

A GUIDE TO OLD HROLMAR

This rich city was a great meeting place for all the imaginative people of the Young Kingdoms. To it came explorers, adventurers, mercenaries, craftsmen, merchants, painters and poets for, under the rule of the famous Duke Avan Astran, this Vilmirian city state was undergoing a transformation in its character.

Duke Avan himself was a man who had explored most of the world and brought back great wealth and knowledge to Old Hrolmar. Its riches and intellectual life attracted more riches, more intellectuals and so Old Hrolmar flourished.

THE VANISHING TOWER, II, 2

OLD HROLMAR IS ENCLOSED WITHIN a great triangle of masonry constructed almost 400 years ago during the brief reign of Vil Valario, Vilmir's first king. The modern city stands atop the ruins of an older, Melnibonéan, settlement and traces of the city's ancient past can still be found beneath its foundations.

While the city's three-sided wall of dense grey-brown sandstone protects Old Hrolmar from attack, it also limits outward expansion. As a result Old Hrolmar has become severely overcrowded, although since the coronation of Duke Avan Astran five years ago, this problem has been partially overcome, with new settlements now allowed outside the city walls.

To the south of the city walls lies Quayside,

a thriving colony of merchants, fisherfolk and other seafarers. This district has sprung up between the piers and the mouth of the River Hrol, where it flows out through the water gate in Old Hrolmar's walls. On the other side of the city, beyond the North Gate and the almost lawless Foreign Quarter (a place where merchants will not venture alone), is New Hrolmar. A new district of inns, taverns and brothels it is also the arrival and departure point for many of the caravans which travel Vilmar and the Northern Continent.

Inside the city itself, Old Hrolmar's spiritual heart is also its physical centre. Here lies the Temple of Law, a great glass pyramid, which towers over Serenity Park and the waters of the Hrol River, (much polluted as it is downstream

CLEAR CREDIT

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This article was sourced from the Stormbringer! website (see <http://www.stormbringerpg.com>)

from the waterfalls where much of the city's industries are clustered). By contrast, the ducal fortress stands upon a rocky granite outcrop in the southeast corner of the city, at the foot of which are the barracks of the city's guards (known as the Grey Defenders after the iron-grey tabards worn over their armour). From its steep headland the duke's sandstone fortress overlooks all of Old Hrolmar and the bright blue waters of the Straits of Vilmir.

In the past, strict regulations have directed that most of Old Hrolmar's buildings be constructed of the same grey-brown stone as the city walls, but since Duke Avan came to power these regulations have been somewhat relaxed, and the last few years have seen a flurry of renovations appearing all over the city, as landlords and property owners became free to individualise their homes and businesses. As a result, from a drab city where almost every building was of once of uniform height and appearance, Old Hrolmar now presents a baroque and fanciful skyline of spires, domes and towers in every conceivable stage of construction. The sheer numbers of scaffolds, and the constant sawing and hammering which now accompanies the new Old Hrolmar often amazes visitors.

Similarly, the city is also undergoing a cultural rebirth. Under Duke Avan's enlightened rule Old Hrolmar is attracting philosophers and free-thinkers from throughout the Young Kingdoms: artists, astrologers, mercenaries and poets. The streets pulse with life and excitement and while not all citizens appreciate the changes sweeping the city, visitors are sure to find Old Hrolmar a rewarding and stimulating environment.

Old Hrolmar's climate is moderate, tending to cool in the winter months with southerly winds dominate. In summer hot winds from the north are common, making conditions less than pleasant, although a sea breeze often springs up each evening regardless of the season, bringing a chill to the air. Rainfall in the City State is steady throughout the year, although of late a drought affecting all of Vilmir has had a severe impact upon the city and its surrounding farms, orchards and vineyards.

Grapes, tomatoes, onions, oranges, saffron, olives, cotton, wheat and barley are the staple crops of the region, while the local wineries

produce a magnificent cabernet renowned throughout the Young Kingdoms. Seafood features heavily in the diets of the majority of Old Hrolmar's residents and wine is drunk by all, ale being considered a pauper's drink.

Given that it is a civilised city, weapons may not be carried about on the streets of Old Hrolmar, except by members of the Vilmirian nobility, although this law can be extended to visiting nobles from other nations with a successful Persuade roll. Upon entering the city gates all weapons larger than a dagger must be handed over into the custodianship of the Grey Defenders, to be returned on departure. While weapons can be hidden with a successful Conceal roll, the punishment for breaking the law is imprisonment and 10 lashes.

As in all Vilmirian cities the rule of Law is the dominant religion in Old Hrolmar, Avan Astran may be open-minded, he may even occasionally invoke Chaos while cursing, but he is not so foolish as to allow the worship of Entropy a toehold in his lands (nor is he willing to openly challenge his king and cardinal on this position). While Old Hrolmar has of late taken a more open stance towards the Elemental Churches than what otherwise exists elsewhere in Vilmir (where worship of the Elements is banned), there are no organised cults worshipping any of the Elemental rulers in the city. Even in the Quayside district there are only a few scattered adherents of Straasha, while the other Elemental rulers are worshipped only privately by a handful of foreigners.

In general, most of the city's residents share the same views as the majority of their countrymen and women, although they are more open to new ideas and the rights of others. The mentally ill and disabled are still shunned, although they are not so cruelly mocked as in Jadmar or Rignarion, and emotions are not so thoroughly repressed as they are in the other duchies. More and more Old Hrolmarians are beginning to express themselves publicly, although extreme displays of sorrow, joy or affection are still frowned upon. Social restrictions, especially those towards class, also remain strong regardless of the duke's public flouting of such traditions.

(For more details about the Duchy of Hrolmar and Vilmir generally, as well as statistics for Duke Avan Astran, see the

Stormbringer rulebook and the Chaosium publications Atlas of the Young Kingdoms Volume One: The Northern Continent, and the scenario collection Perils of the Young Kingdoms (in particular the scenario 'Stolen Moments' focuses on Old Hrolmar, as well as detailing further the Duke and Vilmar).

City Districts

Old Hrolmar is one of the Young Kingdoms' few truly cosmopolitan cities. It consists of seven main districts, each of which is detailed below.

Foreign Quarter

The lawless Foreign Quarter, clustered inside the city walls around the North Gate, is known as the Shadow City to its residents, and is the home of Old Hrolmar's underworld. Within its few blocks of filth covered houses and refuse filled labyrinthine alleys, reside the most vicious and dangerous of Old Hrolmar's inhabitants. Cutthroats, pickpockets and other criminal elements, (including representatives of Nadsokor) make their home here, as well as prostitutes, artists and of course, many visitors to Vilmar. More than one of the city's nobles is a Shadow City landlord.

The Foreign Quarter's side streets are narrow, indeed in some places so narrow that one must turn sideways to squeeze between the buildings. Its houses are decayed and verminous, although among the ramshackle and crowded tenements can be found the occasional oasis serving fine foreign food and wine, where strange songs are sung, and foreigners eye Vilmirian patrons with suspicion. The Jharkorian restaurant The White Leopard is one such establishment; the Lormyrian tavern The Champion's Arms another, while a new tavern, owned by an expatriate Argimilite couple, is fast developing a reputation for hosting regular poetry readings which attract a colourful and creative crowd.

While the buildings on the district's outskirts are less villainous, those towards its centre are thieves' rookeries and dens of

depravity: brothels patronised by the dissolute and inns whose sawdust-lined floors are stained nightly with blood. Many of the district's oldest houses were once grand structures but have long since fallen into semi-ruin, entire families dwelling in a single room and secret passageways and boltholes common features.

At the Foreign Quarter's dark heart stands the building known to some as 'Rat's Castle', once a monastery dedicated to Theril of Law, now a debased and detestable ruin where the beggars of Old Hrolmar hold their court.

Should visitors venture off the main streets of the Foreign Quarter they are likely to return without their purses and other valuables, if indeed they return at all. Although the Grey Defenders regularly sweep through the slums and rookeries of the Foreign Quarter, five more rascals' spring up for every one they arrest. Rents here are cheap, and so are lives.

Hilltown

Located in the southeast corner of the city's triangular walls is the district known as Hilltown (and colloquially as Snob's Hill). Here are found the sandstone fortress of Duke Avan, the barracks of the Grey Defenders, and the houses of the nobility. Many of these once-dour mansions are being transformed into ostentatious displays of wealth through the addition of new storeys, towers and fanciful architecture. In fact, some days, the broad streets of Hilltown are so full of drifts of sawdust, it blows like snow on the evening breeze and the sounds of hammering and sawing echo from dawn till dusk. Other houses cling to more traditional Vilmirian ways. This district is heavily patrolled and adventurers who venture here will be stopped and questioned regularly unless they appear to be members of the nobility.

Chief among the nobility to embrace the changes sweeping Old Hrolmar is the dowager Lady Atania Almodo, a forceful personality whose soirees are infamous among her peers and greatly anticipated among Old Hrolmar's poets and artists. She patronises several promising talents, and holds monthly parties where bohemians and peers mingle. Her great rival is the younger Lady Nina Aracella, who while lacking Lady Atania's finely tuned critical sensibilities, is considerably more lavish in her

patronage, thanks to a recent inheritance, which has made her the target of suitors from across Vilmir.

Hilltown is also home to Old Hrolmar's lavish new theatre, a baroque and fanciful building only recently completed. Its stage has already played host to some of the best acting troupes in the Young Kingdoms, although there are some in the city who whisper that their works are hardly suitable for performance in respectable Vilmir. Rumour has it that the theatre is already haunted, although whether the ghost is that of one of the several workmen who died during its construction, or an older spirit disturbed by the excavation of Melnibonéan ruins, is presently unknown.

Industrial Quarter

This is the poorest and most desperate district of Old Hrolmar, and extends from the area immediately surrounding the Hrol Falls to the northern and eastern city walls. Here are clustered the homes and hovels of the city's poor, in streets lined with drab terraces; their struggling businesses; and the factories, foundries and mills in which they labour. It is not uncommon to see maimed children begging in the Industrial Quarter's streets, having lost their limbs to the machines that throb ceaselessly behind factory walls. Here, chimneys belch smoke and soot, and the air is thick with a grit which catches in the throat and brings tears to the eyes. In the months of Elordan and Sigmursan the prevailing northern winds blow fumes from the Industrial Quarter right across the city and at which time many of the nobility retreat to their summer estates outside the city walls.

Merchants' Quarter

Old Hrolmar's mercantile district extends from the South Gate to the very heart of the city. At its northern end stands the glittering glass Pyramid of Law, dedicated to Elgis the Gentle, which rises from among the tree-lined avenues, carefully tended turf and reflective pools of Serenity Park. Adjacent to the park, beside the river, construction work is presently under way upon the new Zoological Gardens, whose

exhibits are intended to include many of the wonders of the natural world.

The majority of the businesses in the Merchant's Quarter are clustered together by trade. There is a dressmakers' street, a bakers' street, the street of scribes (who have a vigorous new feud with the residents of Printers' Street) and so on. The busiest thoroughfare is the Street of Architects, where columns and cornices, balconies and finials adorn the once bland and uniform buildings.

Among the more arcane trades practised in the Merchants' Quarter are astrology, alchemy, philosophy and physik, while the oldest of arts is practiced in the Street of Red Lanterns, where most tastes are catered for. Even Duke Avan is an occasional visitor to Cleveland House in Red Lantern Street, albeit discreetly (although his fondness for masculine companionship is a valuable secret among those in the city whose business it is to concern themselves with the private affairs of others). Several private galleries are also to be found in the mercantile district, catering to the increasingly daring tastes of the nobility, and representing some of the many exciting young artists who have flocked to Old Hrolmar in recent years. Prices vary throughout the quarter, but vendors who over-inflate their costs rarely last long, such is the competition. Colourful canvas awnings overhang the streets, shading the multitude of goods on sale and the bustling crowds.

On Valario Street, the main boulevard running from the Harbour Gate to the temple, is the grand bazaar. Occupying all three storeys of an old sandstone building, as well as the cellars, its halls echo with the cries of vendors, as they compete with one another to offer the best bargains on both local produce and goods from across the Young Kingdoms. On the first floor, a labour market can be found where men and women apply for employment ranging from bodyguard to scullery-maid, and lady-in-waiting to alchemist's assistant.

Off the main streets can be found the residences of the town's merchants and tradesmen, as well as Old Hrolmar's Guildhouse, a veritable palace of the workers, which takes up almost an entire city block. The district's less successful businesses are clustered in the northwest corner of the Merchant's Quarter, on the fringes of the Shadow City.

New Hrolmar

A bustling district of new and hastily constructed houses and buildings, surrounded by scaffolding and flying the flags and banners of a hundred nations. Lying just outside the city walls, beyond the north gate New Hrolmar, has sprung up over the last five years of the duke's reign. A colony of artists, free-thinkers, and bohemians, it is also home to many travellers, cheap stalls, seedy alehouses and down-at-heels adventurers.

Much of the district's businesses have grown up around the city's stockyards, from which regular streams of animals are led to the slaughter-yards and tanneries of the Industrial Quarter. Braying donkeys, nervous horses and other beasts are bought and sold here. Clouds of dust are thrown up by the caravans that are constantly arriving and departing New Hrolmar. Several brothels can be found here, although the better class of courtesans dwell in the merchants' quarter, in the Street of Red Lanterns, while cheaper and more dubious pleasures can be found immediately to the south, in the Foreign Quarter. While many of the district's taverns never close their doors.

Quayside

Nestled at the foot of the city's southern wall, this district is dominated by the busy harbour and its attendant fishing village, and is also home to the city's popular fish-market. The scents of salt, seaweed and fish are strong in the air and is, mingled with those of spices and sweat. Drying nets, burly longshoremen, baskets of mussels and other produce freshly harvested from the ocean are common sights, as are tattooed sailors and grizzled ship's captains.

Quayside is always busy. Ships arrive night and day, while the fishing fleet puts out every evening and returns shortly after dawn. Sailors and foreigners, ragamuffin children, pipe-smoking fisherman and drunken sailors make up much of the district's residents. It goes without saying that the Grey Defenders, make regular patrols here.

As with New Hrolmar, many of the buildings in Quayside are built of wattle and daub, rather than the sturdier stone construction that dominates inside the city's walls.

The best tavern in Quayside is The King's Head. This is where visiting sea captains stay and a better class of traveller stay (including dably dressed, puritanical nobles from neighbouring duchies who stare with open contempt at the laxity that they see around them). The King's Head serves fine local wines and the best ales and its common-room plays host to poets and visiting philosophers, as well as to slumming young nobles and their obsequious hangers-on.

A less grand, but perhaps more comfortable inn, is the Scales of Goldar, whose visitors include several retired captains renting rooms on a permanent basis, merchants who take suites for extended stays, successful artists, and the better class of adventurers. The most notable feature of the Scales of Goldar is its downstairs bar, cool and green-lit, with a thick window made from a single pane of Melnibonéan glass, it looks out into the harbour below the waterline. This marvellous window was donated by Duke Avan himself, and provides drinkers with startling views of fish flickering through softly undulating beds of seaweed, darting seals, and the barnacle-encrusted hulls of ships. (For more details about the Scales of Goldar see the adventure 'Stolen Moments' in *Perils of the Young Kingdoms*.)

The cheapest tavern in Quayside is The Chipped Cup, where the rushes on its floor are rarely changed, its beds flea-infested, and its clientele unsavoury. Here one will find poor travellers eking out their last coins on a cup of sour wine; starving refugees from the north whose farms have been devoured by the Dinner-of-Dust; unsuccessful poets brooding on their lack of fame; and press-gangs planning their next abductions over rough wooden tables crudely carved with the initials and covered with fantasies of drunken sailors. While the kitchen at The Chipped Cup does serve gruels and cheap stews, their ingredients are rarely recognisable and never palatable.

Also to be found in Quayside are shipping offices, warehouses of Ilmioran cloth and beams of timber harvested from the Weeping Waste, and the offices of the Harbourmaster's. The district is also home to numerous poor but respectable residences, populated in the main by fisherfolk and their families.

Other Landmarks

Cemetery

To the west of the city, lying just outside the walls is Old Hrolmar's crowded cemetery. Surrounded by the same grey-brown stone that graces most of Old Hrolmar, herethe rich lie in state in ostentatious vaults, while the poor are buried one atop the other in crowded and narrow graves. In the exact centre of the cemetery stands a chapel dedicated to one of the Lords of Law, Mirath of the White Hands, surrounded, as it is, by a veritable forest of tombstones and monuments.

City Gates

There are three main entrances into Old Hrolmar, these being situated in the north, south and west walls of the city. The city walls rise 30 feet into the air from granite foundations set deep into the bedrock and are built of closely fitted sandstone 10 feet thick,. At each entrance, a square, three-storey tower stands astride the gates of iron bound, heavy oaken timbers, and are garrisoned by the ever watchful Grey Defenders.. Of all the gates, the South (or Harbour Gate) is the largest and best defended due to its defensive position overlooking the waterfront.

Each guard tower stands 40 feet high, with a considerable drop from the parapets to the ground below that none have yet survived. On the first floor of each tower are the windowless guardrooms, while the second floors hold the residential quarters as well as the machinery to operate the portcullises - heavy grills which can be dropped down over the gates as an additional line of defence (A complex series of pulleys, weights and levers exists to raise each portcullis, although it can be dropped in a moment's notice by quick-witted guards). Murder holes, through which molten lead can be poured or arrows fired, open down onto the gate tunnel from a first floor corridor that connects each side of the gatehouse towers. With the third floor of each tower given over to the garrison's messes and armouries.

Some 40 men, each led by a captain, garrison each of Old Hrolmar's three gates, although the North Gate (also called the Jadmar Gate, as it marks the road to the capital) is more heavily manned due to its proximity to the lawless Foreign Quarter. Upon entering the city visitors must hand over any weapons to the safe keeping of the Grey Defenders posted at each gate and, in return, are issued with a small wooden chit as a receipt for each weapon, which can be redeemed upon departure.

The gates are closed and barred half an hour after sunset, and remain closed, except for the duke and his most trusted emissaries, until half an hour after dawn the following day. Trumpets are sounded from each tower to mark the rising and the setting of the sun, and to also signal the gates' impending closure.

Hrol River

From its headwaters in the northeast of Hrolmar, the Hrol winds sinuously across the duchy's plains to the sea, although upon entering Old Hrolmar it is quickly polluted by the effluent produced by the numerous tanneries, dyehouses and mills which line the riverbanks, and which thickly clustered about the Hrol Falls. Although the river's headwaters are crystal clear, below the falls the waters are no longer drinkable.

RIVER GATE

In the southern wall of the city, where the River Hrol flows out into the bay, stands the River Gate. Its bars are rarely opened, and although not guarded from within, are so heavily bolted and rusted as to be considered almost impregnable. The bars descend into the sandy riverbed, theoretically prohibiting spies and others from gaining access to the city.

Sewers

At low tide the sewers which empty into the harbour are visible in Quayside. Solidly constructed, they are a marvel of engineering and one of the only remnants of Old Hrolmar's Melnibonéan heritage still standing. As well as being used by the city's smugglers, they also provide a secret network of tunnels linking the

city's major landmarks and are employed by Old Hrolmar's least scrupulous citizens.

The sewers are not without danger however, as often they run through forgotten crypts, whose sleeping inhabitants dream of daylight.

Temple of Law

A great five story high pyramid of glass, is a temple of Law dedicated to Lord Elgis the Gentle. Among the wonders which grace the temple is one of the largest choirs in the Young Kingdoms, whose harmonies are said to bring momentary enlightenment to all who hear them. Chancellor Helforth is the high priest of Elgis, and his sermons concerning peace and humanity's higher purpose in a chaotic world remain concise and illuminating, despite his advancing age (although of late his mind has shown a regrettable tendency to wander in mid-service). Administrator Velon, Helforth's nominated successor, frets about the laxity of Duke Avan's rule, and vows that things will change once he is Chancellor, although for the present the temple's daily affairs are his main concern. Behind the scenes Administrator Uthos, a priest of Donblas, oversees temple security, and studies his peers and rivals with a flinty eye.

GAMEMASTER INFORMATION

THE FOLLOWING SECTION DETAILS information about Old Hrolmar is intended for the eyes of the Gamemaster only. Players should read no further lest their knowledge of what follows lessen the pleasure they stand to gain from discovering such secrets through play.

THE FORCES OF CHAOS

Ironically, as Duke Avan has striven to reduce the stultifying power of Law in Old Hrolmar, the forces of Chaos have increased their footing in the city, trying to bend its citizens to their will. Amongst the dark powers active in Old Hrolmar are the agents of Urish, the Beggar-King of Nadsokor, and the sorcerer Baron Vadrigal.

Beggars of Old Hrolmar

To a degree, the Vilmirian state has turned a blind eye to the existence of an organised community of beggars in its midst, for the existence of a beggars' 'guild' relieves the Vilmirian government from the burden and expense of coping with street-dwellers. Instead the onus falls upon the nation's citizens, many of whom (especially shopkeepers) pay beggars not out of the goodness of their hearts, but to

encourage them to move on. Without an organised system of alms for the poor, beggars have been forced to organise themselves in order to maximise the extraction of coinage and foodstuffs from 'decent' people, and to establish their own social hierarchy.

In another world this order may have even been a good decent one, but the Beggar-Kings of Nadsokor have long been thralls of Chaos, and Urish the Seven-Fingered is no exception. Under his degenerate rule, all beggars are forced to tithe fifty percent of their earnings to Nadsokor. The punishment for failure to comply being death.

The current leader of Old Hrolmar's beggars is Ramirez the Pustulant, a vile creature whose base of operations is the structure in the dark heart of the Foreign Quarter known as Rat's Castle. Although he has neither brute strength nor sorcery at his disposal, his wit, wiles and animal cunning have ensured his safety in a cut-throat world. Much of his body is covered with a intricate and finely-inked tattoo that forms the binding, to his very skin, of a demon of the Ystrych breed. Search rolls or Witch Sight allows astute adventurers to detect evidence of the demon's presence, as Ramirez's skin occasionally ripples and moves of its volition. The demon, which was bound and summoned by a sorcerous ally of Ramirez many years ago, has a wardpact against swords, thus rendering the beggar-lord invulnerable to all bladed weapons (including rapiers, falchions and scimitars).

Unfortunately, the demon's need is to be bathed in excreta once a week and as a predictable side effect Ramirez is plagued by a particularly

horrid skin disease: his whole body is covered in open, weeping sores. Much of his hair has fallen out and the few random tufts that remain are greasy and grey, flecked with faecal matter. His beard too is patchy, and matted with congealed food-scrap. He stinks of excrement and stale sweat.

Nevertheless Ramirez is quick-witted and sadistic, and an apparently faithful servant of King Urish, although his greed often gets the better of him, and he regularly hides certain choice trinkets in his rooms instead of sending them on to Nadsokor. On the occasions that King Urish questions the lack of wealth flowing from Old Hrolmar, Ramirez blames other beggars for trying to hide their profits, usually killing them before they have had a chance to protest their innocence.

Recently word has come to Ramirez that a Lormyrian beggar, Eodwulf, has arrived in Old Hrolmar after fleeing Ramasaz, having unsuccessfully tried to deny King Urish his rightful tithe. Ramirez now has agents out upon the streets hunting the newcomer. The pustulant beggar lord does not realise that other forces are also upon Eodwulf's trail.

RAMIREZ THE PUSTULANT BEGGAR LORD, AGED 33

STR 10 CON 14 SIZ 12 INT 14 POW 14 DEX 10 APP 4

HIT POINTS: 13 ARMOUR: 1D6-1 Soft Leather

DAMAGE BONUS: None

Weapon	Skill	Damage
Shortsword	50%	1D6+1
Dagger	55%	1D4+2

SKILLS: Beg 90%, Bargain 75%, Conceal Object 70%, Divert Blame 85%, Evaluate 80%, Insight 65%, Oratory 45%, Pick Lock 50%, Search 65%.

SKIN DEMON

Bound into his skin, this demon of the Ystrych breed protects Ramirez from swords via its wardpact.

INT 7 POW 12

ABILITY: Wardpact against swords.

THE EYES, EARS AND HANDS

Almost a hundred beggars call Old Hrolmar home. Among them are numbered Ramirez's three most trusted agents, known as his Eyes, Ears and Hands.

THE EYES

Legless Ludovico is a flatulent, grossly fat Ilmioran whose legs were lost in a mining accident many years ago. His flabby bulk overflows the small, wheeled platform that is his main form of transport, although his beefy arms are

surprisingly strong from the years of pushing himself around. Little escapes his gaze.

STR 13 CON 16 SIZ 16 INT 10 POW 8 DEX 5 APP 5

HIT POINTS: 16 ARMOUR: None

DAMAGE BONUS: 1D4

Weapon	Skill	Damage
Carving Knife	40%	1D6+DB

SKILLS: Beg 60%, Bargain 55%, Break Wind 95%, Conceal Object 45%, Evaluate 60%, Hide 30%, Insight 35%, Move Quietly 30%, Search 80%, Whine 65%.

THE EARS

Mad Gilda is a deranged and bedraggled hag, who rarely speaks anything but gibberish. Originally from the Purple Towns, she has not washed in living memory, and as a result smells so foul that anyone trapped in a room with her must make a CON x 5 roll to keep the contents of their stomach down. She makes a living by following people about, muttering unintelligibly and shrieking wildly until they pay her to go away. When not otherwise engaged it is her habit to sit in shop doorways picking at her long, yellow toenails. Although she says little that is sensible, she hears a great deal. Ramirez long ago leaned the key to encourage sensible speech from her, which is to ply her addled brain with opium and garbleweed. Under their influence she is calm and coherent, but when the drugs wear off her lunacy descends anew.

STR 7 CON 13 SIZ 8 INT 11 POW 15 DEX 16 APP 7

HIT POINTS: 16 ARMOUR: None

DAMAGE BONUS: None

Weapon	Skill	Damage
Brawl	65%	1D3

SKILLS: Beg 35%, Conceal Object 50%, Hide 40%, Insight 40%, Listen 85%, Move Quietly 30%, Penetrating Shriek 100%, Search 35%.

THE HANDS

Although his real name is Geft, none have called him that since his parents died three years ago (he is now 9). With no relatives to claim him the boy was turned out onto the streets, where his heart was hardened by the countless cruelties he suffered. Only the beggars showed him any warmth, and only then when they wanted something from him. His only real friends now are the rats he has trained.

Rat-Boy, as the other beggars call him, has a supernatural affinity with his pack of seven rodents, who obey his every command. He is small enough to be able to worm into most enclosed spaces, and where he cannot reach, his rats can. Thanks to the only spell he knows, he can also see what his rats are seeing even when they are not in the same room as him.

STR 7 CON 7 SIZ 6 INT 13 POW 17 DEX 17 APP 8

HIT POINTS: 7 ARMOUR: NONE

DAMAGE BONUS: NONE

Weapon	Skill	Damage
Brawl	45%	1D3

SKILLS: Beg 45%, Climb 70%, Commune With Rats 50%, Conceal Object 60%, Dodge 50%, Evaluate 40%, Hide 50%, Insight 30%, Jump 45%, Listen 55%, Move Quietly 50%, Pick Lock 45%, Search 35%, Train Rats 90%.

SPELLS: Rat Vision (1)

NOTES: Around his filthy neck, on a thin leather strip, gef't wears a small bronze pendant, the only thing he has to remind him of his parents. It is engraved with a mysterious rune which skilled sorcerers may recognise as the name of skweeeeeee, the beast-lord of rodents, although gef't is unaware of its significance.

RAT PACK

If attacking as a pack, the rats have a 10% chance of successfully biting for 1D3 damage per round (5% higher than the standard pack) as Rat-Boy has trained these particular rats to attack on his command. The sensation of a swarm of chittering rats climbing all over an adventurer will have the effect of reducing his or her skills by 10% while under attack.

Working as a team, the rats are capable of dragging objects with a SIZ of less than 3, and in this manner can be used to retrieve keys, parchments and other small but valuable items for their master's lord.

SKILLS: Eyes Gleam 65%, Scurry And Chitter 90%.

OTHER BEGGARS

If additional beggars are required by the gamemaster this generic pack of scrofulous, deformed and vile characters should suffice. One are tongueless; two limp on crutches; another is hideously scarred; the last is a hulking, moronic brute. All are malformed of mind, and vile servants of Chaos.

BEGGARS OF OLD HROLMAR

STATISTICS	#1	#2	#3	#4
STR	8	10	9	12
CON	15	12	7	14
SIZ	10	9	15	12
INT	5	8	9	18
POW	7	9	5	11
DEX	17	11	12	9
APP	3	5	7	5
HP	13	11	11	13
DB:	None	None	None	None
<i>Weapon</i>		<i>Skill</i>	<i>Damage</i>	
Brawl		55%	1D3+DB	

SKILLS: Beg 55%, Dodge 65%, Grovel 70%, Hide 50%, Move Quietly 45%, Search 55%.

Baron Zamoro Vadrigal

The duchy of Vilmiro, in Vilmir's south-east, is dominated by barren hills, hot springs, dangerous mines and silt-choked rivers. It is ruled over by Duke Nogion Vadrigal, whose paramount interest is the fledgling science of Law. His youngest son is the saturnine Baron Zamoro Vadrigal, one of many recent arrivals in Old Hrolmar. Ostensibly here to oversee one of his family's cotton mills in the

Industrial Quarter, the baron, a secret worshipper of the Chaos Lord Slortar, has taken advantage of conditions in Old Hrolmar to propagate the influence of his vile god.

To all intents and purposes Baron Zamoro is a law-abiding member of the nobility. He has cold grey eyes, a thin, tanned face, and wears his black hair and beard trimmed respectably short. His eyebrows are thick and heavy, and meet above his aquiline nose. He dresses puritanically in black linen trousers, black velvet jacket, white silk shirts, calf-length black leather boots, and a broad-brimmed black hat. Only the cut and quality of the fabric pronounce him a member of the nobility, although his arrogant bearing betrays his social class to most observers.

Behind closed doors another side of the baron is revealed. He delights in the pursuit of pleasure, although for him, pleasure is intimately linked with the suffering of others. A sadist of refined sensibilities, Baron Zamoro has made it his aim to surpass the subtle cruelties of Melniboné. Although he is still well short of this goal, his personal habits are perverse in the extreme. His library abounds in treatises and tomes concerning surgery, torture and body modification, including an extremely rare translation of Dr Jest's *Blade & Beauty: Concerning the Creation & Maintenance of the Arts of Agony*. The baron is also a gourmand, a connoisseur of Vilmirian wines and sherries, and a capable sorcerer. Although he resides in Hilltown, his ceremonies and sorceries are centred upon his dark mill perched above the Hrol Falls.

In the 12 months he has lived in Old Hrolmar Baron Zamoro has slowly climbed to a position of some significance in the local cult of Slortar. (Among other activities, the cult controls the city's black market in drugs and other smuggled goods - including enchantments - and also seeks to corrupt the powerful by providing them with outlets for their most secret of desires.) Zamoro aspires to become the city's high priest of Slortar, a position currently held by the mysterious Dark Lady, whose identity even her closest acolytes are unaware of. Sadly the baron's impetuous nature is likely to doom him to failure long before this goal is within his grasp.

BARON ZAMORO VADRIGAL

The baron is a sorcerer and Slortar cultist. Although 33, he is still cursed with the arrogance of noble youth.

STR 14 CON 12 SIZ 11 INT 15 POW 18 DEX 9 APP 9

HIT POINTS: 12 ARMOUR: 1D6 leather and rings

DAMAGE BONUS: 1D4

Weapon	Skill	Damage
Brawl	65%	1D3+DB
Demon Broadsword	85%	1D8+2D10+DB

SKILLS: Art (Dancing) 60%, Art (Torture) 80%, Art (Wine Appreciation) 70%, Bargain 60%, Disguise 45%, Dodge 60%, Evaluate 65%, Hide 50%, Insight 45%, Natural World 35%, Oratory 50%, Potions 36%, Scribe 47%, Young Kingdoms 40%.

SPELLS: Brazier Of Power (4), Chaos Warp (4), Cloak Of Cran Liret (1-4), Compulsion (3), Hell's Armour (4), Ignorance From Slortar (3), Pox (1), Rat Vision (1), Slortar's Grasp (10), Summon Demon (1), Wisdom Of Slortar (3), Witch Sight (3).

LESSER DEMON BROADSWORD

A minor demon of the Ratchangett breed, whose need is to be cleaned with lavender oil after it has spilled blood, is bound within this blade. An egg-sized uncut ruby adorns the sword's pommel.

INT 3 POW 10

ABILITIES: Demon Weapon, adds 2d10 Damage

The Forces of Law

At its worst Law is inflexible and brings about stagnation, but when tempered with more human mercies and desires, it can be a force for peace, as evidenced in Old Hrolmar. Thanks in part to the restraint of the doddering Chancellor Helforth (who at his prime was a living example of the tenets of the White Lord Elgis) Duke Avan has been allowed every freedom in bringing about change to Old Hrolmar. However, the increasingly senile Chancellor is not the only focus for Law within Old Hrolmar's walls and alas, not all are as open to innovation as he.

Religious Rivals

Should Chancellor Helforth die, or be forced to step down from his vaunted position, two main rivals, Administrators Vellon and Uthos, would vie for control of the Church of Law in Old Hrolmar.

Administrator Vellon is a devoted priest of Elgis, but feels that Duke Avan has gone too far in his obsession with all that is new and different. A staunch conservative, Vellon seeks to halt further change in the city, but values harmony enough that, if he came to power, would only seek to slowly turn back the clock to the way things were under the old duke's reign (perhaps allowing New Hrolmar and

Quayside to remain as they are). Vellon is ambitious but insecure and although publicly tight-lipped, stern, and private he is constantly seeking to reinforce his position by dominating those below him and obsequiously cultivating the goodwill of his superiors. Vellon is gaunt, prematurely grey, and prone to a hacking cough in the winter months. His temper as short as his stature.

Administrator Uthos is a warrior-priest of Donblas, and in charge of the temple's guards and defences. He is humourless and grim and spends much of his time training and re-training his meagre forces in the temple forecourt, or, when not otherwise engaged, prowling the temple's halls. Although raised in the Abbey of the Cleansing Flame in Western Vilmiro, he is not strictly speaking a member of the Inquisition, many believe him to be, and he is at pains not to dissuade them. A tall, imposing man in his late 40's, Uthos is broad-shouldered and barrel-chested, with piercing blue eyes and a clean shaven head. The rune of Law is tattooed in blue upon his forehead, and he is rarely seen out of his armour, which is usually worn underneath his priestly vestments.

The Inquisition

The secretive organisation known as the Inquisition is not strong in Old Hrolmar, but it has a presence here all the same. From its headquarters in the bleak uplands of Vilmiro, the Order of the Cleansing Flame (as the Inquisition is formally known) dispatches agents the length and breadth of Vilmir (and sometimes even into neighbouring Ilmiora and beyond). Although not officially recognised by the Church of Law, Cardinal Garrick has long turned a blind eye to the actions of these fanatical worshippers of Donblas, who dedicate themselves to rooting out heresy wherever it grows, and by whatever means necessary.

Damion Clavar, the leader of the Inquisition in Old Hrolmar, has dwelt in the city for only a year, having been sent by his order to monitor and combat the spread of various heresies that go as yet unchecked by church and state. His predecessor recalled to the Abbey of the Cleansing Flame in shame (for "re-education"), having failed to stamp out the duke's licentious and suspect ways.

DAMION CLAVAR

Architect and Inquisitor, aged 33. With his cold grey eyes, short-cropped iron-grey hair, and stern, square face, Damion Clavar appears no more than a staid, unimaginative architect.

Indeed those that know him believe that he is nothing more than a man whose small firm clings blindly to the old ways, and whose business has overlooked the many opportunities for innovative architecture currently in vogue in Old Hrolmar. In truth Clavar is the city's most powerful Inquisitor, and although he has not yet acted upon his survey of the city, he is disgusted by the lechery, debauchery and general heresy he sees spreading throughout Old Hrolmar. Its source is clearly the adventurer-explorer Avan Astran, who has abandoned his duty to the White Lords in favour of satiating his various appetites for sensation and pleasure. For now Clavar prays to Donblas that the duke will see the error of his ways. If he does not, then not even the duke's peerage will protect Avan from the Inquisition's righteous justice.

Such is the Inquisition's power that, should he demand it, Clavar can access the resources of the Church of Law in Old Hrolmar. His chief contact at the temple is Administrator Uthos, although he has yet to make himself known to the man.

STR 18 CON 16 SIZ 16 INT 15 POW 17 DEX 14 APP 10

HIT POINTS: 16 ARMOUR: 1D10+2, Helm on
(Young Kingdoms Plate)

DAMAGE BONUS: 1D6

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Skill</i>	<i>Damage</i>
Broadsword	148%	1D8+1+DB
Shortsword	165%	1D6+1+1D6

SKILLS: Art (Architecture) 85%, Art (Torture) 95%, Dodge 120%, Insight 85%, Jump 80%, Move Quietly 70%, Oratory 75%, Physik 60%, Ride 85%, Track 60%, Young Kingdoms 60%.