the Grey Tower, and Aa's Guiding Hand. The rest of the structures that make up the town of Deadwood, while sturdy and serviceable, are not solid enough to withstand a concentrated assault by a pack of Beastmen.

The assault on Deadwood happens in a series of stages. For several weeks, the Beastmen raid outlying farms and ranches, carrying off food, people, and any animals they can grab. The raids become more and more daring as the Beastmen seek to outperform the previous show of dominance and force. During this time, PCs can spend time defending various homesteads, farms, bringing in durge or urd, or pursuing Beastman raiding packs.

The next stage involves a preliminary attack on the Deadwood itself. While other packs were spending time raiding near the Deadwood Hills, older packs of Beastmen have worked to drive a herd of ogriphants to the Fangs of Golarin. The Beastmen then strapped crude harnesses across the exhausted beasts; these harnesses mainly consist of strips of leather and lengths of knotted grasses, but into these bindings the Beastmen have woven a number of fire-hardened stakes, discarded and broken weapons, and other random sharpened implements. Turned into huge, mobile engines of destruction, the ogriphants are kept still for several days and fed a bare minimum of food laced with a simple aphrodisiac. The fastest riders will then take the scent glands of numerous female ogriphants and ride as rapidly as they can to Deadwood where they will attempt to sling the stinking globules of flesh onto as many buildings and people as they can; when the captured males follow, they wind up stampeding towards the town in a lustful rage.

The Beastmen who ride through town, assuming they reach it, will attempt to fight any who stand in their way, and will likely die rather than ride out of town. PCs may have traced a pack of raiders back to the camps near the Fangs of Golarin or have interrogated



a captured raider. Alternately, they may have no prior warning other than the thunderous pounding and billowing cloud of dust that marks the oncoming herd of ogriphants.

If the garrison commanders can be convinced that there is a credible threat to the town, they will marshal the Thrall heavy cavalry to the outskirts of town in an attempt to deflect the onslaught.

If the herd cannot be turned aside, it causes a horrific amount of damage to the town. Many buildings will be damaged if not completely destroyed in addition to any lives lost as the rampaging beasts stampede through town.

### **Stampeding Ogriphant**

**Size:** 8'-9' at shoulder, 2,000+ lbs.

**Attributes:**

INT -7 PER -1 WIL +3 CHA n/a

STR +10 DEX -8 CON +7 SPD -2

**Ability Level:** 5

**Attacks/Damage:** Tusks: DR 20, Trample: DR 30

**Special Abilities:** Trunk can be used to grasp objects

**Armor:** Hide, PR 2

**Hit Points:** 67

### **Deadwood's Last Stand**

Days after the ogriphant stampede, the Beastmen launch their final attack. Since the game in the area has been sorely depleted if they do not achieve their goal of destroying the town, they will have no choice but to leave in search of game elsewhere. Following the trail of destruction left behind by the ogriphants, a veritable horde of Beastmen assault the city in two large groups.

The first group, mounted on darkmane equus, ride around the town treating the citizens as if they were herd animals. Using fear and intimidation, the Beastmen chase people about and then single out the smaller and weaker for attacks. If faced with a group of strong and determined foes, they will leap

into the fray seeking to take down the largest and visibly toughest individual first.

While the riders cause havoc in town, a second wave of Beastmen approach on foot. They will loot the bodies of the slain and set fires where they can. Should they find unattended equus of any kind, they will likely steal these and ride back to the Fangs. If things progress to this stage, it will take a heroic effort by the PCs to forestall the destruction of Deadwood.

The troops within the Green Tower will first attempt to hold the town, then buy time to get as many of the townsfolk and wounded within the fort's walls, and finally fall back to the security of the Green Tower or the Aamanian monastery, whichever is closer.

The Aamanians will act in a similar manner from the other side of town, but will rely upon sudden strikes backed up with Invocation magic rather than face the Beastmen en masse. Scattered knots of armed miners and townsfolk will attempt to defend their homes, but be by and large outnumbered by the swarming packs.

PCs may have advance warning of the attack through a variety of means, and if they can mount an adequate defense of the town allow them to be the heroes of the day. The Beastmen are largely distrustful of magic, so large and overt displays of magical prowess may frighten off a portion of them; however, some will be intoxicated by bloody skullcap poison and fight with a rabid ferocity.

### **Beastman Warrior**

**Size:** 5'10"-6'2 ; 140-220 + lbs.

**Attributes:**

INT -2 PER +3 WIL -2 CHA -2

STR +2 DEX +0 CON +2 SPD +1

**Ability Level:** 3-12

**Attacks/Damage:** Bite, DR 4; Claws, DR 4; or as per weapon employed

**Special Abilities:** Tracking by scent, stealth

**Armor:** Thick hide PR 1

**Hit Points:** 25

In the aftermath of the attack, other groups besides the Seven Kingdoms come forth to assist in the rebuilding of the town for those survivors who wish to remain. A delegation of Farad merchants promises delivery of a sizable amount of building materials within a week; a group of Haddin investors offers to finance part of the reconstruction in exchange for land rights in the area; the Quan Empire will volunteer to send a contingent of trained slaves and a unit of heavy infantry. In the confusion of citizens leaving and a new wave of settlers moving in, both Arimite Revenants and Rajan Assassin-Mages will seek to extend the reach of the respective cults into the town, perhaps setting off a hidden and deadly struggle while the town attempts to recover.

## **Storm, storm, storm**

As Deadwood recovers from a bad year that included not only a number of attacks but also the possibility of a portion of the town being burned down, a new series of dangers looms on the horizon. The defenses of Deadwood miraculously held and stories of the Last Stand have spread far and wide, others wonder if the town has truly recovered or if stories of its rapid recovery are in fact covering up its lingering weakness.

One of Deadwood's weaknesses that has yet to be addressed years after its settlement is that it still depends heavily on shipments from the Seven Kingdoms; food, building supplies, and news from home are always welcome on the frontier. The Ur-King of Krag is simply the first to take advantage of the weak tenuousness of Deadwood's supply line.

## **The Thunderous Roar**

Unwilling to give away his involvement in matters, Krag's Ur-King attempts cunning and subtlety. His first step is to begin slowly stationing troops in the Poisoned Wastes. The Ur warriors sent there drive their Darkling slaves to begin constructing a crude bridge across the Dead River Chasm so that the

King's siege engines can be transported across. These forces trickle down slowly so that the thinning of forces along Krag's northern fronts is not immediately noticed by the forces of Grod and Vodruk. Flocks of Stryx are sent winging their way eastward to find, hire, and rouse the Za. During this initial stage of things, most PCs in Deadwood will have little cause to find anything amiss. However, parties who have cause to travel to the Ruins of Osmar and points north may notice the attempts at bridge-construction not too far distant. While there is little that can be done from the eastern side of the chasm, daring PCs may attempt to sneak into the Ur work camps to sabotage the work done by the Darklings or to learn the reasons behind the construction.

PCs in Deadwood may chance to notice the passage of the Stryx overhead, a difficult task at best during the dark nights (PER roll at -5; however, multiple rolls would be required to actually track their passage eastward). If the Stryx are followed, they can be tracked to the Fangs of Golarin, then eastward towards the Maruk mountain range. There are a total of twenty-five Stryx in all, five of them necromancers. They spend most of their days sleeping with a few individuals grudgingly on guard. Each night they will fly eastward, scavenging carrion or creating it as necessary, and all the while seeking out the Za. While they cannot be dissuaded from this job, they can be diverted. They will journey out of their way to feast on carrion or could be bribed to travel either north or south instead.

The ultimate goal of the Stryx is to find a band of Za and strike an alliance. The Stryx carry a small fortune in uncut gemstones, bits of silver, and enchanted items (nothing higher than level 3) with which to bargain, and the promise of more once the Za reach the Dead River Chasm. The Stryx will stay with the Za band, supposedly to act as scouts but really ensuring that the Za don't simply take the



### **Ur Overseers**

**Size:** 7'-8', 500-600 + lbs.

**Attributes:**

INT -2 PER +0\* WIL +0 CHA -2

STR +6 DEX -2 CON +6 SPD -2

(\*can read emotions at up to 20 ft. PER +6)

**Ability Level:** 10

**Attacks/Damage:** Fist, DR 8; Yaksha-paw club, DR 10

**Special Abilities:** Night vision, read emotions (range: 20 ft.)

**Armor:** None

**Hit Points:** 35

### **Darkling Laborers**

**Size:** 4'-5', 90-130 lbs.

**Attributes:**

INT -2 PER +3 WIL -4 CHA -2

STR -2 DEX +1 CON +2 SPD +1

**Ability Level:** 1

**Attacks/Damage:** As per weapon employed

**Special Abilities:** Night vision; sense living creatures by scent (range: 10 ft.); see poorly in daylight (range: 20 ft. maximum); difficult to detect in darkness (+5 to Stealth in shadows)

**Armor:** None

**Hit Points:** 12

### **Stryx Warriors**

**Size:** 5'10"-6'2" 140-180lbs.

**Attributes:**

INT +0 PER +3\* WIL +0 CHA -3

STR +1 DEX -2 CON +1 SPD -1\*\*

(\*at night, -2 in daylight)

(\*\*on the ground, otherwise +6 while in flight)

**Ability Level:** 5

**Attacks/Damage:** Claws, DR 3; Bite, DR 3; Javelin, DR 6; or Short Sword, DR 6

**Special Abilities:** Flight, detect carrion by scent (range: 5 miles)

**Armor:** None

**Hit Points:** 22

### **Stryx Necromancers**

**Size:** 5'10"-6'2" 140-180lbs.

**Attributes:**

INT +0 PER +3\* WIL +0 CHA -2

STR +1 DEX -2 CON 0 SPD -1\*\*

(\*at night, -2 in daylight)

(\*\*on the ground, otherwise +6 while in flight)

**Ability Level:** 5

**Attacks/Damage:** Claws, DR 3; Bite, DR 3; Javelin, DR 6; or Short Sword, DR 6

**Special Abilities:** Flight; detect carrion by scent (range: 5 miles); Necromancy Order with three Modes at +4

**Armor:** None

**Hit Points:** 20

### **Za Equis-raiders**

**Size:** 5'6"-6' tall; 90-190 lbs.

**Attributes:**

INT -1 PER +1 WIL -1 CHA +2

STR +2 DEX +0 CON +4 SPD +0

**Ability Level:** 10

**Attacks/Damage:** Scimitar, DR 8; Short Bow, DR 6

**Special Abilities:** None

**Armor:** Per armor worn

**Hit Points:** 24

wealth and ride away. As the Za and Stryx travel back to the west, the Stryx will attempt to guide the Za towards the supply route that runs north from Karfan. They will constantly attempt to fill the Za's ears with stories of how weak Deadwood is, how ripe for plunder it must be in the wake of the Beastmen attack, how much wealth is sitting freely in the hands of the Archaen trespassers.

As they head west, the Za will ride through the Eastern Borderlands, attacking anything in their path, though they will skirt the edges of the Danelek Salt Plains. Arriving at the foothills lie between the Eastern Borderlands and the Dead River Chasm, the Za will ride north, eventually catching up to one of the supply caravans heading to Deadwood. Unless the PCs happen to be close by, the Za obliterate the caravan, carrying off what they can and destroying the rest. The same goes for all of the crew working the caravan: the ones who survive the attack will be dragged along to be used as slaves.

In town, the missing caravan will soon be noticed. It had already been delayed by a week in the Seven Kingdoms due to a variety of reasons: the land lizards came down sick; the first drover was arrested for theft; and the land ark had an axle break outside of Nankar. The citizens of Deadwood know none of this, however, only caring that their stores of gourmet foodstuffs and fine wines are late. The Thrall hussars from the Green Tower have been sent ranging farther and farther from town in hopes of bringing back news of the caravan's approach. With the Stryx to fly aloft and scan the distance, the Za continually have advance warning of the approach of the Seven Kingdom's troops and are able to retreat to their temporary camps in the foothills. The Stryx never do convince the Za to actually attack Deadwood. The closest the bandits come is a journey north to the site where the Darklings were attempting a bridge across the Dead River Chasm.

The Za, finding lucrative reasons to stay, range up and down the eastern side of the Dead River Chasm for some time, and unless they are removed, the situation in Deadwood will become increasingly dire as supplies begin to dwindle. The edible plants and tubers created by Chi-Kree and the various waterholes and creeks near town ensure that few people actually perish from want of nourishment, but prices on such staples as bread, grog, clothing, and basic supplies will continue to rise. Eventually, as caravans become more and more guarded a fact that also contributes to the rise in prices, some will manage to reach Deadwood. Merchants may also begin to utilize windships to ferry goods to Deadwood, but those shipments will be comparatively smaller and rarely any cheaper. Some nomadic tribes, such as the Djaffir and the Orgovians will be able to avoid or bribe the Za in order to reach town. At first such groups are welcomed as saviors and heroes, but as times grow lean, public sentiment will slowly turn against them and accuse them of collaborating with the Sub-Men.

All in all, the Za will remain in the foothills for almost five months unless the PCs manage to drive them out prior to that. If the PCs seem reluctant to risk such an endeavor on their own, Wilemerion, Galadia, and Sharlingus will work with them to pose as a caravan laden with supplies in the hopes of drawing out a Za attack and turning the tables on them with a small group of hired mercenaries and Borderlands Legionnaires.

### **Unexpected Troubles**

Expecting the Za to cause at least some havoc, the Ur-King of Krag has largely forgotten about them while preparing a small army, including siege engines, to attack Deadwood. Unfortunately, his plans are greatly delayed by a huge aberrant storm, perhaps caused by the fumes rising from the Poisoned Wastes. This band of roiling clouds slowly drifts east from the Wastes, periodically dropping a noxious type of acid



rain rarely, if ever, encountered before. The storm wreaks havoc on the camp of Darklings near the Dead River Chasm before it passes out over the western Wilderlands. It slowly drifts to a halt over the Deadwood Hills; while the occasional shower of rain helps out by replenishing the rills and creeks, refreshing the crops, and washing away some of the accumulated stink of the mining camp, the periodic showers of its aberrant nature stir up troubles in town. The acid rain destroys equipment and weakens some of the structures in town while also ruining crops and distressing livestock. For the citizens of Deadwood it is one more in a series of blows that they must withstand. However, this time there is no one to lash out at or attempt to bargain with unlike before.

Enterprising PCs could choose to make a fortune selling alchemically treated tarps and tents brought up from the Kingdom of Sindar. Should they possess enough magical might, they attempt to summon up an elemental to disperse the storm, but otherwise they must, like all the rest of the citizens of Deadwood, wait out the weeks until the winds change and blow the storms further out over the Plains of Golarin.

## The End of Everything

After the passing of the Poisoned Rain, the Ur must force the Darklings to begin constructing a new bridge across the Dead River Chasm as the previous one is no longer usable. Once this construction is finished, an army from out of Urag marches for Deadwood determined to seize the city and its riches. While the Ur have numbers at their disposal, they do not have much success with supply lines or loyalty.

## The Long March

The Ur army that marches on Deadwood does so on foot. While the fifty odd miles from the Dead River Chasm is not a huge distance, since the vast majority of the army

### Poisoned Rain

Unlike Acid Rain, Poisoned Rain carries a greenish tint; however, it is just as caustic. Like Acid Rain, it withers plants, discolors stone, and causes non-magical metals to become pitted. Organic substances (such as wood, cloth, hide, and flesh) suffer DR 1 every round. Poisoned Rain usually lasts for 2 to 40 rounds. Unlike Acid Rain, unprotected creatures caught in one of these storms must also succeed on CON roll or fall victim to poison. This poison causes a numbing paralysis that lasts from one to twenty minutes. Even when resisted, the numbness causes the victim to suffer a -2 on all Action Table rolls while they are in the storm and for five rounds after.

Poisoned Rain can be bottled but often becomes inert within a few days. Unfortunately, water sources such as rivers, open wells, and creeks can become contaminated after several such storms. Although seldom dangerous when so diluted, such waters often carry an oily, bitter taste.

are Darklings, those miles are long indeed. The army is mobile primarily nocturnal; days are spent in make-shift camps sleeping and each night is a forced march while dragging along siege engines and supplies. While cautious, once they cross the Dead River, the army is far from stealthy. During the day, greasy smoke-fires rise above the camp like a banner, and by night the ominous creak of wooden wheels heralds the march of the siege equipment.

In order to bring their siege engines into optimum position to strike at Deadwood, the Ur will have to bring them around the rocky Deadwood Hills; this fact does give the city some time to prepare. However, roaming bands of Darkling scouts and circling flights of Stryx warriors will harass small groups attempting to leave the area of the hills as well as serve to warn their masters of any attempts to out-manuever the army.

PCs in Deadwood may attempt to slow down the army's advance by conducting raids against the troops or sabotage missions against the siege equipment. Such adventures would be extremely difficult at best as the army contains huge numbers of Darklings, Stryx, and Ur, as well as scattered mercenaries from a variety of races. Rapid raids during daylight hours would likely work best as the majority of the troops have poorer eyesight during the day.

The Legionnaires from the Green Tower will be held back by Hoell (or the current administrator); while they are there to protect the town, if they venture too far out there won't be enough of a force left behind for defense. Still, the Thrall Hussars on their mangonel mounts can easily charge out for sorties every day, slowing the advance and whittling down the army's numbers before they reach the city. Prejudice in Deadwood against the Ur and other Sub-Men will escalate the closer the armies of Urag get to town. While certainly a minority, the few Sub-Men who do dwell in the mining camps of Deadwood will be forced out of town; some of these will join the advancing army out of frustration and resentment while others will simply flee into the Wilderlands.

The Army from Ur will settle in near Deadwood and hold it hostage. They will fight any armed bands that move out from the city and prevent any supplies from coming in. However, there are disparate factions within the army, many of which can be bribed with riches, luxury goods, or items made from blue iron. The factions amongst the Ur mean that there are very few instances when the entire army is focused on any one task; often, it seems to do more to hinder itself than to actually achieve the goal of capturing Deadwood. Fortunately for the town, the siege is a very loose one and it is possible for small groups to smuggle goods into town; a dangerous venture to be sure, but one that is definitely worth the risk. However, after the

Ur army has been sitting outside of Deadwood for a week or more, the various scouts and smugglers from Deadwood who have been providing meager food, supplies, and news to the town report that another sizable army is marching from Urag. This news causes despair amongst the townsfolk; with such a sizable force, the Ur will be able to simply march over the town.

The forces of the Green Tower draft all the remaining available townsfolk, equipping them with battered leather armor and simple spears. A single windship from the Seven Kingdoms will manage to arrive in town just a day before the two armies will meet. Although the townsfolk mistakenly believe that the windship carries additional supplies, arms, and troops for the town's defense, in reality it has arrived in order to evacuate a number of the Cymrilian nobility. PCs with the status to learn this may anticipate the chaos that will ensue once the townsfolk realize that there are no more troops coming to their aid. PCs may try and bargain with the Green Tower to convince them to take the PCs along, to lend the windship to the defense of the town, or even to take as many of the townsfolk as will fit aboard the craft to safety.

Before these matters can be resolved, the two armies from Urag meet. That meeting is not the one expected by the townsfolk, however it is not the meeting that the townsfolk expect. Having learned of the plans of the Ur-King of Krag, the Ur-King of Grod sent a force to intercept them and prevent them from claiming the rich blue iron mines of Deadwood. Although not precisely co-operating, another sizable force from Vodruk accompanies this second army. When the forces from Urag meet, they do not negotiate, but instead fall to fighting one another. Nevertheless, should the forces of the Seven Kingdoms charge out to join the fray, the various Ur bands will unite to crush them. Attacks from a distance will likely not draw this sort of retaliation, but the use of the



windship will likely draw attacks from the Stryx that accompany the armies. This is a critical time for Deadwood: the culmination of the past few years have taken their toll on the town, and the siege by the Ur is perhaps the final stroke.

### **Unwelcome Visitors**

After a few days of fighting, the remaining forces of Urag turn their attention to Deadwood. As the forces of the Sub-Men pour into the perimeter formed by the Deadwood Hills, the ground begins to tremble and shake. Deep beneath the town, forgotten by history, lay the mines of ancient Osmar. Inhabiting the mines are a circle of devils; while their initial agreement was to mine and store blue iron, they also agreed to protect the warehouses from the depredations of the Sub-Men. While there have been Sub-Men in Deadwood, they have always been there to work or make a fortune for themselves; none have come to the city with the express purpose of destroying it and the works of the Archaens. Until now.

#### **Deus Ex Diabolica**

GMs take note: after Players have been through all the build-up of protecting Deadwood from crisis after crisis, having a band of five devils steal the show by saving the day can be somewhat less than anticlimatic. While your Player's Characters may be despondent and worried about the huge army practically sitting on their doorstep, you should allow them a chance to shine and be the true heroes of the day. Perhaps the best way to accomplish this is to have the devils rally behind the PCs, deferring to them as though the PCs were their Archaen masters, protecting them and looking to them for guidance during the battle. Alternately, the PCs could see the devils as yet another evil to dispatch and destroy the fiends as well as the Sub-Men. No matter what you choose, don't let the devils' power overshadow that of the PCs.

When the armies of Urag enter the seven Deadwood Hills, the devils below are bound by an ancient pact to defend the stores of blue iron above. Emerging from their hiding places, the five devils attack the Ur with devastating force. The devils do not recognize the citizens of Deadwood as being Archaens per se, but they do know that they are not Sub-Men. Having been somewhat separated from the course of history, the devils only have the vaguest sense of what has transpired during the past millennia. While the devils will move to protect any spell-casters from the Sub-Men hordes, they will not hesitate to attack any who attack them, magician or otherwise.

### **The Devils' Due**

Should the circle of five devils survive the battle, the PCs will have to deal with them in the aftermath of events. The governmental powers in town, i.e. the Green Tower and Aa's Guiding Hand, will both frown on the idea of an ongoing diabolical presence. However, while the Cymrilians and Aamanians debate and argue between themselves over how to solve this latest problem, the PCs can easily step in and deal with the devils themselves.

The devils are curious about the world, and use their natural abilities to begin extracting information from those around them all the while hiding their activities behind the use of foreign languages and tongues. They are more than willing to strike a new bargain for their services; this time, however, they are determined to set a short term of service. The devils could be convinced to stick around the town and defend it for a short period of time, such as a year and a day. Alternately, they could answer a set number of questions about arcanology and the ancient past, specifically Osmar, the refining and use of blue iron, or even some rudimentary knowledge of Invocation (Diabolism). In return, the devils wish to be informed of the fates of the

Archaens or perhaps even simply be dismissed to go about their own way.

The five devils who remained beneath the Deadwood Hills are all unique individuals:

**Phereia** has remained the closest to the surface, and is likely the first to emerge. Having hated the confinement of centuries, she emerges with the fury of a whirlwind. Having long ago mastered the arts of Geomancy, Phereia appears on the battlefield encased in rock and stone (Level 15 Defend Spell). She will conjure forth barrier walls of marble and obsidian to protect magicians or to isolate opponents; her attacks take the form of huge shards of obsidian or blue iron erupting forth from the ground beneath her foes.

**Merarenos** has spent decades submerged in a water-filled shaft; for a time he was attempting to breed ornamental fish, but he has since turned his attention to breeding intelligent aquatic animals. Somewhere far beneath the surface lies a lake wherein dwell his successes. Merarenos preserves some knowledge of the ancient Archaens' early attempts at the hybridization of life. However, he is loath to share that information with others as he prefers to reign over his own creations as a jealous god.

**Arteras** comes forth wielding a pair of enormous pick-axes and wades into the fray searching for the strongest opponent he can find. He revels in the fact that he cannot be killed; however, in truth he is something of a coward. This is why he remained behind instead of leaving with the other devils long ago; he fears what will happen should he break his oath. If he begins taking damage during the battle, he will break off his attack and retreat, loudly cursing and wailing all the while.

**Helenos** is a creature of stunning beauty. Nominally the leader of the devils, she will stalk the battlefield searching for the Archaens to whom the devils swore their oaths. She prefers not to dirty her hands with actual physical combat, instead relying on her

magical skill to entrance others to defend her. She may mistake one or more of the PCs as one of the Archaens from the past; if she does, she will attempt to remove them from the fray so that she might renegotiate her terms of service. She is not above swearing the other devils to a longer period of servitude as long as she is allowed to go free.

The last devil, **Basilike**, actually knows a good deal about what has passed since the Archaens vanished, however, his perceptions of events are heavily biased since his source of information has been a Zandir diabolist. Basilike will do his best to avoid any Aamanians he comes across, genuinely disturbed by their presence in town. He will advise the other devils with tidbits of information, particularly if they are together and negotiating. He hopes to lord his information over them later in exchange for favors and service.

The other devils who escaped confinement long ago do feel a compulsion to travel to Deadwood when the siege begins. GMs can have them arrive during the battle or save them for reoccurring trouble in later adventures.

After the appearance of the devils, the Ur have a much harder time driving their forces to attack. While the Stryx will continue to revel in the carnage and mayhem, many of the Darklings will flee in terror. In the aftermath of the siege, the city has to deal not only with rebuilding, but also with disposing of the dead before predators and scavengers arrive.

The appearance of the devils raises numerous questions; the answers of their origins only raise more. The discovery of a vast network of tunnels and mines beneath the Deadwood Hills will likely only serve to bring more visitors and fortune-hunters eager to plumb the darknesses below which will likely set off more disputes over who truly owns the land and the treasures that are brought out of it.



### Devilish Statistics

**Size:** 6' - 7', 140-200 lbs.

**Attributes:**

INT +6 PER +4 WIL +2 CHA +5

STR +3 DEX +4 CON +8 SPD +5 in air, +3 on the ground

**Ability Level:** 10

**Attacks/Damage:** Sword, DR 11 or Pick Axe, DR 15

**Special Abilities:** Invocation (Diabolism) with four Modes at ability level; flight; night vision; sense presences (range: 100')

**Armor:** Resilient skin, PR 2

### Devilish Qualities

Talisantan devils are possessed of many various qualities and abilities. Relevant to this adventure, however, are the following traits.

**Speaking in Tongues:** All devils can speak and understand any language. This means that the devils will not only be able to understand orders shouted amongst the forces of Deadwood and Urag, but they can also communicate between one another in obscure languages.

**Immune to Non-Magical Harm:** Unenchanted weapons typically do not harm devils. The exceptions to this are items made from brass, shadowsteel, and adamant. Similarly, non-magical elemental substances (such as fire, acid, or poisons) do no harm to them.

**Aversion to Faith & Holy Symbols:** A devout believer can make a show of faith to repel a devil with a contested roll of WIL + Cult Doctrines versus the devil's WIL + Ability Level. While such an action does not physically harm the devil, it does cause them discomfort and may cause them to flee the individual in question.



# A Matter of Pride

Deadwood is a city on the edge of civilization. A frontier town that draws settlers and entrepreneurs from across the continent and that represents something different to each of them. For many people, it is a place where they hope to find the riches of their wildest dreams. For others, it is the hope of land all their own. Each group of settlers brings with them not only their hopes and dreams for the future, but also the cultural baggage of the past. As they arrive, they are accompanied by the traditions and government of their homelands, and while the settlers may live together with the shared hardships of life on the plains, their governments are uncertain companions.

When a band of Pharesian merchants discover blue iron in the Deadwood Hills, they send word back to compatriots in the Seven Kingdoms. Before those companions can arrive, however, a group of Aamanian pilgrims stumbles upon the Pharesians and their discovery, setting in motion a chain of events that may one day lead to war.

## A Helping Hand

When someone gives you assistance without having been asked, how much do you owe them? Such a dilemma falls upon a few Pharesian merchants. When one of their number is saved from certain death by an Aamanian warrior-priest, they are unquestionably grateful. However, when the Aamanians begin setting up camp and openly discussing plans for the construction of a grand monastery, the Pharesians grow uneasy, worried that their discovery has already been lost. The PCs, either as friends of the Pharesians or even Pharesians themselves, arrive in Deadwood after construction on the monastery has already begun. However, the Pharesians still hope that the situation can be salvaged.

### A Matter of Pride Timeline

603 N.A. – Blue Iron discovered in the Deadwood Hills.  
604 N.A. – The Guiding Hand of Aa completed.  
605 N.A. – The Green Tower built in Deadwood; the Seven Kingdom's claims the land as a protectorate.  
608 N.A. – Strife in the mining camps around Deadwood leads to factions led by different governments. Each faction protests for an equal say in the governance of Deadwood.  
610 N.A. – Aaman protests that the Seven Kingdoms is oppressing its citizens in Deadwood. Other nations rally behind Aaman and attempt to force the Seven Kingdoms to relinquish its claim to the land.

## A Simple Accord

Rescued by the Aamanians, Balerimos understandably feels that he owes them a great deal. In fact, he is willing to give up his share of the discovery. After the seven Pharesians discovered blue iron here, they each staked a claim to one of the seven hills. Having cleared a portion of Knotnay Hill already, the Aamanians have already started the work of constructing what they hope will one day be a source of pride for Aamanians everywhere; at this point the structure is little more than a stone-walled shrine surrounded by several simple wooden huts.

Should the PCs be called in by the other Pharesians in the hopes of negotiating, the Aamanian position is clear: they want more land. While the top of Knotnay Hill is certainly useful, the Aamanians plan on having more of their countrymen arrive. When they do, they will need land on which to grow crops as well as to build their homes.



The Pharesians are not willing to part with their own claims to the remaining six hills, and worry that the spread of Aamanians out into the Plains of Golarin will only increase the difficulty in controlling their find. The Aamanians will counter any claims the Pharesians put forth to the land reasoning that seven individuals can only use so much land themselves, that the greater good demands they share the land, and ultimately that the land itself belongs to no one, or rather in these lawless lands to the one who can hold by force of might.

Diplomatically, things begin to stall at this point. The Aamanians here are, in general, level-headed individuals, and things will likely not turn to violence unless the PCs initiate it. However, the Aamanians will threaten; some of them will even loudly proclaim that Aa led them to the Hills and that the Hills must be theirs by divine providence.

### **Measure for Measure**

Using diplomacy, intimidation, or other means the PCs may be successful at containing Aamanian expansion to Knotnay Hill; otherwise the Aamanian's not only construct their monastery, but also begin to layout a grid of streets, homes, and plots of farm land. While no construction actually takes place in such a case, the Aamanians do work to clear and level the land. If the PCs contain the Aamanian growth, the monastery is built but the Aamanians grudgingly do not build anything else for the time being.

Uncertain of the whether or not the PCs will be successful, some of the Pharesians have already sent word to allies back in Cymril requesting whatever aid might be available. While the aid is not necessarily quick in coming, it arrives in the form of a windship, a unit of the Borderlands Legion, and a Cymrilian diplomat. The diplomat, Hoell ap Crythor, claims the area of the Deadwood Hills for Cymril and the Seven Kingdoms despite any prior claims and in

spite of the people already living there. This action will, of course, infuriate the Aamanians causing them to resent the Pharesians. From the Aamanian point-of-view these matters were already settled with the prior negotiations, and the arrival of the Hoell only serves to show how duplicitous non-believers can be.

As the Borderlands Legion begins clearing land for the construction of a fort, the Aamanians decide that any prior agreements are null and void and restart their plans for a model society in the Deadwood Hills. Dismayed by these rapidly shifting events and the rumored arrival of settlers, prospectors, and fortune-hunters from both the Seven Kingdoms and Aaman, the Pharesians turn to the PCs again for aid.

While the Aamanians will entertain diplomatic negotiations once more, they remain unconvinced of the PCs reliability and trustworthiness. They will agree to halt construction on settlements if and when the Seven Kingdoms acknowledges the sovereign rights of the Aamanians to rule and worship as they see fit in the region. After arranging an audience with Hoell, the PCs will find him less than eager to cooperate.

Hoell will insist on his own sovereignty, and unless the PCs couch their requests in obsequious terms, he is likely to dismiss them and their requests. Hoell will insist that he was sent here by the Seven Kingdoms with a suitable force of arms. No one disputes the rights of the Seven Kingdoms to operate the other Borderlands outposts; the Deadlands outpost is indispensable for trade with such distant northern lands as Tamaranth and L'Haan. As far as Hoell is concerned there is nothing to dispute; if the Aamanians want to live in the Deadwood Hills, that's fine. They'll be treated just like any other citizen of the Seven Kingdoms.

## Protests and Proclamations

Under the protection of the Seven Kingdoms and Aaman, Deadwood grows rapidly. However, little actual construction takes place as many of the people who arrive come with the hopes of finding enough blue iron to make a small fortune; few of them consider the costs that are actually involved. As a result, while there are a number of buildings constructed in various styles and of varied materials, the vast majority of the inhabitants of Deadwood live in tents of various sizes. Many of these tents are close to the constructions in town, either lying behind or between more solid buildings. Others are spread in small clusters amongst the Deadwood Hills where individuals and groups have staked out claims to assorted pieces of land.

The Pharesians who originally discovered the wealth hidden beneath the Deadwood Hills have long since conceded that they have neither the power nor the ability to effectively hold and mine the land themselves. As a result, most have either moved on or established businesses in town that cater to the prospectors, miners, and mendicants.

While Aaman and Cymril bicker over such things as tariffs, taxes, and settlement policies, the population of the mining camps grows ever more diverse. Yassan mechanics, Marukan workers, Ur and Monad laborers, and Arimite miners can all be found nearby. Further complicating matters are investors from other lands; Hadjistan, Farad, and the Quan Empire all have representatives in town. Some of these foreign investors have begun to purchase scattered land claims from despondent and destitute miners while others have brought their own work crews with them in the hopes of finding a fortune. These assorted groups have also brought with them the cultures of their homelands, and not all of those cultures blend well with one another.

## Schemes

Aasutek Erdok, abbot of Aa's Guiding Hand, chafes under the rulership of Hoell. Aasutek knows that he cannot seize control of the town militarily because it would be nearly impossible for Aaman to provide troops and supplies with the Seven Kingdoms lying in-between. He has decided that the next best thing is to provoke the Hoell into using force to control the population; Aasutek understands control by force and believes that Hoell is incapable of executing such a task successfully.

In order to provoke Hoell, Aasutek begins pridefully displaying Aamanian culture, especially where it clashes with Cymrilian culture. By having his people openly parade slaves through town, but treating them with the modicum of dignity afforded their station, he offends the Seven Kingdoms laws against slavery. He has his witch-hunters arrest notable Cymrilians for public drunkenness and lewd behavior by lying in wait outside taverns, gambling halls, and brothels. He does his best to expose Cymrilian decadence and corruption, be it real or imagined, and counterpoints it with the temperance and restraint of the Aamanian faith.

If the PCs have made a name for themselves, Aasutek himself may attempt to sway their emotions to his side; he attempts to blame most of the ills in the town and camps at the foot of the Green Tower and since he fervently believes that things would be better under Aamanian rule, the PCs may have a tough time deciding if his rantings are the truth or biased propaganda.

Aasutek's break comes when a group of young Cymrilians, drunk on Zandir wine and aquavit, stumble through one of the mining camps, and insult a group of Arimites. In the ensuing brawl, a number of the miners are seriously hurt. Borderlands legionnaires and Aamanian witch-hunters hear the melee and scramble to prevent any deaths. If the PCs are acting as guards or law-enforcement in town,



have them hear the brawl. Give them a set amount of time in which to find the disturbance amongst the tents and to stop it. If they take too long, one or more of the combatants wind up dead, either from a dueling sword, spell blast, or throwing knife.

When Hoell dismisses any charges against the youths citing diminished capacity due to inebriation, a number of the miners are understandably upset. Aasutek capitalizes on this discontent and convinces many of the miners that the Cymrilian government does not adequately represent their interests. If any of the PCs spend time in the camps, they will soon hear Aasutek or one of the other Aamanians preaching on this topic.

Soon, however, the idea of representatives to the government begins to spread like a fire on the Plains. If left unchecked, it will quickly outpace Aasutek's desire that the miners turn to the monastery for support. PCs in the camps can attempt to sway the feelings of the workers towards either of the two main powers – the Cymrilians or the Aamanians – or even encourage them to appoint spokesmen of their own. The PCs themselves may even be put forward as likely candidates for the job.

### Intrigues

Within a short span of time, perhaps a week or two after the assault, a large mob consisting of almost all the miners in the Deadwood Hills marches on the Green Tower. At their head are a group of representatives: a Farad Wizard, an Ispasian from the Quan Empire, a Hadjin nobleman, an Arimite miner, an Aamanian pilgrim, and possibly one or more of the PCs. The mob will demand that either Hoell agree to share power with a chosen council or leave Deadwood completely. An infuriated Hoell will reluctantly agree; however, his displeasure is apparent during the meeting he holds with the chosen representatives. He will continually hold the Borderlands Legion as a threat. Such threats alternate from using them to enforce the peace in town to removing the Legion from other

outposts and thus weakening trade with places like Hadj. His threats will, to some degree, work on the representatives from Hadj and Farad who will back down after being given word that Hoell will consult with them before making policy decisions that affect the entire town. The Arimite sees Hoell's threats as an insult while the Ispasian doubts Hoell's ability to enforce policy for the Borderlands Legion.

If the PCs can convince Hoell that it is in his best interests to allow an advisory council to be formed, he will agree. If the PCs are outstandingly successful in their diplomatic attempts, Hoell will even agree to allow the council to serve as a judicial body and act as the governing body for the township. In return, he demands that the council recognize the sovereign right of the Seven Kingdoms to administer the Deadwood Hills area and to hold and protect it militarily.

Once the council is formed and active in any capacity, its various members begin plotting and scheming amongst one another.

The **Farad** wish to see lucrative trade contracts emerging from Deadwood; astounded at the rapidity with which the Pharesians took a chance discovery and almost turned into a thriving monopolist market, the Farad want to make sure that some of the goods, trade, and lumens head towards Tarun.

The **Ispasians** want to shut down the dispersal of the blue iron coming out of the Deadwood Hills. To this end, he will continually put forth other products with which merchants can make money, all the while buying up as much blue iron as he can without raising suspicions.

Like the Farad, the **Hadjin** wish to make money off of the success of Deadwood, and like the Ispasians they believe it can best be done by acquiring the rights and ownership of the land. However, the Hadjin worry about the city's lack of security and the ever-present threat of the Beastmen and the Za.

The **Arimite** council member says little and drinks a lot. Unsure of why he was chosen to sit on the council, he simply wants to get what he can before someone realizes that he really shouldn't be here.

The **Aamanian** on the council is Aasutek's man, wholly and without question. He remains fairly silent during negotiations and meetings, but memorizes everything that is said so that he can repeat it for Aasutek.

The council will remain in place in Deadwood for years to come. PCs with diplomatic or mercantile leanings may be appointed to the council, or already be on it. Over the following months a variety of council members come and go, and with them an assortment of plots and intrigues. Behind the scenes the members of the council are continually attempting to find some means of leverage over the others, and of course the PCs get involved.

For several months, the PCs find themselves the objects of unusual scrutiny where ever they go, but never by the same people. One day it's a small Ferran, the next a Zandir duelist. Eventually, the cause of all this is revealed to be the Farad monopolist on the council. He approaches the PCs with a variety of charges, claiming to have evidence of crimes the PCs may or may not have actually committed. He is willing to keep silent so long as the PCs perform a few favors for him. One week he may send them to capture a pair of Beastmen to be sold as slaves, the next he is asking them to vote in favor of his proposals. The PCs should attempt to find a way to recover whatever evidence the Farad may have in order to get out from under his thumb.

Invited to dine with the Ispasian (or some other foreign culture), the PCs must behave with tact and etiquette in order to open up trade relations. If they can manage an entire evening without offending anyone, they may

be able to forge ties and receive information in the future. The Ispasian isn't out for any personal gain; he is simply far from a home that he truly loves and is lonely for company on his intellectual and cultural level.

A group of miners come to the PCs for help. They claim that the Hadjin in town have produced deeds showing ownership to the claims that the miners had already staked out. Hoell ap Crythor will say that the deeds appear to be authentic and legal, but that unfortunately the reference ledgers for those particular claims have been sent off to the Seven Kingdoms for storage. This seems a bit unorthodox to say the least. The PCs may begin to suspect that the Hadjin and Hoell came to some arrangement; however, it will be difficult at best to prove such allegations.

For the time being the only thing that the PCs can tell the miners is to find a new spot or seek employment under the Hadjin's terms. However, as the Hadj begin attempting to buy up other plots of land, the PCs may attempt to turn Hoell against them by pointing out that if the Hadj continue buying up land, Hadj will have a sizable claim to the governance of Deadwood.

Should the PCs be able to convince Hoell that the Seven Kingdoms are losing their tenuous grasp on the town to the Hadj, then the documents that were allegedly sent to Cymril will mysteriously be found in the Green Tower. The land will be returned to the miners who had prior claim, but the Hadjin will not look kindly on the PCs in the future.

## Strange Bedfellows

As power shifts back and forth amongst those with an interest in Deadwood, the various interests begin to factionalize. In 610 N.A., the factions polarize. In part this is because many believe that the surface layers of blue iron are depleted and that it will take a large investment to extract anything from the metallic layers of rock under the Deadwood Hills.



While not yet a majority, there are a sizable number of **Aamanians** living in Deadwood. Still more pass through the city on pilgrimages to the Watchstone. The Aamanians aren't truly concerned with the presence of blue iron in the hills, but mostly want to settle near the arable land of the Plains of Golarin.

Accepting that the blue iron coming from Deadwood has slipped through their grasp, the **Quan Empire** wants limits on the amounts being extracted.

Several groups, such as the **Farad**, **Kasmirans**, **Djaffir**, **Orgovians**, and **Phare-sians**, want the blue iron and the miners to continue moving through Deadwood and therefore want Deadwood to be secure and safe for travel and commerce.

As the mines have grown, experts from the **Seven Kingdoms** are growing more and more convinced that the blue iron in the Deadwood Hills exists in unnatural concentrations and wish to investigate further.

Political maneuverings between the countries conspire to turn Deadwood into a cause for war. Late in 609 N.A., Ispasians in the Quan Empire deduce that the blue iron in the Deadwood Hills is devaluing the exports from the east. When the first claims were struck in the Deadwood Hills, there was too little blue iron coming out to be a threat. Later, it was assumed that the Deadwood Hills strike was an aberration and would quickly peter out. Now, however, the Ispasians worry that the blue iron veins run deep beneath the surface and could supply the mines and the west for years to come. With their calculations and predictions mapped out, the Ispasians pressure their masters to take some course of action; the flow of blue iron in the Deadwood Hills must be stopped, controlled, or some new source of revenue found within the Empire.

## Maneuverings

To that end, a series of events has unfolded behind the scenes in the east. The Quan Empire, promising a series of trade deals with Faradun, has paid a small fortune to hire a mercenary army to raze Deadwood to the ground. For the Farad, the most expedient way to do this was to influence the Khadun of Rajan. Already envious of the blue iron coming from Deadwood, the Khadun and the Cult of Death have had agents in place in and the town for several years. With the monies given them by the Farad, the Rajans equip a small force and begin the long ride towards Deadwood.

In town, of course, few people know of these things. The PCs, however, may be tipped off. As they likely have a place of some standing in the community and town by now, the Rajans agents in Deadwood decide to target them for conversion before their forces can arrive. Therefore, during the night, each PC is visited by two assassin-mages. If the PCs live in close proximity to one another, have magical safeguards, or even servants, they may have some advance warning immediately before the attack.

### Rajan Assassin-Mages

**Size:** 5'4"-6'4" tall; 100-200 lbs.

**Attributes:**

INT +0 PER +1 WIL -0 CHA -2

STR +1 DEX +0 CON +1 SPD +0

**Ability Level:** 5

**Attacks/Damage:** Garrote, DR 6; Dagger, DR 4; Short Sword, DR 6

**Special Abilities:** Necromancy with Transform, Summon, and Attack each at +5; three amber-glass vials of paralytic poison (may have already been used on weapon blades)

**Hit Points:** 21

The Rajans will have already slain a number of miners and townsfolk, and used Transform to alter their own appearance. They will use their garrotes if they can catch a sleeping or unsuspecting individual. Otherwise, they use a poisoned blade, preferably from surprise.

After the attack, the PCs can either interrogate any surviving Rajans, or attempt to do some investigating of their own. The cabal of assassin-mages who attacked them lived in a small collection of tents at the edge of the miner's camp. Most of them have been disguising themselves and going amongst the miner's on a daily basis. Amongst their belongings in the tents, the PCs can find:

- A small shrine to Death.
- A bag of lumens forged in Faradun - they bear the face of Avar on one side and their weight on the opposite.
- The scattered remains of a number of greasy meals.
- A number of detailed sketched maps of Deadwood, its immediate surroundings, and a number of its buildings.
- A small bag of what appears to be bones and ash; Arcane Lore at -5 to realize they are spell components for a necromancer.
- A few small chunks of blue iron.
- A strange, scrawled arcane diagram along one side of the tent. An Arcane Lore check at -10 (less if the PC is a Necromancer or possesses the Summon Mode) will reveal that it is some type of necromantic portal through which the spirits of the slain can be summoned.

Asking the miners who live closest will reveal that the Rajans were avoided for the most part. They kept to themselves, and periodically strange moans could be heard from their tent. Afterwards, they always claimed that one of their number was ill, but within a few days, they'd all be back working with the other miners.

If the PCs attempt to take their fears of a Rajan attack on Deadwood to others, most will scoff. Rajan is far away, and any band of Death-worshipping miscreants would have to not only cross the Wilderlands of Zaran, but also avoid the patrols of Carantheum and the Borderlands Legions. Still, some may listen to the PCs based on their influence and power.

### Calling up the Dead

It is entirely possible that there is a necromancer amongst the PCs or that they know one who owes them a favor. If so, the idea of summoning up the spirits of one of the slain Rajan assassins for questioning may occur to the PCs. If the GM wishes to go that route and reward the PCs for their foresight, feel free. Remember that the shades are not compelled to necessarily tell the truth and can only relate events about which they themselves have knowledge of. The assassins may have known that an attack from Rajan was coming, but will likely not know when it may arrive. If you wish to throw an added challenge at the PCs, perhaps the spirits of the dead Rajans have already been claimed by the agents of Death and in order to have access to them, even on a limited basis, the PCs may have to deal with a particularly foul spirit of the Underworld or even fight off a number of nightstalkers that come through the opening if the summoning goes awry.

When the assault comes, it strikes quickly. The Rajans spend some time before their initial attack attempting to contact their associates in town (providing the PCs with a chance to infiltrate the assault band or learn of their plans) and trying to summon a variety of servitors to help with the attack. Once the Rajans have called forth a number of necromantic entities, they will send them in as an initial attack. While the summoned creatures cause havoc in town, the assassin-mages will sneak in and assassinate prominent townsfolk, attempt to destroy buildings, and sabotage any equipment they can.

If the PCs find out about strangers asking for the prior assassins, they may attempt to disguise themselves or otherwise deceive the Rajans. If successful, they could easily find out where the Rajans are encamped outside of town, how many assassins have come, and



what their plan of attack actually is. Once in possession of this information, the PCs might attempt to sneak back into town to inform the Green Tower, Aa's Guiding Hand, or others about the Rajan threat. The Rajan encampment is largely nocturnal as a result of their summoning attempts.

### Death's Helping Hand

Although GMs can choose other Underworld entities, necrophages make a handy adversary. While fairly low in level, they are difficult to dispose of and can be portrayed in a variety of disturbing ways. Furthermore, GMs can tailor the difficulty of the adventure by choosing an appropriate number of opponents.

#### Necrophage

**Size:** 6'4"-7', 120-180+ lbs.

#### Attributes:

INT -2 PER +2 WIL +3 CHA -7

STR +4 DEX -2 CON +5 SPD -1

#### Ability Level: 5

**Attacks/Damage:** Bite, DR 8; Claws, DR 10 (CON roll to resist contracting disease known as "corpse-rot")

**Special Abilities:** Harmed only by silver and magic; night vision; detect scent of carrion or bones at range of two miles; dismembered body parts may continue to attack

**Armor:** None

**Hit Points:** 25

No matter the result of this attack, political factions in town take advantage of the aftermath. The Ispasians claim that the Seven Kingdoms is not doing enough to protect the town. That the Rajans were able to get so close to attacking the town, or were even able to destroy part of it, clearly shows that the town would be better off under the jurisdiction of a government ready and committed to defend the town. The Farad will throw support behind the Quan Empire, citing poor economic performance, outrageously

inflated prices, and poor business practices as further reasons for the removal of the current administration. If the presence of Farad coinage in the presence of the Rajan agents in town is brought up, the Farad will dismiss it out of hand; a lot of coin passes through Deadwood on a daily basis, they assert. Aaman will initially come in against the Seven Kingdoms. Although they despise the godless ways of the Quan and the heathen behaviors of the Farad, the Aamanians display a grudging respect for the order and structure that the Eastern nations are advocating.

The Hadj however are reluctant. They remember Hoell's threats to remove part of the Borderlands Legion from the southern posts and fear what the reduction in forces may do to trade closer to their homes. Therefore, they side with Cymril and the Seven Kingdoms and dismiss the Rajans' attack as a chance occurrence. Furthermore, assuming that at least part of the city still stands, the Hadj state that the Seven Kingdoms (and others) did an adequate job stopping the threat and preserving the town. The Green Tower will publicly thank the PCs for any role they had in defending the town, but otherwise attempt to portray the events with the Borderlands Legion as having the greatest impact during the attack. The Arimites will also side with the Seven Kingdoms, but less from an ideological or political stance. Disliking the arrogant nobility of the Quan, Farad, and Aamanians, the Arimites carry some fears that they might be made into second class citizens, or worse still, slaves, if the Seven Kingdoms does not maintain power in the region.

With the council initially evenly split, the PCs have the opportunity to sway support to either side. Although they could always vote one way or the other themselves, they may wish to use any diplomatic leverage or skill they may have to ensure results by swaying the opinions of the other members.

## Reactions

Unless the Seven Kingdoms achieves a clear and decisive victory during the discussions, Hoell ap Crythor is enraged. Knowing that his tenure as the town's administrator is tenuous at best, he decides to declare martial law in order to "ensure the safety of the citizens and interests of the Seven Kingdoms." As the Borderlands Legion begins patrolling the streets and enforcing laws, the attitude and mood in town slowly begins to change. At first, the only indication that things have changed is a subtle undercurrent of anger. The townsfolk are by and large upset that it has taken the Seven Kingdoms this long to begin policing the town they claim to protect. That anger spreads as the Legion begins cracking down on black market economies, prostitution, and the slave trade.

In a rather nonsensical and gutsy move, a consortium of Farad merchants attempts to turn in a group of Aamanian farmers for purchasing slaves. Having already sold the slaves to the Aamanians, one of the Farad believes that he can produce the original deeds of sale from Faradun and reclaim the slaves once the Legion confiscates from the farmers. However, word of the impending raid on the Aamanian farmers spreads rapidly. The PCs may attempt to intervene on the farmers' behalf, go along with the raid, or even attempt to free the slaves themselves to remove the cause for the raid completely.

If the PCs do nothing to stop the raid, or do not go with the soldiers in an attempt to resolve things peacefully, the Aamanian farmers will reluctantly hand over the slaves, but only after a brief scuffle with some of the soldiers. Since the farmers do not attack with weapons, the Legionnaires can easily be convinced to not arrest them. However, after the slaves are taken they are freed by the sympathetic Legionnaires, much to the

dismay of both the Aamanians and the Farad. In the weeks to follow, the Aamanians claim that the government of the Seven Kingdoms is oppressive, not allowing the citizens of Deadwood their natural freedoms. As fears over the Borderlands Legion freeing all the slaves in Deadwood begin to circulate, other governments begin to fall in behind Aaman. The Hadj, Farad, and Quan all sympathize with Aamanian fears and begin a renewed call for the Seven Kingdoms to relinquish their hold on the area.

PCs who have heretofore been sympathetic to the Seven Kingdom's rule in Deadwood may find popular support for them waning. While the number of slave holders in Deadwood is actually quite small, others fear that the Seven Kingdoms may begin restricting other practices as well. Many of the wealthy begin preparations to leave town, just as Hoell holds a last moment assembly of the council members. This meeting is the PCs last chance to maintain some semblance of order in town. Whether they mediate between the factions or align themselves with one or the other, their diplomacy and etiquette will determine the outcome of the town.

If the Seven Kingdoms are forced to politically relinquish their claim on the Deadwood Hills, there will be a vacuum of power in the area. The Aamanians are the only ones with a ready force of both arms and political might in the area (besides the Seven Kingdoms) and will immediately claim ownership of the area which will set off another round of disputes. However, once they have seized control, the Aamanians will bring in numerous settlers by offering them free land in the area as long as they acknowledge Aaman as the governing body and agree to abide by the laws of Aaman. They will make a deal with the Quan Empire, through the Ispasians, to only allow a limited amount of blue iron out each year; they will allow the Hadj to maintain ownership of the



lands they already hold deeds to in return for recognition; and Farad will be allowed to construct a trade compound outside Aamanian control, but within the bounds of the Deadwood Hills.

If the Seven Kingdoms retains control over the Deadwood Hills, they will reinforce the fort with more troops as well as encourage a new round of settlement and construction. They will construct a pair of towers for windships to dock here, and will encourage settlers of their own to move to the area. Hoell ap Crythor will be replaced with a new ruler. If any of the PCs are citizens of one of the Seven Kingdoms' member states, perhaps even one of them may given the stewardship of the settlement.



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## Chapter 6

# Characters of Deadwood

Deadwood attracts a wide range of individuals from across Talislanta. While the majority of the permanent residents are of Cymrilian heritage, it is not unusual to find a wide variety of folks from many disparate places.

The following NPCs are important figures in Deadwood; while your PCs should be more important, these individuals exist to give you a sampling of what types of characters commonly fill the streets, shops, and hills of Deadwood.

### **Aastar Solirrion, Aamanian Warrior-Priest**

Purportedly a descendent of the famous archpriest Solimorrion I, Aastar is one of the original Aamanians who built the monastery in Deadwood. He has spent a great deal of time here and seen a great deal as well. He is convinced that the Aamanian presence in Deadwood came at the hand of Aa, and that by being here more people will be exposed to the glory of Aa. While he has had only a handful of converts, he has not swayed from his self-appointed task. Aastar also helped to finance one of the Pharesian shops in town, and lately has insisted on working there as well. While assisting patrons with their purchases, he takes every opportunity to proselytize and instruct others on the great blessings of Aa.

**STR +3    PER 0    CR +3**

**DEX 0    CHA +1    MR +3**

**CON +1    WIL +3    HP 22**

**SPD -1    INT 0**

Invocation:

Mode (Reveal) +5

Mode (Influence) +3

Mode (Defend) +3

Mace +7

Heavy Crossbow +3

Shield +4

Oratory +6

Doctrines (Orthodoxy) +6

Diplomacy +4

Mounted Combat +4

Ride +3

Guide +3

Haggle +5

Cooking +3

Engineer (Settlements) +4

Urban +7

High Talislan, native

Low Talislan, fluent

### **Aasutek Erdok, Aamanian Witch Hunter**

Aasutek recently assumed command of the Deadwood monastery. Sent here as a punishment for his occasionally deviant, but doctrinally correct, views, Aasutek has decided to take advantage of both his position and the local chaotic environment. Seeing that the Cymrilians by and large have done nothing about the rampant crime and debauchery here, he has taken on the roll of a law-keeper. He requires the Aamanians who study here, as well as any Aamanians stopping over on their way to the Watchstone, to patrol the streets, shops, taverns, and even brothels. Law breakers are apprehended and dragged off to the penitent cells of the monastery where they receive instruction on proper behavior from the monks. Aasutek currently enforces the laws of the Seven Kingdoms, but both he and his monastic brethren contemplate turning Deadwood into an Aamanian paradise in the wilderness. Aasutek has friends in high places back in



Aaman, a fact that he is willing to call upon if necessary.

**STR +1    PER +2    CR +1**

**DEX 0    CHA -1    MR +4**

**CON +1    WIL +4    HP 20**

**SPD 0    INT +1**

Invocation:

Mode (Influence) +6

Mode (Reveal) +5

Mode (Move) +5

Longsword +2

Staff +5

Oratory +4

Doctrines (Orthodoxy) +5

Command +4

Tactics +3

Tracking +6

Astrology +5

Stealth +8

Ride +2

Haggle +3

Conveyance +3

Nomad +7

High Talislan, native

Low Talislan, fluent

Nomad, fluent



## Alecandros, Cymrilian Charlatan

Sometimes considered more of a Pharesian than a Koresian, Alecandros makes the trip between Deadwood, the Seven Kingdoms, and Danuvia every few months. Traveling in a gaudy wagon, he regularly concocts various herbal remedies of dubious quality from even more dubious sources. Citing the 'wisdom of the Ancients' and 'lost secrets of the Archaens,' he bills his products as miraculous cures for a variety of afflictions and ailments. Since he is frequently on the move, by the time most of his customers realize that they've been drinking erd-urine and wildflowers or smearing durge-dung and salt dust on their chests he's already halfway to his next stop.

**STR -1    PER +2    CR +2**

**DEX +1    CHA +2    MR +4**

**CON 0    WIL -1    HP 20**

**SPD 0    INT +2**

Aquamancy

Mode (Move) +6

Mode (Conjure) +5

Mode (Reveal) +4

Mode (Attack) +4

Alchemy (Medicinal Mixtures) +2

Longsword +2

Brawling +2

Deception +8

Stealth +4

Forgery +4

Legerdemain +6

Arcane Lore +3

Etiquette +3

Fashion +3

Ride +4

Haggle +6

Conveyance +6

Wandering +7

Rural +5

Urban +3

High Talislan, fluent; Low Talislan, native;

Archaen, fluent

## Balerimos, Pharesian Merchant Prince

Balerimos still bears the scars of a hangman's tree around his lime-green neck. A popular attraction, Balerimos tells stories of the early days of Deadwood and his own life on the road while tending bar at the town's largest inn. When on duty, Balerimos will accept small nuggets of blue iron in lieu of hard currency, a fact that has only served to increase the respect the local prospectors and miners give him. Still, Balerimos grows weary of the tedium of life in Deadwood and dreams of something better. However, he's not sure precisely what just yet. In the meantime, he listens intently to the conversations in the tavern hoping to hear something that will catch his fancy.

**STR 0    PER +2    CR +1**

**DEX 0    CHA +2    MR +3**

**CON -1    WIL 0    HP 20**

**SPD 0    INT +2**

Wizardry

Mode (Defend) +5

Mode (Conjuration) +5

Mode (Alter) +3

Mode (Attack) +3

Staff +3

Alchemy:

(Elixers/Powders) +5

(Medicinal Mixtures) +5

Merchant +10

Appraiser (curios) +5

Appraiser (blue iron) +5

Oratory +5

Salvager +3

Streetwise +6

Barter +4

Haggle +6

Cook +3

Wandering +7

Low Talislan, native

High Talislan, basic

## Bertamos Oathtaker, Tanasian Convert

Bertamos is the scion of noble Cymrilian family who came to Deadwood to secure a fortune large enough to restore his relatives to greatness. For some time it seemed as if he would achieve that goal; he bought up stakes and claims, shrewdly trading them for greater and greater amounts of lumens to new arrivals. Slowly, he became an important fixture in town, owning a large tavern, a brothel, and an equus corral. However as various political factions turned their attention towards Deadwood, Bertamos realized that no matter how much money he raised, it would never be enough to achieve his dreams. Recently, Bertamos publicly converted to the faith of Aa, throwing his support behind Aasutek's efforts to clean up the town. Some of his enemies, however, whisper that his conversion is but a sham, and that he really intends to use the Aamanians in a plot to overthrow the rightful government of Cymril.

**STR +1    PER +1    CR -1**

**DEX 0    CHA +1    MR +5**

**CON 0    WIL 0    HP 20**

**SPD 0    INT +3**

Geomancy:

Mode (Defend) +6

Mode (Attack) +5

Mode (Conjure) +4

Mode (Summon) +4

Mode (Transform) +3

Mode (Ward) +3

Arcane Lore +5

Etiquette +8

Ride +5

Antiquarian +4

Doctrines (Orthodoxy) +2

Cultures +8

Haggle +3

Conveyance +3

Gambling +3

Administrator +5



Money Lender +3  
Litigator (Seven Kingdoms) +4  
Urban +7  
High Talislan, native  
Low Talislan, basic  
Archaen, fluent  
Nomad, fluent

## **The Bold Jasper Blade, Gao Sea Rogue**

Bold Jasper Blade, known in other places as Carlito the Rock, Jinxo, Hexhand, and a dozen other colorful epithets too coarse to repeat in polite society, believes that he labors under a curse. He is a renowned pilot; renowned because he has lost more vessels beneath his hand than any man twice his age. Furthermore, he often makes grand and outlandish statements that have a tendency to come true almost immediately afterwards in the worst possible way. As a result, Jasper has found himself far from home, a landlocked pirate. For a period of time, Jasper was the pilot and guide for the Motley Company; however, after pulling off the miraculous feat of stranding their land ark some twenty feet off the ground amidst a grove of deadwood trees, he decided enough was enough. He spends much of his time currently formulating plans to return to Gao a wealthy man. Needless to say, his plans have yet to reach any sort of fruition.

**STR 0    PER 0    CR +3**

**DEX +2    CHA +3    MR +3**

**CON +1    WIL -1    HP 21**

**SPD +2    INT +1**

Geomancy:

Mode: Conjure +5

Mode: Defend +5

Mode: Attack +3

Mode: Summon +6

Dueling Sword +2

Evade +5

Pilot (Gao Ship) +4

(Corsair) +2  
(Duneship) +2  
(Landark) +4  
Swim +5  
Appraiser (Treasure) +6  
Deception +3  
Underworld +6  
Stealth +4  
Forgery +3  
Bribe +5  
Conveyance +5  
Fashion +6  
Nomadic Culture +7  
Sea Nomad – native  
Low Talislan – native

## **Chi-Kree, Green Aeriad Botanomancer**

The leader of the Aeriad flocks in Deadwood, Chi-Kree is a curious individual. Shy, quiet, and reserved, she rarely speaks to non-Aeriad, seemingly embarrassed by her lack of skill. When she does speak, however, her words carry great weight. So great, in fact, that even Blue Aeriad and occasional members of other races have begun to listen to her, even going so far as to copy down her words and sayings for posterity. Chi-Kree is largely unaware of this, focused as she is on the vegetation around Deadwood. The Cymrilian government is paying her family quite a bit to ensure that food is grown in sufficient quantities to support the village of Deadwood. At first, Chi-Kree thought this would be an easy task as it has long been known that the Plains of Golarin are a very fertile region. However, she did not know of the strange properties of deadwood and its influence over other plants. Now she spends much of her time pondering both the mysteries of the local fauna, obscure passages from a few pages of Viridian's Green World, and what arcane knowledge she can occasionally glean from those who understand her theories.

**STR -4    PER +1    CR 0**  
**DEX +2    CHA +2    MR +4**  
**CON -4    WIL 0    HP 16**  
**SPD +1    INT +4**

Botanomancy +8  
 Alchemy (plant-based only) +6  
 Agriculture +8  
 Herb Lore +8  
 Artificer +4  
 Brewer/Vintner (vinesap) +4  
 Arcane Lore +1  
 Administrator +4  
 Low Talislan, native  
 High Talislan, basic  
 Avian, fluent  
 Archaen, basic

### **Cymeer ran Cordiran, Cymrilian Swordmage**

Cymeer became a Swordmage to annoy his father Cordiran, a stuffy but honest, if somewhat lowly trader, who wanted him to follow in his footsteps and run the family trade concerns. He became a Pharesian partisan in protest to what he considers his father's spineless toadying support of Tanasian politics and Cordiran's bowing and scraping to his betters among the Cymrilian nobility. His mother, who always considered herself slightly too good for a trader such as Cordiran, has always indulged and encouraged him in his petty rebellions against his father.

The self styled Pharesian Blood Swords were little more than a drinking and boasting club for Cymeer and his friends, most of whom are also the sons of craftsmen and traders. Their contribution to 'the cause' being little more than frequenting all the popular haunts of Cymrilian youth, posturing, trying to look stylish, and loudly debating their somewhat ill-formed radical views. It was on this social scene that Cymeer got involved in

a duel. Drunk at the time, Cymeer wound up scarring the face of a wealthy Tanasian. A terrified Cymeer, realising what he had done, fled the wineshop in the confusion of upturned tables, broken crystal and outraged brawling that erupted between the two groups of young Cymrilians. The Pharesians helped him escape from the city and put him touch with a small company of free traders known as the Motley Company. The irony of being forced to follow in his father's tawdry footsteps and make his way as a lowly trader is lost on him as he seethes at his perceived loss of status. When the Motley Company stopped at Deadwood, Cymeer decided to help out the Pharesians here.

**STR +1    PER +1    CR +3**  
**DEX +1    CHA 0    MR +3**  
**CON +1    WIL 0    HP 22**  
**SPD 0    INT +1**

Wizardry:  
 Mode: Influence +5  
 Mode: Move +5  
 Mode: Conjuraton +2  
 Longsword +4  
 Dagger +4  
 Brawling +2  
 Pilot (Windship) +5  
 Arcane Lore +4  
 Etiquette +4  
 Ride + 5  
 Urban +7  
 Fashion+3  
 Haggle +4  
 Barter +4  
 High Talisian, fluent  
 Low Talisian, native  
 Archean, fluent



## **Daniyyel, Cymrilian Rogue-Magician**

Things are tough, even in Cymril. Daniyyel, however, had it rougher than most. He dropped out of studies at the Lyceum Arcanum due to a drug addiction. While trying to figure out how to tell his parents, an enchanted advertisement for travelers heading north to Deadwood caught his eye. Almost before he knew it himself, he was on board a fast land ark out of the Seven Kingdoms with no one the wiser. Deadwood, however, was tougher than he thought. Within a few short weeks, he was reduced to stealing in order to eat after having gambled his way into debt. Eventually, he had a rather nasty run in with some wandering Ur. Bertamos found him beaten and left for dead in an alleyway, his face scarred and body broken. Once he had recovered and was released from the care of the Aamanians, Daniyyel began working for Bertamos. At first it was largely odd jobs but over time it became more and more serious. Daniyyel is now a murderer, killing those who do not pay their debts to Bertamos or who threaten his business interests.

**STR 0    PER +1    CR +2**

**DEX +2    CHA -1    MR +4**

**CON -1    WIL -1    HP 19**

**SPD +1    INT +2**

Wizardry:

Mode (Reveal) +8

Mode (Alter) +6

Mode (Defend) +4

Mode (Attack) +4

Dagger +5

Assassinate +8

Sabotage +4

Brawling +2

Deception +6

Stealth +6

Coerce +4

Arcane Lore +4

Etiquette +3

Fashion +4

Ride +4

Haggle +5

Climb +4

High Talislan, fluent

Low Talislan, native

Archaen, fluent

## **Djulan al-Djaffir, Djaffir Merchant**

Djulan was one of the Fifty-Five Desert Blades, a merchant group that was usually thought of as a bandit group (but not within their earshot). They had a credo, "We leave no one behind alive." On one raid, they thought Djulan dead, and with a heavy heart, they left him so the desert sands could bury him. Only he wasn't dead, just nearly dead. A passing caravan picked him up and dropped him off at a hospice still unconscious; he never did find out who saved him. Feeling betrayed by the Fifty-Five and not knowing who he owed his life to, he wandered awhile until he came across the Motely Company. He offered his services, and luckily, they were desperate. In Deadwood, Djulan is attempting to hold the Motley Company together. He largely avoids any other Djaffa merchants in town, a fact that may allow others to approach him more easily.

**STR 0    PER +1    CR +3**

**DEX +1    CHA 0    MR +1**

**CON +3    WIL 0    HP 21**

**SPD 0    INT +2**

Scimitar +5

Short Bow +3

Dagger +2

Mounted Combat +3

Ride +4

Merchant +8

Appraiser +5

Caravan Master +8

Animal Handler +3

Guard +4

Survival +4  
 Dance +1  
 Artisan: Windship +1  
 Conveyance: +3  
 Etiquette (Desert Kingdoms) +5  
 Nomad +7  
 Nomadic, Native  
 Low Talislantan, fluent  
 High Talislantan, fluent



## Esquire Goo, Snipe Gossipmonger

Companion to Porthos the Pirate, Goo is a Snipe of considerable bravery. He has traveled from the Sinking Land to Gao and from Zandir to Farad with his Gao companion, learning as much as he can. Currently, however, he is miserable. Goo finds the dry, dusty climate of Deadwood to be quite harsh, a fact he attempts to ameliorate by remaining within the suitably moist confines of the room he shares with Porthos. From time to time, he wanders to the tavern so that he can hear tales of lands he has yet to see, but the oddity of a giant, talking snail tends to stop many conversations. So, for now, Goo is struggling to be content with listening from a distance and watching through the crystalline window of his room.

**STR -3    PER +4    CR -2**

**DEX -1    CHA -3    MR +2**

**CON +4    WIL +2    HP 18**

**SPD -6    INT +4**

Wizardry:

Mode (Heal) +3

Mode (Defend) +3

Cultures +2

Cryptography +1

Oratory +3

Song +5

Stealth +5

Guide +4

Survival +4

Swim +8

Barter +3

Climb +4

Fashion +3

Wandering +7

Low Talislan, native

High Talislan, native

Archaen, basic



## Farnirinos, Cymrilian Magician-Merchant

Farnirinos had a fairly relaxed life in Cymril. He had a business, a wife, and two children. He had everything society said he should be grateful for, but he still wasn't happy. He longed for the excitement of past ages when daring magicians pulled the very secrets of nature from the cosmos. Upon hearing of Deadwood, Farnirinos became hopeful. After some (slightly flawed) research, he deduced that the ancient sky-city of Farnir had once flown above the current location of Deadwood. Farnirinos made a rash decision; he sold his business and took half the money and moved out to Deadwood. Here he built an extravagant inn, complete with such magically enchanted fixtures as hot tubs, cold drinks, and pest-free mattresses. From time to time, he does think about the family he left behind, but he knows that here at least he is happy.

**STR -1    PER +1    CR -1**  
**DEX 0    CHA +1    MR +6**  
**CON -1    WIL 0    HP 19**  
**SPD 0    INT +4**

### Aquamancy:

Mode (Conjure) +5  
Mode (Transform) +4  
Mode (Defend) +4  
Mode (Summon) +4  
Mode (Reveal) +3  
Mode (Ward) +3

### Aeromancy:

Mode (Attack) +3  
Mode (Move) +3  
Mode (Conjure) +2  
Mode (Summon) +2  
Mode (Transform) +1

Arcane Lore +5

Etiquette +6

Fashion +5

Ride +3

Haggle +4

Barter +2  
Antiquarian +2  
Cartography +2  
Administrator +5  
High Talislan, native  
Low Talislan, fluent  
Archaen, fluent

## The Farwalker, Ariane Druas

Sometimes called 'the Ghost who Walks,' Farwalker is regarded as something of an oddity. Few people in Deadwood can claim to have actually seen the Farwalker, although there are many reports of his passage through the area. Assuming the legends are true and he really does exist, he can be identified by the deadwood staff that he carries, the scars covering his right arm, and a faint, quizzical smile upon his face. Rumored to help passersby and strangers in need, the Ghost who Walks is most renowned for having destroyed numerous demonic entities across parts of Talislanta.

**STR -1    PER +2    CR +2**  
**DEX +1    CHA +2    MR +4**  
**CON 0    WIL +2    HP 20**  
**SPD 0    INT +2**

### Mysticism:

Mode (Influence) +6  
Mode (Reveal) +6  
Mode (Defend) +4  
Mode (Heal) +4  
Mode (Move) +4

### Natural Magic:

Mode (Summon) +6  
Mode (Alter) +6  
Mode (Heal) +6  
Mode (Attack) +5  
Mode (Reveal) +4

### Alchemy:

(Potions) +2  
(Medicinal Mixtures) +2  
Ariane Mace +2  
Ariane Bow +2

Staff +8  
 Mandaquan +2  
 Doctrines (Transascendency) +5  
 Mounted Combat +2  
 Evade +5  
 Meditation +5  
 Naturalism +2  
 Tracking +6  
 Herb Lore +3  
 Healer +3  
 Cultures +3  
 Ride +4  
 Stealth +5  
 Acrobatics +4  
 Music +3  
 Elder Tongue, native  
 Archaen, native  
 Low Talislan, fluent  
 Sign, basic  
 High Talislan, basic



## Galadia, Danuvian Mercenary

She may once have been as lovely as they say her sisters are, but she is a mass of scars, bruises, contusions, and missing pieces. Her left ear is missing entirely and the right had been nibbled down a bit. Several teeth were missing from a mouth curved into a frown by a long scar. And her nose has been broken so many times that one is hard-pressed to identify it immediately. However, her voice is one of crystalline fragility and pureness. Galadia has served in many places across the Wilderlands, including several years serving with the Borderlands Legion where she was once Captain of the garrison at Akmir. Rumors abound around town of several amorous dalliances that Galadia has had over the years, notably the Bold Jasper Blade and Wilemerion. Whatever the truth of these rumors might be, everyone acknowledges that Galadia is more than a match for most men. At one point, Bertamos was courting Galadia to be the captain of the town guard, but has recently turned his attention elsewhere, leaving Galadia with little to do on her spare time.

**STR +4    PER 0    CR +6**

**DEX +3    CHA -1    MR 0**

**CON +2    WIL +1    HP 26**

**SPD +3    INT 0**

Halberd +5  
 Longsword +8  
 Long Bow +4  
 Parry Bracers +5  
 Dagger +5  
 Mounted Combat +5  
 Brawling +4  
 Tactics +8  
 Command +6  
 Guard +4  
 Ride +5  
 Haggle +3  
 Barter +3  
 Rural +8  
 Urban +4  
 Low Talislan, native

DEADWOOD



## Greyfang, Crippled Beastman

Driven from his pack when a fall from a darkmane crippled one of his legs, Greyfang nonetheless clung to life, deliriously crawling into Deadwood. When he dragged his battered body through town, many of the townsfolk watched in abject horror. Eventually, Greyfang collapsed right at the feet of Wilemerion. Wilemerion took pity on the unfortunate wretch and dragged his body to one of the cloister cells used as prisons in the Aamanian monastery. Greyfang awoke there some time later, most of his injuries healed. His leg, however, would never recover. Without a pack, unable to hunt for himself, Greyfang remained in Deadwood. The townsfolk still do not quite accept his presence, but there are more than a few who come to Greyfang and pay him to be a temporary member of their packs, leading them across hostile territories or guiding them to game and water.

**STR +2    PER +3    CR +4**

**DEX 0    CHA -2    MR -3**

**CON +2    WIL 0    HP 27**

**SPD -2    INT -2**

Spear +4  
Bow +2  
Dagger +2  
Brawling +4  
Mounted Combat +4  
Stealth +6  
Tracking +5  
Survival +7  
Traps +3  
Torture +4  
Ride +5  
Barter +3  
Climb +4  
Nomadic +7  
Rural +1  
Sign, native  
Low Talislan, native

## Gwilym, Pharesian Merchant

Gwilym is a small, unassuming man who currently makes a living tending bar in Deadwood. He dreams of striking it rich and traveling the world in style; however, every time he's found a large deposit of blue iron, he loses it to someone bigger and stronger, gets robbed before coming into town, or gambles it away in a drunken debauchery. For a while, he was storing up small nuggets hoping to amass enough to buy passage on a land ark or at least a suitable mount. Unfortunately, when a mass brawl erupted while he was tending bar, his boss determined that it was Gwilym's fault and began charging him in order to work off the debt. Gwilym would love to find a way, any way, to escape the chaotic misery of his life in Deadwood, but such an opportunity has not been clear enough for him to grab just yet.

**STR 0    PER +1    CR +1**

**DEX 0    CHA +1    MR +3**

**CON +2    WIL +1    HP 20**

**SPD 0    INT +1**

Wizardry:

Mode (Move) +5

Mode (Conjure) +5

Mode (Ward) +4

Mode (Enchantment) +3

Staff +2

Alchemy:

(Elixers, Powders) +6

(Medicinal Mixtures) + 5

(Narcotics, Poisons) +2

Merchant +5

Appraiser (Curios) +5

Oratory +3

Streetwise +3

Haggle +3

Conveyance +4

Wandering +7

Urban +5

Low Talislan, native

## Hoell ap Crythor, Cymrilian Diplomat

Hoell is a Cymrilian of noble lineage and can count no less than seven Wizard-Kings among his ancestors. Exactly why he was sent to this provincial backwater in the midst of a magically benighted wilderness is a complete mystery, both to himself and the rest of the town. In theory, Hoell is here as a representative of the legitimate government of the Seven Kingdoms and therefore the nominal ruler of Deadwood. Hoell doesn't entirely see it that way; he has no staff to speak of, few guards, and even fewer nobles with which to commiserate. As such, Hoell is miserable. He tends to spend his days drinking glass after glass of Zandir wine in the local taverns and complaining.

**STR -1    PER +1    CR -1**  
**DEX 0    CHA +2    MR +6**  
**CON 0    WIL -1    HP 20**  
**SPD -1    INT +2**

Wizardry

Mode (Alter) +6

Mode (Ward) +6

Mode (Defend) +5

Mode (Conjure) +4

Mode (Illusion) +4

Mode (Attack) +3

Necromancy

Mode (Summon) +6

Mode (Heal) +5

Mode (Reveal) +4

Mode (Attack) +2

Mode (Transform) +2

Arcane Lore +6

Etiquette +6

Fashion +5

Ride +3

Swim +3

Climb +3

Urban +10

High Talislan, native; Low Talislan, basic

Archaen, fluent

## Hywel Wynne, Cymrilian Priest

Hywel came to Deadwood to answer a strange call. Long a man of faith in the Creator, every time he heard Deadwood mentioned, he felt a strange tug in his chest. Eventually, he left the wise philosophers of Cymril, bought supplies, and headed north. While Hywel doesn't necessarily agree with the Aamanian faith, he does believe that the kindness and order of faith and religion are something that this little town needs. In his opinion, Deadwood is like a new child; it seems to be lashing out, growing and reaching too fast. Hywel hopes to bring some semblance of order to Deadwood by nurturing it and guiding its first steps.

**STR 0    PER +1    CR -1**  
**DEX 0    CHA +2    MR +6**  
**CON -2    WIL 0    HP 18**  
**SPD 0    INT +2**

Invocation (Creator):

Mode (Conjure) +8

Mode (Alter) +7

Mode (Ward) +6

Mode (Defend) +6

Mode (Summon) +5

Mode (Illusion) +5

Mysticism

Mode (Reveal) +5

Mode (Influence) +4

Mode (Heal) +3

Mode (Defend) +3

Mode (Alter) +1

Arcane Lore +8

Etiquette +6

Fashion +4

Ride +4

Conveyance +4

Haggle +5

Rural +5

Urban +5

High Talislan, native

Low Talislan, fluent

Archaen, fluent



## **Ispergon, Ispasian Merchant**

Originally the head of a mercantile venture to forge trade agreements with the West, Ispergon instead learned of the discovery of blue iron on the Plains of Golarin and redirected his efforts. Due to a variety of unforeseen setbacks, she and her ample supply caravan arrived in Deadwood not long before the Seven Kingdoms asserted their authority over the town. Ispergon is now in quite the quandary; she has not completed her trade agreements, she has learned of a threat to the Quan Empire's monopoly on blue iron, and she has been thwarted in her attempts to maintain that monopoly. As time passes, her funding dissipates, and her discouragement mounts.

**STR -2    PER +1    CR -1**

**DEX 0    CHA +3    MR 0**

**CON 0    WIL +1    HP 19**

**SPD 0    INT +4**

Dagger +2

Merchant +12

Litigator +8

Diplomacy +10

Linguistics +6

Appraiser +10

Antiquarian +4

Cultures +5

Bribe +8

Interrogate +4

Haggle +5

Barter +5

Urban +10

Quan, native

High Talislan, native

## **Jankin Cadmus, Arimite Miner**

Jankin was originally part of a work crew hired in Arim. His original employer paid for a group of miners to come to Deadwood, paid for their room and board; however, after a week in Deadwood their employer took the ore that they had mined and left town without paying their wages. Most of the other miners have since found work or took a chance on staking a claim of their own. Jankin, however, spends many of his nights in one of the town's taverns and his days sleeping in alleyways or under trees. Jankin is slowly wasting away, a fact that is obvious to everyone around him. Alone and friendless, Jankin is trying to find a way home.

**STR +3    PER 0    CR +3**

**DEX +2    CHA -1    MR 0**

**CON +3    WIL -2    HP 24**

**SPD 0    INT 0**

Pickaxe +5

Arimite Knife-fighting +1

Brawling +5

Climb +4

Laborer +8

Mining +5

Conveyance +4

Ride +3

Rural +7

Low Talislan, native

## L'hil Ith-Suth, Rasmirin Witch

Her distinct racial coloration long since faded, L'hil is only barely recognizable as a denizen of the north. While the preponderance of blue adamant equipment might give some a clue, most of the citizens of Deadwood assume her to be a wealthy foreigner with a lot of blue iron. Like most of her kin, she believes in strength of personal will; however, she also feels strongly about the ideals of freedom. Although some would see her hatred of slavery as somewhat discordant with the teachings of Aberon, L'Hil reconciles them with an indomitable sense of will and the triumph of Man over any outside adversity. New to Deadwood, L'Hil is likely to join with others who vocally advance the cause of freedom at any price.

**STR +1    PER 0    CR +3**

**DEX +1    CHA +1    MR +3**

**CON +2    WIL +1    HP 22**

**SPD 0    INT +2**

### Witchcraft:

Mode (Heal) +5

Mode (Reveal) +5

Mode (Summon) +4

Mode (Alter) +2

### Aeromancy:

Mode (Move) +5

Mode (Defend) +3

Mode (Attack) +3

Mode (Summon) +3

Naturalism +5

Survival +3

Deception +6

Stealth +3

Staff +3

Crossbow +2

Cultures +1

Haggle +3

Climb +3

Wandering +8

Elder Tongue, native

Sign, native

Low Talislan, fluent

## Ludessa Gemin, Batrean

### Entertainer

Ludessa was drawn to Deadwood because of an advertisement that Bertamos had criers announcing in the streets of Zanth. Escaping from a life of near poverty in the City of Wishes, she bartered away most of her worldly possessions to purchase passage to Deadwood on a land ark. Once here, she discovered that the "many resplendent and exciting opportunities" promised were little more than tavern wenching, dance-hall entertainment, and prostitution. Ludessa loves the variety of men that pass through Deadwood, but resents her present circumstances. She does her best to keep up the appearance that she is a honored princess waiting for a handsome stranger to sweep her off her feet, but by doing so she spends what meager amounts she manages to earn. Ludessa has attempted to persuade Bertamos to pay her passage back to civilization, but with his recent conversion, he has little to do with her.

**STR -3    PER 0    CR 0**

**DEX +1    CHA +5    MR +3**

**CON 0    WIL +1    HP 18**

**SPD +1    INT +3**

### Natural Magic

Mode (Conjure) +3

Mode (Summon) +3

Mode (Influence) +3

Mode (Illusion) +3

Dagger +2

Alchemy (Elixers) +1

Dance +10

Seduction +10

Lip-reading +8

Deception +2

Stealth +4

Forgery +2

Cultures +5

Cook +3

Barter +3



Urban +7  
Chanan, native  
Low Talislan, native  
High Talislan, fluent

### **Marik, Marukan Writer**

Having arrived in Deadwood early on, one would think that the unprepossessing Marukan named Marik would have managed to at least stake out a small plot of land from which to dig blue iron. However, such is not the case. On his first day in Deadwood, a durge stepped on Marik's foot, mangling it badly. When he could get out to the hills around Deadwood to search for blue iron, he was often too exhausted to swing a pick-axe or push a shovel. Tired and despondent, Marik sat down one day to write a letter home. In his missive, Marik satirically extolled the virtues of life in the wilderness, how brave men had to constantly rescue damsels in distress, fight off hordes of savage Sub-Men, strike it rich on luck and talent, and ultimately survive better off than they were before. Unbeknownst to Marik, however, his letters have not been reaching their intended destination. Instead they are being turned into a new style of literature currently popular amongst the populace of the Seven Kingdoms and beyond. Marik, barely earning enough to survive has no knowledge of how widespread his works are; nonetheless, no one even knows that he is the original author of their hopes and dreams.

### **Millerium Trakos, Pharesian Merchant**

The first time people meet Millerium Trakos they often compare him to a swamp slug: rotund, slimy, and disgusting. As apt a description as that may be, Trakos is a cunning individual highly concerned with his own welfare and well-being. A shrewd business man who knows that there is always a market for anything, his true skill, he believes, is in having the right product when

needed. Thus, Trakos trades in a little bit of everything from chakos to slaves and medicinal mixtures to narcotics. Trakos also does a brisk business in the trade or keeping of information. Many in town believe all manner of tales about Trakos and his habits, ascribing to him all manner of villainy. Some of these tales are likely true; Trakos was one of the first people to begin trading slaves in Deadwood under the argument that while the town is under the nominal protection of the Seven Kingdoms, it still lies far outside the borders and therefore the laws of those nations. Trakos does a brisk business selling, trading, and buying from the miners and mendicants that pass through town.

**STR 0    PER +2    CR +1**  
**DEX 0    CHA 0    MR +3**  
**CON +1    WIL 0    HP 20**  
**SPD 0    INT +2**

Alchemy:  
(Narcotics) +8  
(Poisons) +5  
(Potions) +2  
Merchant +8  
Appraiser:  
(Curios) +6  
(Slaves) +5  
(Treasure) +4  
Oratory +3  
Streetwise +4  
Haggle +6  
Barter +5  
Urban +8  
Espionage +6  
Forgery +5  
Underworld +5  
Low Talislan, native  
High Talislan, basic  
Sign, fluent

## Mio Osolo, Bodoran Entertainer

Among the Bodor, Mio Osolo is a bit of a radical. He has a fondness for bringing his audience the unexpected and the surprising. His works, while not unpleasant, are far from the traditions that the Bodor have built over generations. Worse yet, Mio's compositions often convey garish and ugly images in the Sound-Sight of his people. While his troupe struggled to be open-minded toward his new ideas, they found his music too unsettling and sometimes hard to follow. His maestro Vida Inagada implored Mio to return to the classics and traditions that the Bodor have passed down, but when Mio refused, Vida flew into a rage and expelled Mio from the troupe. Now Mio works as an itinerant musician, making a meager living from his performances as well as by selling the instruments he crafts. He is hungry to learn about the musical styles from all corners of Talislanta so that he can incorporate them into his own pieces. He hopes to one day return to his troupe and show them all he has learned and that these new styles can be beautiful as well. Mio wound up joining a traveling merchant group known as the Motley Company. When the Company made a stop in Deadwood, Mio found easy employment in the different taverns where the patrons were starved for entertainment. Although Mio sometimes misses life on the road, he is enamored of the praise and demand he now receives for his music.

**STR** -1    **PER** +3    **CR** 0

**DEX** +3    **CHA** +2    **MR** +1

**CON** 0    **WIL** +0    **HP** 20

**SPD** -1    **INT** +1

Staff +2

Music +12

Diplomacy +6

Merchant +6

Etiquette +3

Fashion +3

Bribe +5

Evade +5

Artificer (Instruments) +4

Cultures +6

History +2

Survival +2

Ride +2

Wandering +7

Sound-Sight +5

Bodorian, native

Low Talislan, fluent

High Talislan, fluent

Thaecian, fluent

## Ordavu el-Shemu, Orgovian

### Trader

The Orgovian traders who travel the Plains of Golarin have known about the existence of blue iron in the hills around Deadwood for several generations. However, by and large, they believe that the area is cursed. Salvagers who took blue iron from the hills were known to meet horrible deaths in any number of ways. When the first reports of blue iron began to spread, most Orgovians stayed away. Ordavu, however, had other ideas. He reasoned that it was only those who took blue iron from the hills that fell under the curse of the deadwood trees; therefore, if he went to the booming frontier town and insinuated himself as a middleman, bartering goods with the scavengers and merchants alike, he could make a sizable profit while avoiding the curse. That was the plan. However, in the past three months, a number of disturbing events have plagued his life; Ordavu has been shat on by an erd, been plagued by hecklers, had his chin spur broken during a barroom brawl, and had half of his lopers die of some heretofore unknown disease, just to name a few. He is sure that the curse has fallen upon him somehow, and now madly seeks a cure so that he can leave Deadwood and return to his people.

**STR** 0    **PER** +1    **CR** +3



**STR 0    PER +1    CR +3**

**DEX +2    CHA -2    MR 0**

**CON +3    WIL +2    HP 23**

**SPD 0    INT +2**

Star-thrower +4

Prod-hook +5

Spear +3

Mounted Combat +3

Guard +4

Merchant (Barter only) +13

Survival +7

Appraiser +5

Antiquarian +5

Animal Handler +6

Artificer +5

Ride +6

Barter +6

Conveyance +3

Nomadic +7

Low Talislan, native

Sign, native

High Talislan, basic

Nomadic, basic

### **P'Ko, Nagra Spirit-Tracker**

P'Ko and his two fellow Spirit Trackers were hired by a group of Dracartans to lead them to a group of thieves who had robbed them in the night. The Dracartans were eager for revenge, and it mattered little to the Nagra trackers. It was a standard, unremarkable job and within a week they had caught up with the band. Creeping up on them in the dark, P'Ko saw that this band of thieves was in fact a caravan of Rajan women and children, with only a few males in charge. Before he could utter a word, the Dracartans fell on the camp and slaughtered every Rajan they could find, shouting the name of some razed Dracartan village in triumphant vengeance as they killed. While P'Ko had no love for the death-worshipping Rajan, he found the killing of so many children distasteful, and he and his

companions broke ties with the Dracartans and went their own way.

It wasn't until weeks later that he discovered that the caravan had been part of the extended family of the Khadun of Rajanistan himself. He only learned of this when his companion R'Ti was found dead against a tree with a note explaining that the Dracartans responsible for the slaughter had died, and now it was time for the Spirit Trackers to answer for their part. P'Ko and G'Ta fled immediately, but somehow the Rajan Assassin-Mages were faster, and three days later P'Ko woke to find G'Ta dead next to him. They were toying with P'Ko before delivering the final blow.

P'Ko ran for days, changing course often in hopes of throwing his pursuers off the trail. It was then that he ran into a group of Marukan mendicants heading to Deadwood to look for work. Traveling together in a dilapidated land ark, P'Ko seized the chance to travel out of sight. No one would expect to find a Nagra lowering himself to use such a distasteful conveyance. Having reached Deadwood, however, P'Ko is unsure of what to do next or where to go. How long can you outrun Death?

**STR +2    PER +5    CR +4**

**DEX +2    CHA -3    MR +2**

**CON +6    WIL 0    HP 24**

**SPD +2    INT 0**

Spirit-Tracking +6

Blowgun +2

Spear +4

Dagger +1

Brawling +2

Stealth +5

Traps +4

Climbing +3

Scout +5

Herb Lore +3

Barter +3

Swim +3

Wandering +7  
Chanan, native  
Sign, native  
Low Talislan, basic

### **Porthos the Pirate, Gao Scoundrel**

A Gao of Phantasian descent, Porthos the Pirate is widely known for having pulled off one of the most daring thefts of the modern age: the seizing of the luxury windship "Pride of Talisandre." Porthos and his snipe companion, Goo, arrived in Deadwood mysteriously one evening. Walking into town with a swagger and a purse full of gold lumens, Porthos has spent the time since spending copious amounts of money in the various gambling halls, taverns, and pleasure dens. He is curiously silent however on both his most famous exploit and his current business in Deadwood.

**STR** +1    **PER** 0    **CR** +3

**DEX** +2    **CHA** +3    **MR** +3

**CON** 0    **WIL** 0    **HP** 20

**SPD** +3    **INT** +1

Dueling Sword +4  
Dagger +1  
Evade +5  
Pilot (Gao Ship) +8  
(Windship) +4  
Swim +5  
Appraiser (Treasure) +3  
Deception +5  
Underworld +8  
Stealth +5  
Locks +4  
Seduce +4  
Climb +3  
Haggle +3  
Nomadic +7  
Urban +7  
Sea Nomad, native  
Low Talislan, native  
High Talislan, fluent

### **Sebastian Bae Rovenclip, Sarista Prince**

A known and noted Sarista Gypsy, Sebastian is proclaimed far and wide for his skill with thrown knives and daggers. However, some whisper that it is not in fact Sebastian's skill, but actually a pair of enchanted daggers that house the spirits of slain gypsies - their cunning and guile that guide the blades home. If the rumors are true, such magical blades would be worth a fortune, in addition to making someone of surpassing skill at flinging the deadly iron at foes. Among the Sarista there is a large extended family of gypsies known as the Rovenclip; whether Sebastian of the Knives is their progenitor, a mentor, or merely a member is unknown.

**STR** +1    **PER** +1    **CR** +3

**DEX** +4    **CHA** +2    **MR** +2

**CON** 0    **WIL** 0    **HP** 20

**SPD** +2    **INT** +2

Witchcraft:  
Mode (Reveal) +3  
Mode (Defend) +4  
Dagger +2  
Thrown Knife +12  
Swordsmanship +6  
Legerdemain +6  
Deception +5  
Stealth +6  
Herb Lore +4  
Guide (Silvanus) +7  
Ride +2  
Acrobatics +8  
Dance +5  
Gambling +8  
Locks +5  
Low Talislan, native  
Sign, native



## **Sharlingus the Absolute, Pharesian Merchant**

When the first loads of ore began to be bought up by the wealthy Cymrilians who flocked to Deadwood during the Blue Dash, Sharlingus realized that the chances were great that the original Pharesian discoverers would get little to nothing from the venture. Therefore he hatched a cunning plan with any and all of the Pharesians he could find, not just those of the original journey. Instead of making a speculative fortune off of the blue iron, instead they would make profit off of those who came to the town. Known for always devising perfect plans for lucrative gain, the Pharesians all agreed to forego the exploratory venture that was blue iron mining and instead work to construct a town that would instead siphon money off of others. So far, the plan has lived up to Sharlingus' moniker; a number of the Pharesians are contemplating packing up their things and leaving town, deciding to leave before the blue iron dries up completely. For his part, Sharlingus has made several strong friendships amongst the strangers who now inhabit Deadwood, and has therefore decided to stay and run his caravan business from here.

**STR 0    PER +2    CR +1**

**DEX 0    CHA +1    MR +3**

**CON +2    WIL +1    HP 20**

**SPD 0    INT +4**

Wizardry:

Mode (Reveal) +4

Mode (Defend) +3

Mode (Ward) +3

Mode (Alter) +3

Dueling Sword +4

Deception +2

Stealth +1

Oratory +10

Streetwise +5

Etiquette +4

Haggle +5

Litigator +3

Cultures +5

Diplomacy +3

Administrator +2

Caravan Master +8

Low Talislan, native

High Talislan, fluent

## **Wilemerion, Cymrilian Warrior- Mage**

'In a land of lawlessness, the faithful must beware' was a proverb that Wilemerion learned from his grandfather. Wilemerion took such advice to heart and no matter what jobs he took, he always did his best to ensure law and order. And he has held many jobs, from serving in the Legions of the Seven Kingdoms, working as a wilderness scout for militaries from Carantheum to Zanth, working as an equus-herder, and finally as a teamster on a wagon-train to Deadwood owned by Sharlingus. Along with the Holy Knights of Aa, he has become something of a lawman in town. Too, people from far and wide seem to know who he is and respect his opinions. While Wilemerion isn't entirely sure why this is, he appreciates the reverence he is given.

**STR +2    PER +1    CR +3**

**DEX 0    CHA +2    MR +3**

**CON +1    WIL 0    HP 22**

**SPD +2    INT +2**

Wizardry:

Mode (Defend) +6

Mode (Ward) +5

Mode (Alter) +3

Invocation (the Creator):

Mode (Heal) +4

Mode (Conjure) +3

Longsword +5

Dagger +2

Brawling +5

Pilot (Windship) +5

Arcane Lore +5

Etiquette +6  
Fashion +5  
Ride +5  
Conveyance +5  
Haggle +3  
Cultures +3  
Caravan Master +3  
Animal Handler +3  
Scout +6  
Urban +7  
Rural +6  
Wandering +5  
High Talislan, fluent  
Low Talislan, native  
Archaen, fluent

## Yato Naj, Yitek Healer

Drawn here not by the lure of wealth, but that of knowledge, Yato Naj believes that there is more beneath the surrounding hills than simply layers of rock and ore. However, his ideas are often met with scorn and derision when he attempts to explain them. The one occasion when Yato attempted to hire a group of diggers to excavate the closest hill, all of them seized what blue iron they could and headed back to town, ignoring Yato and his pleas. Sullen and dejected, Yato remains in town, doing what little he can, unable to ignore the feeling that there is something buried nearby waiting to emerge. Yato plans on being here when it happens, no matter how long it takes.

**STR 0    PER +3    CR +2**

**DEX +2    CHA -2    MR +1**

**CON +4    WIL -1    HP 22**

**SPD -1    INT +4**

Scimitar +3  
Guard +3  
Locks +6  
Traps +6  
Salvager +7  
Stealth +2  
Survival +3  
Cryptography +2  
Linguistics +1  
Antiquarian +4  
Merchant +5  
Ride +3  
Healer +8  
Barter +3  
Haggle +3  
Nomadic, native  
Sign, native  
Low Talislan, fluent



## Yasmine Darkheart, Jaka Witch

A Jaka of somewhat dubious origins, the Darkheart is shunned by those of her kin who pass through Deadwood, few of whom will even mention her name without making a sign against evil. Precisely where she learned the arcane secrets she possesses is unknown, but she is obviously quite proficient in a variety of arts that are shunned by most sane magicians. In the past, she has traveled much of the continent in a search for a being known as the Grey Ghost, a quest that led her to the very depths of the Omniverse, or so she claims. In Deadwood, she works as a bounty-hunter and wizard-catcher for those who are desperate enough to deal with such a character.

**STR +1    PER +4    CR +4**

**DEX +3    CHA -4    MR 0**

**CON +1    WIL 0    HP 24**

**SPD +3    INT -1**

Witchcraft:

Mode (Ward) +6

Mode (Heal) +5

Mode (Summon) +4

Necromancy:

Mode (Summon) +6

Mode (Attack) +5

Mode (Defend) +5

Longsword +5

Shortbow +2

Dagger +2

Brawling +2

Mounted Combat +5

Track (by scent) +7

Stealth +7

Survival +8

Ride +3

Acting +2

Healer +2

Herb Lore +2

Haggle +4

Climb +4

Wandering +7

Low Talislan, native

Sign, native

## Yoch the Burnt, Ur Bandit

Chased from Ur some years ago, Yoch bears huge, disfiguring scars across his head and back. While he attempts to turn the disgust that others feel at the sight of his mangled visage to his advantage, his attempts at intimidation are mediocre at best. He does have a strong arms and a stronger back; Yoch rarely lacks for work as a day-laborer in Deadwood. Still, the revulsion that most of the citizens feel towards Yoch does little to encourage him to fit in. He spends much of his free time brooding, drinking, and dreaming of a rise to glory that may never come.

**STR +6    PER 0\*    CR +5**

**DEX -2    CHA -4    MR -1**

**CON +6    WIL -1    HP 34**

**SPD -2    INT -1**

(\*emotions, PER+6)

Ur Club +4

War Axe +4

Pick Axe +3

Dagger +3

Brawling +6

Mounted Combat +1

Command +4

Engineer (Siege) +4

Coerce +2

Underworld +5

Ride +5

Laborer +6

Mining +5

Gambling +1

Haggle +3

Climb +4

Wandering +7

Northron, native

Low Talislan, basic

## **Zarquillian the Zandir**

### **Bladesmith**

Zarquillian was once a renowned bladesmith in Zanth where his creations were in demand amongst scores of the nobility. Having spent many years learning the art of the sword and nearly twice as many learning how to create one, Zarquillian thought he was the master of his craft. Until he hefted his first blue iron blade. Since then, he has been from one end of the world to another, learning all he can about metal and ore. He once hoped to apprentice to a Vajra smith, having paid a small fortune to its Quan mistress, but the Silent Insurrection occurred before he had even learned the word 'sword' in the native tongue. When he heard about blue iron being discovered outside of the Quan Empire, he came as rapidly as his aging body would carry him. Now that he's here, he spends most of his time repairing various tools that the miners and scavengers bring to him. He has managed to acquire some blue iron, however, and is quickly learning how best to craft it.

**STR 0    PER 0    CR +4**

**DEX +2    CHA +1    MR +3**

**CON +1    WIL 0    HP 20**

**SPD +1    INT +3**

Swordsmanship +10

Staff +2

Brawling +2

Acrobatics +4

Oratory +6

Etiquette +5

Fashion +4

Ride +6

Haggle +5

Barter +3

Cultures +4

History +3

Armorer +5

Artificer +9

Weaponer +12

Urban +9

Low Talislan, native

High Talislan, native



## Chapter 7

# Treasures of Deadwood

### Blue Iron Nuggets and Ore

When purchased from the Quan Empire, ingots of pure blue iron come in ten pound bars. In Deadwood, however, blue iron is found in a variety of sizes, from small flakes to nuggets the size of an Archaen's fist. Much of the cost associated with blue iron in the East derives from the method by which those pure ingots are formed: feathers from shrikes must be gathered or plucked and then smelted down and cast into ingots. The blue iron being found in the hills and streams of Deadwood is just as pure however. The following costs cover various sizes of blue iron found in the Hills. One flake typically equals one dram, but flakes can vary in size. Ingots range from being several ounces to several pounds at the largest.

**One dram** = 1.5 Copper bits

**One ounce** = 1.3 Silver bits

**One pound** = 2 g.l.

**Ten pounds** = 20 g.l.

### Zarquillian Blade

These blue iron blades are the pinnacle craft of a master weaponsmith. For someone who already knows how to wield a blade, the amazing lightness and balance of one of these blades provides a non-magical +1 to all combat rolls. In the hands of a swordsman skilled in the art of Zandir swordsmanship, however, this rises to a +2.

#### Zarquillian Dueling Sword

**DR 6 WT .5 STR -4 Skill LB**

**Cost:** 50 to 100 g.l.

### Deadwood Staff

Seemingly a common wooden stave, deadwood staves are smooth, regular spans of wood. Many of them seem to have been weathered down by wind and rain, but they are gathered this way from the valleys,

gullies, and gulches of the region. Seemingly deadfall, many of these are gathered and brought into town by scavengers where they are subsequently cut down to size for individuals. Like most weapons made from deadwood, these staves are particularly damaging to plant grues. However, such weapons are also likely to cause plants and plant-like creature to react with hostility towards the bearer.

#### Deadwood Staff

**DR 6\* WT 3 STR -3 Skill S**

\* versus Plant Demons, these are counted as enchanted items and halve the Plant Demon's natural armor

**Cost:** 3 s.p. in Deadwood, 1 g.l. elsewhere

### Deadwood Spear

Spears carved from the same deadfall that deadwood staves are made from, these weapons are commonly crafted by Beastmen whose packs pass through this area. Typically shaped with barbs, hooks, and protrusions that follow the natural grain of the wood, these spears appear quite fearsome. In addition to the properties possessed by other deadwood weapons, these spears typically leave a particularly nasty wound due to the shape of their heads.

#### Deadwood Spear

**DR 8\* WT 4 STR -1 Skill S**

\* versus Plant Demons, these are counted as enchanted items and halve the Plant Demon's natural armor

*On a critical hit, the barbs of these wooden spears lodge in the victim's flesh and require a round to remove. Alternately, they can be removed instantly doing DR 4 as they are ripped free.*

**Cost:** 2 g.l. in Deadwood, 5 g.l. elsewhere

## Deadwood Arrow

Similar in appearance to deadwood spears, deadwood arrows are similar to the barbed arrows produced in other lands. Unlike other arrows, however, deadwood arrows often seem crooked or misaligned. These minor flaws do not seem to hinder their utility; in fact, some savants have posited that such strange twists and bends are actually a part of the twisted nature of the wood itself and may actually help it deadly capabilities.

**Quiver (deadwood arrows\*)/20 arrows**  
**WT 4**

**Cost:** 5 s.p./2 g.l.

\*versus Plant Demons, these are counted as enchanted items and halve the Plant Demon's natural armor

## Deadwood Shield

Resembling the sturdy wooden shields in use throughout much of the continent, deadwood shields are fashioned from carved planks of deadwood and typically bound in either black or blue iron. Like other deadwood products, these shields are repellant to plant-based creatures of all sorts. Furthermore, they are especially adept at turning aside the blows of plant grues; this later property is not widely known. While strongly suspected given the nature of the material, there are typically few survivors of grue attacks.

**Deadwood Shield**  
**WT 2 Max DR 10\* STR -1**

**Cost:** 5 s.p.

\*These shields can withstand DR 15 from a single Plant Demon attack without breaking.

## Carved Ironwood Armor

Ironwood grows along the edges of the Deadwood Hills, but few woodsmen are skilled enough to cut it. As a result, many of the ironwood items that come out of the Deadwood Hills are made from shed limbs and branches. One enterprising merchant-

artisan has found a way to carve the shed limbs and weave them into bands of knotted cords. The resulting armor is surprisingly light; however, its cost is quite exorbitant since alchemical quicksilver is used during the carving process.

### Carved Ironwood Armor

**PR 4 WT 10 STR -**

**Cost:** 250 g.l.

## Ironwood Spear

Fashioned from shed ironwood limbs and crudely sharpened, ironwood spears are something of a rarity. Slightly heavier than a normal spear, these weapons are widely used amongst a number of Beastmen packs. Although capable of turning aside the blows from swords and axes with ease, these heavy sticks do no more damage than a quality spear.

### Ironwood Spear

**DR 8 WT 5 STR -1 Skill S**

**Cost:** 1 g.l.

## Ironwood Staff

In most cases, ironwood staves are simply the shed limbs of ironwood trees with the excess branches hacked away, but on rare occasion a craftsman will expend the energy and resources required to turn a shaft of ironwood. The difference between the two forms is more than merely cosmetic; the cruder forms tend to be heavier in the hand but lighter on the purse.

### Crude Ironwood Staff

**DR 6 WT 10 STR -1 Skill S**

**Cost:** 1 g.l.

### Carved Ironwood Staff

**DR 6 WT 6 STR -2 Skill S**

**Cost:** 250 g.l.



## Bloody Skullcap Poison

A noxious brew concocted by the Beastmen, bloody skullcap poison is typically left coating weapons or traps. Victims of the poison often experience horrific delusions and exhibit irrational behavior (-10 to all actions due to hallucinations, prone to violence). Ingested in low doses, the mixture will render its user immune to pain for hours to days; during such a state, the Beastmen often seem fearless and savage when in truth they often simply do not recognize that they have been wounded.

**Dose:** one ounce

**Degree of Difficulty:** -10

**Ingredients:** Six drams of powdered skullcap mushroom, 3 drams of freshly spilled blood, 1 dram of ground Beastman fang or claw.

**Time required:** one day

**Cost of materials:** 25 g.l.

**Minimum value:** 50 g.l.

## Sensational Serpis Oil Elixir

This alchemical substance can be either ingested or applied directly to the skin. While in use, the elixir completely numbs the affected area. Used sparingly, it works to relieve pain in aching joints and muscles; alternately, it can be used as a sedative to anesthetize a patient. Unfortunately, it doesn't actually provide any other beneficial affects, so while it may seem to relieve the pain from a long day's work, it does nothing to ease the strain and stress already placed on the body.

**Dose:** one ounce

**Degree of Difficulty:** -5

**Ingredients:** Six drams of powdered serpis-fang, three drams of distilled water, one dram of serpis-venom.

**Time required:** one day

**Cost of materials:** 15 g.l.

**Minimum value:** 50 g.l.

## Appendix

# A Deadwood Lexicon

**Above Serpis** – If you were “above serpis,” you were above ground – meaning still alive.

**Absquatulate** - To leave or disappear.

**A Gruffan-Killin' Time** - A real good time. “We went to the dance and had us a gruffan-killin' time.”

**Airin' the Lungs** - A herdsman term for cussing.

**Airin' the Paunch** - Vomit, throw-up, regurgitate. He's "airing the paunch" after a heavy bout of drinking.

**Allers** - Always

**All-overish** – Uncomfortable. “I was just all-overish around that steely-eye man.”

**All to Pieces** - Completely, absolutely.

**Among the Deadwoods** - Dodging the Law.

**Arimate Toothpick** - A long, sharp knife. Also known as a Kang or Danuvian toothpick.

**Ask No Adds** – Ask no favor.

**At Sea** - At a loss, not comprehending. “When it comes to understanding women, I’m at sea.”

**Atween** - Between

**Atwixt** - Between. There were hard feelings atwixt them.

**Bangtail** - A wild equus, typically a darkmane.

**Barkin' at a Knot** - Doing something useless; wasting your time, trying something impossible.

**Belly Through the Brush** - Dodge the law.

**Bushwhack** - A cowardly attack or ambush.

**Chew Gravel** - Thrown from an equus.

**Coil** - Rope.

**Copper a Bet** - Betting to lose, or being prepared against loss.

**Converter** - A preacher.

**Cut a Path** - Leave, go.

**Dicker** - Barter, trade.

**Down to the Blanket** - Almost broke.

**Feller** - Fellow.

**Fetch** - Bring, give.

**Fix One's Flint** - To settle a matter.

**Get my/your back up** - To get angry.

**Girls of the Line** - Prostitutes.

**Guttersnipe** – A homeless child who roamed and slept in the streets.

**Jawing** - Talking.

**Keep That Dry** - Keep it secret.

**Night Hawk** - While the rest of the herdsman slept under the stars, one unlucky soul who drew the short straw, the “night hawk,” had to stay up all night standing guard.

**Odd Stick** - Eccentric person.

**Prod, On the** - Spoiling for a fight.

**Rogue in the Hole** – Reference to the Zodar deck; a hideout or a hidden gun.

**Windies** - Tall Tales.