

Everway Session Notes 2014a

Things to investigate:

- [Wishbone] Grapetown
- The Bliss Experiment - The Mothers
- Who is haunting the cellars
- The Blackhearts and the brothels -> The Palace messenger
- MS 7 The Chamber Platinum maze
- Terracotta - Porters at the House of Calm
- The Zephyr Monks

Other Events:

- Other mafia types get in touch
- The Twelve meet
- MS 8 The Trade Dispute

Thinking further ahead...

Assuming that everything works out, make clear to the heroes that they are now comfortably off. The extortion is paying for the (expanded) Sons of the West, various people are coming up with suggestions for profitable side-lines, and the profits from smuggling and the brothels are vast. What will they do with their additional cash? They could spend it on extra bling (point out to Wishbone that there are lots of tempting offers around) or use it to help the poor.

- Plumes offer to pay for patrols to keep trouble out of Talespinners Square.
- Gifts from wealthy "well wishers" and tradesfolk, particularly if The Trade Dispute resolves well.
- Blackmail opportunities from the brothels

Possible Timeline

Cellars

Moonday, 31st Day of the Month of the Maiden, 2473 (waxing half moon)

AM

- Flame's wrist is still broken. She is at -2 E. Walker can cure her for free in 2 hours.
- Cellars: Aftermath of Blackhearts action.
 - Some Blackhearts surrender. Others hole up in the old hunting lodge.
 - Take control of the brothels. Find out about the arrangement with the Palace.
- Everwayan authorities (Watchers and Plumes) set ambush in Heroes Tavern for Flame.
- **Cedar** complains that things have gone missing in the kitchen [Cunning is trying to encourage a cellar-wide search]. Slight (but no-one else) can see that they are still there.

PM / Night

- Problems at Mercy Hospital
- [WB at Bald Top Hill]

Venusday, 1st Day of the Month of the Scales, 2473

AM

- "Boss, I thought you ought to see this guy. He wants to give us money..." A trader (a hatter called **Pushpin**) from Dark Alley turns up and DEMANDS to pay his protection money. Cut Throat was shaking him down and he's got used to it. Gets panicky if they refuse.
 - Pushpin: 60s, greying hair, wears a hat like a bishop's mitre turned sideways, bandy

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legged, stick.

- **Rumour: Goldring Digger** becomes convinced that the kidnapping of her son is a Mask scam. She denounces them in the Court.
- [WB finds spirit]

PM / Night

- **Mangonel** – claims he saw a ghost in the passageway near the parade room. An old man dressed in ancient Everwayan clothing. He was looking for something...
- The door to Towershield's room disappears or becomes unopenable.
- [Spice Runner meets Sneak Wolf]
- [WB meets Veraison Grapepresser]

Earthday, 2nd Day of the Month of the Scales, 2473

AM

- **Radiant** comes in looking blissfully happy. "I've seen Towershield!" "He is still with us!" This could get out of hand – several other members of the SotW claim to have seen him. Soon even the heroes catch sight of him...
- Snakerings recruit Steel.
- **Rumour:** Stories about dragons have become valuable currency in Tales...
- **Herring Turnwick** sends a message with a business proposition. If the Turnwicks can sell their medicine in Beggartown and Dark Alley (it's basically laudanum), the heroes can have a cut.
- [WB to Axil's cottage]
- [Spice Runner meets the Cormorant]

PM

(3pm) Spice Runner at Gateway Isle. Zephyr Monks.

[WB finds Spiralvine farm]

(9pm) Spice Runner at Grapetown

Marsday, 3rd Day of the Month of the Scales, 2473

AM

- Trouble between Daggerboys and SotW. Also Blackhearts, if recruited.
- Superstitious gang members start to leave. Except they can't...
- [WB, Rathgard and Fish Trader: Raid on Spiralvine farm?]

PM

- [Spicerunner leaves Grapetown]
- SotW members start drifting off and assembling in the mural room. The mural starts to glow...
- Pyramid lizards haunt people's dreams...

Joveday, 4th Day of the Month of the Scales, 2473

AM

- Cellars: The Trade Dispute
- Daggerboy riots.

PM

- Spice Runner enters Glimmermoon Bay. Encounter with Captain Foxglove and the Falcon.

The Spice Runner

Additional Events

Need some extra events on the way back:

- Sea Lord trading vessel
- Zephyr Monks want something?
- Stupid razor bills tear the sail cloth
- Pirates: Pretend shipwreck?
- Something for Wishbone to do

The Sea Lord Traders

- Encounter out in the ocean.
- See a longship with a high prow cresting the waves. Its square sail is elaborately and beautifully decorated with thread. The main icon is a circle containing an icon of a striking hammer with a long-beaked bird with wings outstretched superimposed on top (knowledgeable heroes may recognise it as a cormorant, or Seahook can tell them). Six sets of oars poke out of either side, ominous-looking spears stick up from the deck, and shields (also showing the cormorant design) are fixed to the boat rail.
- Three Trees looks nervous. They're probably all right, but Sea Lord pirates are not unknown.
- As the ship draws closer, there is the sound of singing (Fish Trader hears this first).
- A burly woman dressed in furs (despite the warm sun) leans over the side. "A thousand times, friends! Do you want to trade?"
- She is **Walrus Hammerblow** and her ship is the Cormorant. She introduces her first mate ("in all senses of the word"), **Stormblast**, an equally burly man in his 40s with a full beard. They are sweaty, friendly and cheery, as are the rest of the (18 person) crew.
- They are on their way to trade with the people of the Chatterfish River, but are happy to do some light bartering on the side.
- They have furs, walrus tusks and fat, wood carvings, beer and cheese (not very good, but worth it for novelty value).
- Rumours: The Sea Lords have a new high king, **Corvine Fellslayer**. He was acclaimed after killing a monstrous bear. He is young and energetic, but it not clear yet what kind of leader he is going to be.

Wishbone in Grapetown

Plot: The Spiralvines are engaging in a subtle sabotage of their rival winemakers. They have found a type of rot that affects the flavour of the grapes used by other families but not their own. Unfortunately, the rot can only be grown on the bodies of dead humans. So they have been kidnapping people. Wishbone finds out about this by hearing a spirit that has become associated with the grapes themselves.

[Problems

1. A story involving dead bodies and burials may be inappropriate at present. But it is Wishbone's modus operandi. Come up with something better?
 - a. Spirits are okay. A haunting.
 - b. The hawk – see things from afar
 - c. Healing
2. May be better to turn it into a murder mystery – someone who lives alone has disappeared. But how to make the connection to the Spiralvines?
3. Grape harvesting happens between July and early October, so the harvest should

already be almost over. Perhaps the Vintners are known for harvesting late as it adds sweetness to the wine, which one of the Everwayan judges is known to like.

4. It's clearly a filler story with no connection to circumstances in Everway or anyone's personal plot.]

The Fields

- Most likely, Wishbone will be travelling back along the road to Grape Town as it winds through valleys covered with vines. It is the coming towards the end of harvest season – in the distance a few workers can be seen with big hats and large baskets. At the corners of the fields there are huge barrels mounted on wheels with patient donkeys tethered to them.
- WB is passing a field of grapes that are yet to be picked. The grapes are large, black and shiny. She is hungry and there is no-one around.
- Whether or not she indulges, she hears a very faint voice – "Veraison... Veraison..."
- It is a spirit that has almost dissipated. WB can capture it, but it never says anything else.
- The odd thing about the spirit is that it is flitting around a partially picked row of grape vines. Careful inspection reveals that the spirit is only associated with the vines that have not been picked, and only with the grape clusters thereon.
- If WB thinks to eat the grapes, she may notice that they have an odd, musty taste. They look perfectly healthy, but close inspection shows grains of a powder that are almost invisible against the dark skin of the grape. It looks like powdery mildew, but if so it is of no type that WB has ever seen before.
- Asking nearby workers will reveal that the leader of the Grapepressers is called Veraison.

Veraison Grapepresser

- The Grapepresser mansion is a little way out of Grape Town. It is distinctly more rustic and poor than the Greenglass mansion - basically a large farm. A number of ragged-looking people are stamping grapes and turning screws.
- Veraison will answer the door herself. She is a short, sharp woman with a no-nonsense attitude and is particularly harrassed because this is the busiest time of year. She will initially be quite short with WB, assuming that she wants to buy something and telling her to visit the warehouse in Grapetown. She has no time for politicking, recognising that the odds are stacked against her family.
- She knows everything that is happening in the family and will warm considerably if told WB's tale. No, no-one has died recently, but she is concerned that she hasn't heard from her Uncle Axil, a hermit who lives on his own up in the mountains.
 - Axil is a bit eccentric and wanted, he said, to "strengthen his soul" by living a simple life of prayer and fasting so that he would not float out of the pyramid before the Walker returns with the Capstone.
- She is worried because she was talking to **Glowing Sand Greenglass** at the market the other day and he mentioned that a flock of sheep and their shepherds had gone missing. The shepherds were up on the mountains near Axil's cottage. Glowing Sand had asked Veraison to spread the word among her family.

Axil's Cottage

- A long journey into the mountains – it will take Wishbone the rest of the day to get there.
- Axil's cottage is situated by a mountain stream in a narrow fir-covered valley.
- It is immediately apparent that it is deserted. Goats with clonking bells are all over the place and have been eating the vegetables in the overgrown vegetable patch.
- The latch on the door is broken and there are faint signs of a struggle inside.
- WB's hawk is disturbed. There is an unnatural smell in the air.
- The smell is coming from drops of a oily dark red liquid on the floor. Sniffing these will cause WB to pass out for a minute or two. The drops smell of sickly wine.

- WB may think to ask the local birds of prey (via the hawk) if they have seen anything. One hawk remembers that its hunting was disturbed by a group of humans who were carrying another human. They were heading in a westerly direction.

The Apple Valley

[Only use this if WB insists on visiting a graveyard].

This is the place where the people of Grape Town bury their dead. It is an attractive mountain valley that is occupied by an orchard of apple trees. The dead are buried at their roots. As usual there are a number of spirits hanging around, and they are disturbed. They will point the way to three graves which have been disturbed recently. Closer inspection will reveal that the bodies have been removed. A skilled tracker (Fish Trader) can make out the beginnings of a trail that leads to the west.

Identifying the Spiralvines

This is potentially tricky. The modus operandi of the abduction of Axil and the dark powder will both suggest that they are involved, and Veraison may point this out if asked. She also recalls that the Spiralvines have an isolated farm where they perform research into vine diseases.

WB could also lurk in the fields at night and see a bunch of hooded figures delivering the powder. The hawk can track them back to the Spiralvine farm.

The directions suggested by the hawk near Axil's cottage or the tracks from the Apple Valley also lead straight to the Spiralvine farm.

The Spiralvine Farm

This lies about 7 miles north west of Grapetown down an overgrown track between rows of grape vines and fields. Unusually, it is surrounded by a 10' high stone wall. A reconnaissance by the hawk will reveal a number of outbuildings and a fairly substantial human presence, including what look like guards. WB may need help if she wants to enter the compound (alternatively, allow a Killing-style "woman goes into a dark basement armed only with a torch" scenario).

- The farm can be approached by a roundabout route through the trees to the south-west.
- There are a dozen workers in and around the grounds (A 2 E 3 F 2 W 3)
- 4 guards (A 2 E 4 F 3 W 2) patrol the grounds. They wear slightly silly-looking spiral hats and goat leather armour and are armed with blow pipes that shoot paralysing darts. If caught, intruders will be interrogated and either returned to Grapetown for trial, or (if it is thought that they will not be missed) taken down to the cellar,
 - Guards could be distracted by WB's Summon Birds trick, though this will cause other workers
- The fields around the main house contain peculiar-looking and exotic plants as well as more common vegetables that have been infected with strange diseases. Mis-shapen marrows, grey twisted vines, spotted potatoes, black-fringed kale, corn cobs which bifurcate several times, blue cabbages that emit a terrible stench.
- The western corner has a small grove of unhealthy-looking olive and cork trees. Their trunks are covered with brilliant red and purple spots, the bark is flaking off, the yellow leaves are curled and dry and, even more than usual, the branches are twisted into distressed shapes.
- **Oidium Spiralvine's** hut is the centre-most of the outbuildings and has two guards-cum-errand boys outside. It is distinguished by the bundles of herbs hanging in its eaves and the special cultivars of vines that surround it. Unlike the rest of the farm, these look almost unnaturally healthy.
 - Oidium himself seems like an absent-minded gardener, but if threatened he has a variety

of pots that he can use to defend himself – choking spores, strangler vines, blinding (miniature vine tendrils clamp the eyes shut), explosive spores.

- **Veinleaf Spiralvine** is the farm's overseer, a huge burly man in his 50s who has taken rather too many herbal supplements. He is paranoid and incredibly strong, able to rip up fences and throw farm implements with deadly accuracy. He is usually to be found in the main building, but will appear at the slightest sign of trouble.
- The ultimate goal is in the basement of an isolated building in the north corner. The building itself is used a storehouse for agricultural implements, but there is an outside trapdoor leading into a basement. It is here that the Spiralvines' darkest secret can be found.
 - Opening the trap door releases a strong stench of decay, rot and dead bodies. FC+E vs 4 not to throw up. WB can handle this better than most because she is used to dead bodies.
 - The stairs are rotten and narrow. Damp patches of colourful mould decorate the otherwise bare wall.
 - A haze of spores hangs in the air
 - The floor of the room is cracked and uneven. Pallid-looking roots are thrusting up through it. There a puddles of water that are dark green with slime.
 - In the far corner of the room is a table with an array of blood-stained knives and surgical instruments on it. On the ground nearby are three naked bodies lying in a pools of congealed blood.
 - The victims have been killed by a stiletto through the eye, after which fine cuts were made all over their bodies. The cuts have been infected with a deep purple fungus which is sprouting fruiting bodies. The largest are fist-sized and have been covered with fine leather bags.
 - Other bags lie on the table. Opening these reveals a fine deep purple mildew – the source of the dust on the vines.
 - There are two spirits here, one attached to one of the bodies and the other to one of the stilletos. WB can commune with them and confirm that Veinleaf performed the murders while *Oidium* was responsible for infecting them with the purple rot.
- If the heroes take out the entire farm, there is a collection of herbs and unguents for which an apothecary would pay 400 hefts.

Aftermath

- Veraison will be extremely grateful to discover the fate of her kinsman and will supply the heroes with additional cheeses, raisins and sultanas worth 200 hefts.
- The Spiralvines will lose an enormous amount of face – not so much for the killings as for cheating in wine-tasting contest. Heavy fines will be levied and the family will decline as a result.
- The Spiralvines will be enemies of the heroes and may attempt to assassinate them.

If WB solves this all on her own, she deserves a Boon.

Developments in Strangerside

The Nippers - Repercussions

- In Carrot's papers, the heroes could find the following interesting things:
 - A weekly delivery of papers from *Brother Quicksaw* of the Mercy Hospital to **Mother Immortal Light** of the Temple of Mercy. [This would fit well with "Trouble at the Mercy Hospital"]
 - Various deliveries from the *Halyards* in Strangerside to the Stonebreaker, Scratch and Gold families. "Probably cheeses – they certainly smelt like them".
- *Silly Me* will know and will take an interest in the heroes for promoting Freedom.

The Haunting of the Cellars

Cunning is still looking for the pyramid. He will do this as long as Slight isn't around. Having heard mention of the "Water Tower" he will investigate there as well.

- **Walker** will be his chief target. *Find out where Walker and Flame are sleeping.* If it's Towershield's old room, the door disappears for a time or cannot be opened (only when Slight is not around).
- Cunning will want to know how Walker knew about the toy pyramid and what happened to the real message (if there was one).
- C. will want to rifle through W's belongings. Do the Enchanter trick below. *OR* encourage Flame and Walker to have sex. Their belongings disappear while they are busy. *Cunning finds the pyramid.*
- Slight will be a problem. On the one hand, C will immediately suspect him of being involved in the pyramid scam. On the other, he could blow the whole thing wide open. C. will try to incriminate him if he starts getting too suspicious.

- **Radiant** comes in looking blissfully happy. "I've seen Towershield!" "He is still with us!" This could get out of hand – several other members of the SotW claim to have seen him. Soon even the heroes catch sight of him...
- **Mangonel** – claims he saw a ghost. An old man dressed in ancient Everwayan clothing. He was looking for something...
- Walker sees **Enchanter** as a ghost! Or Flame turns into Enchanter. Does this work? Maybe – if either Flame or Walker gets too enthusiastic about investigating the odd goings on, C. could try to distract them.
- Slight may well spot him. However unless he gets a good FC he will see what he wants to see – a sinister cloaked figure with a tall pointed hat and a veil. Or maybe **Glint Crookstaff**. Or Carrot. Or a dumpy Everwayan housewife. Or **Wormwood Crookstaff!** Go with what the FC suggests.
- After a day or two, Cunning discovers the mural. He puts a spell of importance on it which results in half the SotW members wondering in and staring at it. He doesn't do this while Slight is around since he would recognise the spell.
- Cunning's power is sufficiently strong that he can make someone think they are asleep when they are awake and vice versa.
- Pyramid lizards haunt people's dreams

Trouble in the Gang

Want to build this up over the week. Cunning will exacerbate the situation, either knowingly (in an attempt to get Walker to do something), or unknowingly (by building up paranoia).

- Names of competent gang members: **Shank, Polearm**
 - Names of Daggerboy members: **Stickblood, Gash, Scar, Edge, Swish, Gouger**
1. Relations between the Daggerboys and the SotW will deteriorate without Rathgard's guiding influence unless Slight thinks to take control. This creates a strong pressure on Walker and Flame to pick a fight with the Blackhearts.
 2. Heron has trouble getting the SotW to take her seriously. People keep stealing things from the stores when she hasn't authorised it.
 3. Dark Alley has all sorts of lowlives whom the Daggerboys have been suppressing. Spate of thefts, muggings and burglaries. What should be done?
 4. The Plumes will want a payment for turning a blind eye to activities in and around Talespinner's Square and Gold's Garden.

For later:

- Now that he is effectively in control of them, what does R. intend to do about Beggartown and

Dark Alley? Expectations have been raised. Several groups are very interested in the answer to this question – Golds, Masks, Plumes, Old Town Merchants, various business and religious interests in Strangerside.

- Three priestesses of the Goddess of Flowers - long white tunics with elaborate red robes embroidered with lilies, elaborate petal shaped collars that sweep up round the back of the head and circlets of carnations. They purify the streets by sprinkling them with rose water. Their temple is in the Old Town.
- **Wist**. A plain, rather stupid woman who is obsessed with Towershield. Jealous of Radiant. Acts as Cedar's skivvy. **A1 E3 F2 W3**. Will try to stab Rathgard when he returns.

Trouble at the Hospital

- Brother Scapula (a woman) comes to the Cellars to say that they are besieged by bliss addicts.
- The entrance has a crowd of about 150 desperate people outside it. A harrassed Brother Valentine has barred the door with his staff. He is trying to persuade the crowd that the hospital does not contain supplies of Bliss. A man tries to grab him, saying that he hasn't slept in 5 days. Another pushes forward saying his case is worse – he hasn't slept for a week.
- Inside, the other Brothers desperately trying to corral a screeching psychopath with a knife without hurting him [if not restrained, he will eventually plunge the knife into his own eyeball].
- People cover every available surface, shivering in the chilly autumn air. Haunted, sleepless eyes look at you everywhere.
- A woman is having convulsions. The others near her look on dully, too exhausted to help.
- There are at least 3 bodies that no-one has got around to moving.
- A stench of gangrene from a man with a blackened foot. He's scheduled to have it removed but no-one has had time.
- A woman is giving birth. She is bleeding copiously. An older woman – presumably her mother – is holding her hand and crying for help. The child is still-born.
- One room is full of full of people with bright red spots on their faces. Only a rag curtain separates them from the rest of the hospital. One has died.

The heroes can, if they choose, do what they can to help. Organising water and firewood, and removing the bodies, would be immensely useful. But there is no let-up in the number of people coming...

A Beggartown Revolution?

- It's possible that the heroes might decide to use the momentum of their victory over the Daggerboys to stir up a revolution in Beggartown. Point out that they are not, in fact, very powerful at present – of the 32 SotW, 6 were killed and another 10 injured in the fight, and the remaining Daggerboys comprise 6 intact and 12 wounded.
- Rathgard could decide to have a rally in Beggartown, which will raise interest. However the beggars are chiefly interested in knowing whether they will still be able to get their Bliss and whether R. will protect them "like what Towershield did". They also want better access to Everway, including an extension of the hours they can stay in the town.
 - Working together, the heroes together could probably persuade a crowd of a couple of hundred beggars to "invade" Everway, which will force the authorities to react. A show of force by the Crows, Watchers and Keepers will be enough to cow them – beggar "invasions" happen fairly regularly (the last was in 2465) and they have training to deal with them. Depending on how far the heroes want to push things, there could be a bloodbath.
 - A more positive approach would be to try to fix some of the major problems. These are:
 - Lack of clean water. Needs to be got from upstream. Rotas will need to be organised and squabbles about supply sorted out.
 - Lack of food. The many eateries around Talespinner's Square have waste food that could

- be put to use. Bazaar stallholders will sell food cheaply at the end of the day.
- Lack of housing. Organising the beggars to rebuild their own homes would soak up surplus labour. **T-Square** is a down-on-her-luck builder who knows how to build a home and could organise things once she has overcome her Bliss addiction. The heroes may also be able to find sympathetic people in the Crafters Quarter – **Mallet** is an ex-beggar turned prosperous architect who would be happy to help.
- Lack of medicine. Brother Valentine could be persuaded to train groups of beggars in basic first aid once the Bliss cold turkey problem is sorted out.

Random Beggartown Events

- An exploding still. An attempt to brew illicit hooch goes horribly wrong and causes terrible injuries.
- Heroes encounter a young man being mugged by a Sons of the West group for refusing to pay them a "toll". He is **Highheart Wolfsbane**.
 - A paranoid young man, blond hair, dressed in blue and black. He has a knife out and ready, hugs the walls and is constantly glancing over his shoulder, but it doesn't help him.
 - He is from the Old Town and is looking for the smugglers who can sell him a cheese as a gift for his lady friend (*Merrily Lightstep*).
- Heron invites the heroes to an evening meal at her hovel in Midden Well so they can see in detail what things are like.

Nighthawk and the Blackhearts – Repercussions

Nighthawk's death will split the remaining Blackhearts (about 24 remaining). About a dozen will surrender to the heroes, realising that they don't want to fight someone who can burn someone else to a crisp [note: if the heroes incorporate them into the gang, the laws of storytelling demand that there will be at least one traitor]. The remainder will hole up in the old HQ and, if left alone, will attempt to set up a rival gang. **Black Jack** (a girl – 18 years old and Nighthawk's protégé) will be its new leader.

- The Blackhearts are the richest of the gangs. They run the brothels around Talespinners Square:
 - The Lavender House
 - The Gold Piece
 - Pendulous Pearl's
 - Slappers
 - The Sailor's Luck
- The brothel accounts indicate that most of the payments go to "GG" (Glisten Gold) – they are picked up once a week by a hooded figure in a heavily defended coach surrounded by hulking guards (the figure is **Sunrise Gold**, an accountant from Gold HQ who is a Penhead in the bazaar, and the guards are Watchers). There are also payments to the Plumes.
- There is a list of clients and their preferences that would make good blackmail material. Most are men (women tend to go to the Street of a Thousand Kisses) whom the heroes do not recognise. A few names:
 - Whitedust Stonebreaker
 - Vengeance Crow (prefers men)
 - Weft Weaver
 - Clink Gold
 - Dewdrop Mudbank (likes really clean girls)
 - Mirage Crookstaff (likes to cast illusions on girls)
 - Stonelock Keeper (someone has altered the l to a c in his name)
 - Tapfoot Moondance

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- Velvet Plume
- Anvil Smith
- Threnody Wailer
- Clackit Weaver
- The most interesting notes relate to "the palace", to which, it seems, a girl is sent regularly, sometimes as often as once or twice a week.
 - **Tamarind Emerald** (male) makes the arrangements with **Sapling**, the madam of the Lavender House (this is no surprise to Slight).
 - Sapling claims to have no knowledge of who in the palace the girls could be for, but she will reveal that the client is "highly discriminating" with a preference for young busty types. The notes make clear that the person(s) concerned goes through phases, often ordering the same girl for several weeks in a row before evidently getting bored of her.
 - The girl currently on the palace roster goes by the unlikely name of **Beautiful Rice**. She is a big-bosomed, dark-eyed beauty originally trafficked from the Glorious Empire who is also a Bliss addict. She will demand a hit of bliss to reveal the name of her client, who is none other than Crown Prince Tourmaline himself!
 - If the heroes discover this, Flame may decide to pretend to be a girl to try and get into the Palace. This won't work unless Slight thinks to disguise her, and unfortunately there is strong magic detection in the palace which means that the attempt will fail. Flame could be captured, but will be freed by Silly Me.
- The heroes will be asked to make decisions on which "girls" and "boys" should be promoted to the Lavender House. Random prostitute names: **Ginger, Daffodil, Pearl Number 3, Ketch (male), Diamond Delight, Laughing Lil(y), Topaz, Sir Happy, Tickle.**
- Restaurants and taverns around Talespinners Square pay the Blackhearts protection money. Ostensibly this was to protect them from the Daggerboys, but there is no reason for this now, as some of the smarter owners may work out.
- The Plumes who patrol Talespinners Square don't bother the Blackhearts. A message will eventually come from them about "continuing the existing arrangement". Assuming the heroes don't respond, Plumes will start arresting gang members on the slightest pretext.

The Hunting Lodge

- It is about a mile south-south west of Talespinners Square, separated from Strangerside by half a mile of marsh.
- A trail to it begins in the marsh a little beyond where the west road (Marsh Way) from Talespinners Square peters out. Occasional rubble shows that it was once paved. A few fishermen and mudlarks have built huts off it (including one used by the Old Town smugglers), but most are no longer occupied.
- The lodge is built on a slight rise in the flatness of the marsh. It is surrounded by wide, 10-15' deep muddy gullies (think Tollesbury) that carry water to Glimmermoon Bay.
- Several traps surround it:
 - A marshy area is covered by a narrow plank. A tripwire on it causes a blade to come spinning out of nearby reeds (F3 to dodge).
 - The bridge over the nearest gully has a deliberate weak point. Anyone going over the centre will fall 15' onto spikes buried in the mud.
 - A tree overhangs the path. Careful examination will reveal that the branch is hinged and a tripwire beneath it will cause it to collapse.
 - Another concealed pit in the path to the main entrance. This is 10' deep with spikes (F3 to avoid)
 - Near the house are several cattle-grid like structures buried in the grass. The slats are slightly more than a human foot length apart. Anyone running across them is likely to break a leg.
 - The front and side doors have little spouts that pour fuming acid on intruders when activated from within.

- The gables conceal nozzles spraying "sticky fire", the equivalent of napalm. The area near the front door can quickly be turned into a deathtrap.
- Actually quite a substantial building. It was built as a lodge for the Whiteoars when they went duck hunting.
- Two stories and made of stone (bad luck Flame...). Shuttered windows and thick stout doors. The roof is tiled and mostly intact. The chimney pots are missing.
- There are guards concealed in bushes and up trees. Unless the heroes are clever, their presence will be alerted.
 - Blackhearts hurl rocks, sling shots and cross-bow bolts at approaching enemies.
 - They slip out the side and down ropes from first floor windows.
 - They have bolas to take down attackers. Their approach is to trip them up and then bludgeon them when they are down.
 - They know the area extremely well and will make use of the gullies to sneak up on attackers.
 - There is a concealed boat at the entrance to the sea channel if all else fails.
- Inside are arms from Middleland and elsewhere, cheeses and preserved meats, gold and silver ingots, valuable herbs and spices, silks and jewellery. 2000 hefts all told.

Retaliation

- The Golds will bring down the full force of their wrath. They can afford to pay for a platoon of Plumes to go in and arrest Flame. [May need to organise a trip to Keep in the Woods or the Blacksand Desert if this happens]
- The reward for bringing Flame in increases to 500 hefts.
- Spinnaker's shop is set alight. He is ruined.

Flame and the Masks

- Anyone going to Crafters Square will see that buckets of water and stone weapons are much more in evidence. The Watchers are learning...
- After the goings on in Crafters Square, the Masks and Watchers suggest that Flame could become a threat to Everway and that she should be pursued under the City Justice. Crows or Plumes could become involved.
- The Heroes Tavern is visited by Watchers and Plumes searching for Flame. Weasel confesses that she was there in approximately 2.4 nanoseconds.
- The authorities set an ambush. Any of the heroes visiting the Heroes Tavern will be arrested in an attempt to make Flame give herself up. If it's Walker, a Nipper may spot him and warn him. Similarly, one of Bruiser's Boys could do the same for Flame. Slight will probably spot the intent of the people present before the trap can be closed.

Inkhand Scratch

Heroes may bump into him. Only if desperate – there's little he can add, other than to distract them into chasing Quill Scratch.

Smuggling Plans

- Other commodities that Everway lacks / bans
 - Gold
 - Drugs: Bluegrow, Bliss, Brighteye
 - Basahnware and engraved Fortune Decks
 - Weapons
 - Wines – heavily taxed

- Pornography – not illegal (except if depicting illegal acts), but embarrassing

Three Trees can reveal that they have two other safe houses. One is Manta's mother's house (*Tuna*) near Talespinner's Square. The other is an abandoned fisherman's hut in the marshes to the west of Strangerside.

Current stocks:

- Five Nanny Ebonair cheeses
- Two Wineland Ancient cheeses
- Some Basahnware jugs and plates (stored at Tuna's house - destined for the Diggers)
- Half a dozen fire-damaged but serviceable Middleland cutlasses. These are wanted by *Destrier*, the leader of a band of mercenaries who provides services to merchants crossing the Blacksand Desert.
- A heavenroot

Sellers

- **Hammerhand Pike.** He is currently owed 100 hefts for his last shipment of arms. These were crossbows intended for Destrier, which were destroyed in the fire. Hammerhand can also supply Blueglass glassware.
- **Callus Wenderway:** A spherewalker, he smuggles small amounts of drugs from Lotusland hidden in small spheres that he swallows.
- **Slipsheath.** Smuggles goods from the Civil Kingdom, including kinky pornography and mechanical sex toys.
- **Pagoda Five:** An inhabitant of the Glorious Empire, she supplies artisanware.

Buyers

- **Destrier:** A hard-bitten mercenary who runs Destrier's Dragons, he has used the smugglers for some years as a means of kitting out his men on the cheap. Buys weapons and armour.
- **Sootface Digger:** Goldring's rival, she seeks to outdo her kinswoman with ostentatious parties featuring the very finest arts and crafts from Fourcorner and beyond. Buys Basahnware, Blueglass and Artisanware from the Glorious Empire through an intermediary called **Lemon Stemsnip**.
- **Masks:** Buy specialised assassination equipment through an intermediary (a body double – currently posing as Splendid!). This includes poisons from Lotusland.
- **Mandala Crookstaff:** A member of Living Fire Coven, she is engaging in esoteric experiments and requires dangerous ingredients that cannot be legally bought in the Bazaar.
- **Brander Smith** is after specialist components for Why's clockwork army. Pure gems, saltpetre, flowers of sulphur, firestone, gold, copper
- **Highheart Wolfsbane:** After a glowcheese for his girlfriend Merrily Lightstep.
- **Sandalwood Gold.** Seeking relief from a loveless marriage.

Fish Trader's contacts would be an obvious place to go for possible dodgy goods to trade. They are fish traders so the obvious one is chatterfish. From the Chatterfish River, these (now extremely rare) fish, about four foot long and the shape of fat salmon, are semi-intelligent. They surface and jabber rapidly to each other in a language that no one has been able to decipher. Catching them is extremely difficult (they can use sharp rocks, for example, to cut through nets), but their powdered brains, dissolved in wine, is said to increase intelligence temporarily.

Contact name: **Spar Fastnet.** She has been contacted by **Point Scratch**, a young student who is about to take an exam for an indexer in the Library of All Worlds. He needs help remembering the layout of the library because he has just married into the family.

Problem – how to get goods through the heavily guarded gates:

1. Powerful concealment spells – work but Keepers are occasionally supplemented by Crookstaff detectors like Glint. Cheese hounds can detect magic up to level 4.
2. Corrupt the guards. Money will not generally persuade the Keepers, but they are still human.
3. Distractions: Unlikely to work. The Keepers are organised and have trained for this very possibility. A particularly cunning distraction or powerful illusion might work.

So – **Lockstep Keeper**. He has become addicted to Brighteye (the Keepers have a competition to see who can stand guard the longest without losing concentration and he is currently his sept's champion). The smugglers have used him before to get goods through gates. The problem is that the Keepers randomly rotate duties every week so as to prevent precisely this kind of subornment.

A valuable contract (at least 1000 hefts). Preferably needs some investment by the heroes to justify it.

Possibilities:

- Brander Smith (Why) wants a Sphere of Pure Flame from Fire's Wall. The sphere itself needs to be made from midianite-infused glass. A little dull.

Hammerhand Pike

- Hammerhand can be found in Blood Row in Earthbank, posing as a butcher. The street is well-named – its streets run with blood and are piled with offal and bones from the dozens of butchers that work there. The street slopes down to a marsh which is infested with gulls, giant rats and other scavengers which feed on the remains.
- He is extremely paranoid and will stick stoutly to his story that he is just a humble butcher (a transparent lie to Rathgard and Slight).
- He can be threatened or bullied into doing business. He will try to claim the 100 hefts he is owed and will call the heroes' bluff if they threaten to expose him. After all, he their only source of ironware and blue glassware. The heroes can lie and say they have an alternative source, which may be effective depending on how convincing they are.
- He will take an interest in a possible alliance to attack Everway, but will need convincing that it is genuine. He says he will have to take it back to his superiors.

Other Purchasers

- **Destrier** could send a note (via one of the local taverns) to say that he wants his crossbows. He is a hard-bitten mercenary who shows up with two back-ups. He needs the arms for a caravan trip that he is guarding, which is setting off next week.
 - Pub Names: The Gold Piece
 - The Old Gate
 - The Hook, Line and Sinker
 - The Lady Freedom

The Strangerside Mafia

- With the heroes starting to make their mark, some other Strangersiders who are into dodgy stuff could get in touch.
 - People traffickers – Waving Flag isn't the only merchant who is taking advantage of people's desire to come to Everway. The **Goodbodies** [like the irony of the name] run some weaving houses near the docks that are basically escort agencies. They may need some help bringing in more people from other spheres.
 - The **Halyards** are classic smugglers, focusing on wine and cheese. They won't be too happy if they hear that the heroes have done a deal with the Vinelanders. **Lamp Halyard** is their leader.

- The **Turnwicks** are an extremely dodgy band of apothecaries. Hearing that there are medical problems in Beggartown, **Herring Turnwick** gets in touch with a business proposition. If they can sell their medicine in Beggartown and Dark Alley (it's basically laudanum), the heroes can have a cut.
- Religion as the opiate of the people. A religious organisation (voodoo? Too blatant) asks permission to preach among the beggars.

Stoneflake and Whiting

A Visit to the House of Calm

This is the only lead that the heroes have at present (other than the Chamber Platinum maze).

- The House of Calm is in the same compound as the House of Penitence and has the same grim aspect. The only real difference is that the guards are white robed Mothers rather than Keepers.
- Screams, sobbing and moans can be heard from some distance away.
- There is a gatehouse that is manned by Keepers leading into a high-walled dusty courtyard containing a few sorry-looking trees and bushes. Serried ranks of white-washed prison-like cells with barred windows look on to the courtyard. The escape story really doesn't look very plausible.
- Some gibbering lunatics are being given their daily airing. They are chained and leashed like dogs, their white-robed warders standing several yards away as they sniff around the scrubby bushes and trees that comprise the "garden" or just gaze into the sky and howl.
- **Mother Noble** is manning the reception desk. He is a beefy man who nonetheless speaks in the fluting tones of all the Mothers. No, there is no-one by the name of Terracotta there at present. A lengthy perusal of the books eventually reveals that there was a woman of that name who stayed with them for some six months but then "left" six weeks ago. If questioned more closely, Slight might notice a hint of discomfort.
- Bluffing or bullying will get the heroes into the main compound. There are two Mothers around – **Serene**, a pleasant motherly-looking woman in her 40s, and her assistant **Scruple**, a thin-faced and rather unpleasant man. If the heroes can get Scruple on his own, he will reveal that he does remember Terracotta – she attacked him when he tried to take her owl bangle off her. "She clearly required special... treatment." He was rather surprised when she disappeared suddenly – "though that happens a lot round here." He parrots the official line that she escaped, but clearly doesn't believe it. If asked, he will show the heroes her cell – it is on the third floor and is close to one of the outer walls, but requires an implausible swing across the face of the building followed by a twenty foot drop on the other side.
- On the way back, the heroes may notice another empty cell. Scruple will reveal that this belonged to another inmate who has left recently – **Galleon**, a beggar who liked eating cats and who annoyed Sootstain Digger when he killed her prize moggy. He was taken away for treatment by two burly Mothers from the Temple of Mercy.
- Attempts to foment trouble will bring **Mother Gentle** (F, tall, long fingers, dark eyes with arched eyebrows) and several Keeper guards, who will politely but forcefully usher them out.
- Asking after Galleon at the Temple of Mercy may, if the heroes are lucky, find another garrulous Mother (**Brighteye**). Galleon had an operation – a cordectomy. Brighteye assumed that he was making too much noise at the Calming House – "he certainly screamed enough when he was here". Brighteye assumed that he was taken back to the Calming House after he recovered. One odd thing was that the people who picked him up were not Mothers, but Tenders. "A couple of Buryer Tender's men I think. It was all legit - they had Mother Gentle's seal and everything." They smiled in a very disconcerting way...

Mother Immortal Light

It is likely that the heroes will want to pay Mother Immortal Light a visit. She is usually to be found in the Temple of Mercy, either overseeing patient operations or working in her office. The latter is a mess of papers and books – a very brief perusal will show that she is heavily involved in medical research.

- If asked to explain, she will say that she is researching drugs that will put a patient to sleep temporarily while they are being operated on. At present, patients must be held down by a group of Mothers who can take away the pain, but they are still conscious and wriggle around which often results in complications during delicate surgery. "Just this week, we lost four patients – four! – because of nicked arteries".
- Bliss has potential but also very nasty side effects. She has been experimenting with cutting it with other drugs in an attempt to find a combination that works. Because bliss has such varying effects on people, this has required large scale experiments and the beggars of Beggartown, who are already weakened by disease, make very good test subjects.
- She has a "collaborator" to gather results. Only extreme measures will reveal that he is Brother Quicksaw of the Mercy Hospital.
- The heroes may decide to try to assassinate her. She is easy to kill, but escaping from the Temple of Mercy will prove tricky. There are Watchers guarding the doors and the Mothers have a number of paralysing poisons. Assassinating a Mother will bring the full force of the Everway authorities down on the heroes very quickly.
- She has a private laboratory in the cellars of the Temple of Mercy, which contains a number of suffering animals.

An Interview with Cunning

- He will reveal some or all of the following, depending on how the PCs speak to him and if they deliver the pyramid.
 - He is Slight's real father.
 - He is working for Urumora, who is his grandmother. The message is some very interesting information about a mutual enemy. "But for all I know, you might be working for him, so I cannot say more."
 - The Basahn are the original inhabitants of Everway. They were driven out by humans many years ago.
 - Urumora is leader of the Founder Basahn. They wish to forget Everway and found a new Basahni home. But wherever they go in the Thousand Spheres, the Basahn are persecuted. So they wish to create a new sphere.
 - There is an opposed faction of Basahn – the Returners – who want to re-take Everway [if the heroes make the connection, he will admit that yes, the mutual enemy mentioned in the letter is their leader, a powerful Basahni sorcerer called **Shadow**]. [if asked, Cunning will mention that there is or was a sacred site – Odin's Labyrinth – in Everway. It is now covered by the Pyramid.]
 - Cunning knows that the Heroes have attracted the attention of some powerful people in Everway, but cannot say more because his own interests might be compromised if it got out. "They have been tracking you for some time, and they can be ruthless. Be careful." [if Ulrich Crookstaff or Codex Platinum Scratch is mentioned, Cunning will say that "they move quickly"]
- Cunning's chief concern is that the heroes might be working for Shadow. For this reason he will be reluctant to say more than he absolutely has to until they can convince him that they are on his side.
 - Any mention that Flame is working for a shadowy sorcerer will cause him to clam up entirely.
 - He has lived comfortably in Everway for many years and has no interest in upsetting the status quo. His view is that unrest will simply give an opportunity for the Returners to make an attack – they are fomenting trouble in surrounding spheres, particularly the

Glorious Empire.

- If the heroes ask if there is anything they can do to help, draw an FC:
 - Poor: Find out what General Ten Sticks of the Glorious Empire is up to.
 - Good: Bring any news of a sorcerer who can cloud minds.
 - Excellent: Arrange for him to meet their erstwhile companion Wrath.
- The following information is unlikely to be revealed unless the Heroes somehow persuade him to trust them.
 - Cunning is the result of an experiment to make a Basahn that sets off watch-sprites and so can enter Everway. This was done by sewing human bones and organs into a Basahn skin. This was done to him by Shadow.
 - Cunning has been investigating a secret Everway organisation known as the Twelve. It is made up of senior Everwayans who want to turn themselves into gods [Cunning is dismissive about this]. They are trying to do this by creating a "transcendant plane" which sounds very like a new sphere.
 - There is an old Basahni story about the founder of the Returners, a legendary sorcerer called Spheremaker. He tried to create a new sphere using "the Edge, the Book and the Pearl" but his attempt was spoiled by his evil brother, who is thought to be Shadow.
 - The Twelve have the Pearl – it is in their secret headquarters under the Library of All Worlds. Cunning knows that Ulrich Crookstaff has the Edge, having seen him use it. He has no idea where the Book is. The legend said that Shadow took all three items.

Fish Trader and Gentle Dew

- **Other Peacemasters in Everway.** One (Peacemaster Myeouw, who calls himself Yew Threadlip, a doctor) turns rogue and starts assassinating high-up Everwayans (such as Glint Crookstaff...!). .
- Absinthe can cook up a "diplomatic" mission to get them out of Everway. Perhaps investigate a threat to Everway? The Wavebreak scenario again?

Walker and Humility

- At some point, Humility will come to find Walker. She has been removed from the temple after the Smiths removed their sponsorship. She doesn't know what to do next.
- Kegtap could get her into trouble with the elders of the cult of Elpis by suggesting that she had a sexual liaison with Walker. Could be a reason why Walker has to visit Temple.

The Gatebreakers

- See a printed poster in the Crafters' Quarter – a long tract inveighing against the tyranny of the King, the Great Council and the Merchant's Council of Strangerside –
 - "ONCE AGAIN the so-called Great Council has raised OUR taxes while they *luxuriate in idleness*, so puffed up with *piggish greed* that they can scarce raise themselves from their *couches* to waddle to the table for the next *feast* provided by OUR sweat and labour...
 - And while the hordes of MIDDLELAND threaten our western lands, and OUTSIDERS continue to POUR through our *undefended* gates in a NEVER-ENDING STREAM, *polluting* and *corrupting* our land and people, what does our *Great King* do? NOTHING! Lost in *vice* and *idleness*, concerned only with his *boy-whores* and *girl-whores*, he *lounges* on his *Emerald Throne*, *oblivious* to the DANGERS that beset this land!"

- The poster ends: "WE DEMAND:
 - The formation of a PEOPLE'S CHAMBER to run Everway in the interests of *all* its inhabitants
 - The EXPULSION of all OUTSIDERS who are corrupting our land
 - The DESTRUCTION of the Gates so that the fair city of Everway is never threatened again
 - INDEPENDENCE for the Lands of Roundwater so that local people may govern their own affairs
 - LONG LIVE THE GATEBREAKERS!
- The poster can be traced back to the cellar of a glass blower (*Fraytip Dewer*) in Bottle Street. He holds clandestine meetings in his cellar, where there is a hidden printing press. The meetings are attended by various crafters and also some Everway and Old Town family members (From-the-North Sailson, Arrowsharp Raven, Veracity Scratch and Soothe Tender). From-the-North Sailson is responsible for the tract.

The Trade Dispute

- A merchant who is paying protection – **Caddis Whitestar** – demands that the heroes keep to their promise to "protect" her from a trading rival – **Hewer Wainscot**
- Caddis is a potter who sells her pots in the Crafters Quarter. Recently Hewer has taken to undercutting her. She wants the heroes to "have a word".
- Hewer lives in Redearth Street in the Crafters Quarter (Caddis lives on the edge of Old Town). He is indeed undercutting Caddis because he is desperate. He used to sell pots to Everway families, particularly the Weavers and Mudbanks, through an intermediary. But that line of work has dried up.
- An additional complication is that Hewer's pots are, to an unbiased observer, of higher quality than Caddis'. So he deserves his success.
- The intermediary (**Threnody Salter** (F)) lives in Old Town. She has found a cheaper source, a merchant (**Waving Flag**) living to the south of Talespinner's Square. He has a large compound of a home and a surprisingly large number of guards, all of whom share his distinctive features (star-shaped makeup around the eyes)
- The truth is that Waving Flag is running his business on slave labour. The slaves come from Waving Flag's home realm of [] where they have been displaced by oncoming White Scorpion warriors. Waving Flag is a spherewalker and brings them to Strangerside, promising to set them up in a new life. What he actually does is place them under lock and key.