

Everway Session Notes 2014b

Things to investigate:

- The Bliss Experiment - The Mothers
- MS 7 The Chamber Platinum maze
- Terracotta - Porters at the House of Calm

Other Events:

- Emeralds either try to prevent the Tourmaline story getting out or continue the existing relationship
- Other mafia types get in touch
- The Twelve meet
- MS 8 The Trade Dispute

Boons

+1 Air to Walker

Boon for Wishbone:

Possible Timeline

Cellars

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

PM / Night

- Conversation with Cunning

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

AM

- Snakerings recruit Steel.
- **Rumour:** Stories about dragons have become valuable currency in Tales...
- Brassart: "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 legged, stick.
 - Brought by Brassart, who wants money to fix up the Water Tower.

PM

- **Peacock Plume** turns up for the regular training.
 - He assumes that the heroes will want to continue with the existing relationship.
 - He will tell them off for recruiting so quickly – "your enthusiasm is commendable, but all these new recruits will undermine discipline. There is also the matter of equipment."
 - He will ask about the officer structure.
 - He will advise regularly training hours and single out individuals with military talent.
 - He will regret the loss of Towershield – "he was potential officer material"
- Message from Sapling: Beautiful Rice has been found dead in her room at the Lavender House. She appears to have died of Bliss.

Everway Session Notes

- To a doctor, it is obvious that she has been poisoned. There are unhealed cuts on the tips of two of her fingers, which are coated in bliss. Brushing the drug away shows that they are swollen and discoloured.
- The golden box that Tourmaline gave her has been refilled. The bliss inside it has been cut with Middleland viper venom (level 4). There is also a hidden blade to ensure that the poison enters the bloodstream.
- Sapling complains that Beautiful Rice's friend **Cherry Blossom** has disappeared, taking all her possessions with her.
- Cherry Blossom was also from the Glorious Empire. She and B.R. were good friends.
- Girls (or accounts) will mention that she had a frequent client called **Clackit Weaver**, who came to see her every week. He was a small man with pale yellow hair. They often went out walking together.
- Further investigation with the Weavers will reveal that no such man exists.

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

AM

At Sea

- Flying Fish
 - Fish Trader can catch flying fish as they pop up near the boat. Need minimum skill of F5 to succeed.
 - WB and Rath can try but it's not really their thing.
- Stupid Razorbills tear a hole in the sail

In Everway

- Topaz's mother (**Thistle**) turns up. Topaz has died.
 - She had been on the mend after Walker's healing.
 - Thistle went out to buy food, while Topaz was sleeping. She was gone for half a bell or so. When she got back, she had died.
 - Close inspection of her fingernails will reveal blood under them, as if she had scratched someone.
 - If the heroes are lucky, an urchin may have noticed someone lurking among the chimney pots.
- Sapling sends a message asking what to do about the payment to the Golds this evening.
- Trouble between factions in the Black Daggers of the West.
- **News:** The Stonebreakers have refused to pay their full City Tax. They claim that the tax bill is too high, citing the cost of genuine gold streamers in the last Festival of Masks and the additional defence claimed by the Crows and the Keepers for new uniforms. The Palace running costs have also increased by 100,000 hefts of "miscellaneous expenses" and no explanation has been forthcoming. The Emeralds are launching a court case to reclaim the debt.
 - **Lucent Stonebreaker** is the leader making the claim.
 - She has publicly-stated support in the Great Council from the Weavers, Mudbanks and Scratches. **Almond Weaver** has been particularly vociferous in her support. It is likely that she has tacit support from other families, particularly the Watchers who were annoyed at being left out of the uniforms settlement.
 - Public opinion is that this is a case that the Stonebreakers are unlikely to win. They could even be liable for punitive sanctions if the uniforms is treated as a matter affecting the State of Roundwander rather than just the city of Everway, which would bring it under the King's Justice.

PM

At Sea

- Seahook heads to a fishing spot to make the trip look plausible, where he meets his brother **Bluefin** who is fishing with pole and line from a small fishing smack called the **Flopping**

Haddock. Bluefin could be an identical twin and has a similar laconic manner. He nods respectfully to Reel but ignores Slate, who nonetheless nods to him.

- B: "Aye"
- S: "Aye"
- "Everway?"
- "Aye"
- "Bluestripes"
- "Who?"
- "Falcon. And King's Hammer."
- Seahook sucks in air through his teeth. "Two? Where?"
- "Shimmermoon Point"
- "How long?"
- "Days"
- Seahook grunts, then turns to you. "Trouble".

In Everway

- Heron spots that Brassart is spending too much.
- Evening: **Sunrise Gold** tries to collect the Gold takings.

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

AM

At Sea

- Preparations for possible fight. To Sunsilke Cove to meet Scythe Henbane.
- WB can send Whitehawk to the cellars with a message.

In Everway

- Cellars: Start the Trade Dispute?
- Daggerboy riots.
- **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.

PM

- Spice Runner reaches Shimmermoon Bay. Encounter with the Falcon and the King's Hammer.

A Meeting with Cunning Gold

- Cunning will make a joke of it – "all right, you got me. Allow me to introduce myself – I am Cunning Gold."
- He will suggest convening at a local tavern in Old Town (The Harbinger's Rest). If they do, he gets a side room and puts a spell on it so no-one will notice or overhear what they are saying.
- If there is any attempt at violence, he will disappear, or it will turn out that he is not in the place that he seems to be. Slight only has a 50% chance of spotting this.
- If the heroes complain at the chaos he caused in the cellars, he will apologise but point out that if they had just delivered his message as they were supposed to, all this unpleasantness could have been avoided.
- He will observe that their attempts to create a fake pyramid were amateurish – "you could at least have put a glamour on it to make it seem real".
- If the heroes ask, he will open the pyramid in front of them. Slight can detect that the lock is a combination of physical and magical. At one point a lizard starts to come alive – "oh no you don't".
- Cunning reads the paper and then destroys it [he may ask Flame to do the honours]. "It's a

Everway Session Notes

message from Urumora. [To Slight] She's your great grandmother, by the way"

- If the heroes ask about what, Cunning will say "Basahn stuff". If the heroes press further, he will sigh theatrically – "I suppose there's no harm in telling you – *he* knows anyway" and explain about the Founders and the Returners. (Note: The city name was Ambasara and its people were the Ambasahn).

Occupation and History

Like many Gold husbands (such as [Trader Gold](#)), he appears to be a louche man about town. He is also known as something of a scholar, but in a dilettante fashion. In fact he is part-Basahn and is working for the [Founders](#), looking for the [Pearl of Making](#), [Edge of Light and Darkness](#) and [Book of Words](#) as well as news of [Shadow](#).

Cunning is now a widower, Topaz having died some years ago. He has inherited the [Basahn](#) long life and looks nothing like his seventy years (he occasionally has to cloud memories to make people forget how old he is). He continues to pose as a scholar, trader and man about town.

Physical Appearance

A black-skinned man, seemingly in his thirties, in a black and silver cloak.

Distinguishing Feature

He smiles a lot. Occasional bouts of debilitating weakness.

Values and Motivations

His chief motivation is revenge against his father for his painful childhood. Support for the Returner Basahn is secondary.

[Urumora](#) and Cunning are searching for the components for the spell of sphere creation, based on Spheremaker's notes. Urumora is searching for the [Book of Words](#), suspecting it to be hidden in a Basahn caravan. Cunning is trying to locate the [Edge of Light and Darkness](#) and the [Pearl of Making](#), which he has tracked down to the [Chamber of the Twelve](#). He has managed to work out that [Ulrich Crookstaff](#) has the Edge, having seen him wield it while contacting Wrath. Cunning is always listening out for stories of a dark-skinned magician with the power to cloud minds...

Interactions with Others

Cunning is polite but distant, often using humour as a weapon to disarm people who come too close. He assumes that people will be unreliable. Like Slight, he is largely oblivious to the consequences of his actions. It has not occurred to him, for example, that many people would regard Ulrich's sacrifice of people to gain access to Wrath as something that should be stopped.

Cunning is also paranoid about spies from [Shadow](#). He knows that Shadow's ability to cloud minds is so great that the spy may not even know that they are spying.

He is confident in his powers and can come across as arrogant.

Useful Knowledge

He knows about the [Twelve](#) and their plans, though is not greatly interested.

He knows about the [Pearl of Making](#), the [Edge of Light and Darkness](#) and the [Book of Words](#).

He knows vaguely about Avatars.

He knows about the [Gift of Coyote](#).

He knows all about [Wrath](#).

He knows about the [Golds](#).

He knows that the heroes were involved in the Wormwood Crookstaff murder (he made enquiries with the Watchers) but not that they were associated with Wrath. In the unlikely event that this is revealed, he will find this very funny ("poor old Ulrich!" will be his rather cryptic comment) but will (secretly) be concerned about the possible threat to Everway. *It is possible that Slight could spot this.*

Exceptional Attributes and Skills

Gift of Coyote 7

A 5 Extract information

E 2 Resist pain

Everway Session Notes

F 3 Run
W 7 Sense motivations

Virtue: Cunning
Flaw: Thoughtlessness
Fate: Phoenix (Re-birth vs Destruction) [Ties to Flame - neat!]

He will reveal some or all of the following, depending on how the PCs speak to him:

- He is Slight's real father.
 - He is working for Urumora, who is his grandmother (and therefore Slight's great 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"]
 - *The Golds*: C. prefers not to say too much, other than to say that **Glisten Gold** was responsible for the "Blackheart account" and that there will be serious trouble if they don't get their cut.
 - *Terracotta*: If the heroes tell the Terracotta story, C. will pretend not to be interested. Slight has a 50% chance of spotting that he knows more than he's saying.
 - *Slight*: He will offer to help train Slight's gift. "Maybe if your will can be strengthened, you will be able to fend even *him* off. But it will take a long time and require much dedication."
-
- 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.

What can C. ask the heroes to do?

C.'s problem is that he has to assume that anything he says to them will eventually get back to Shadow/Maba, so he can't tell them what he is up to or what he wants them to find out.

- Poor: Find out what General Ten Sticks of the Glorious Empire is up to. C. knows that there is trouble brewing, but it's probably just a front. The Snakerings will have spies there who will report to the King's Council.
- Good: Bring news of any other people with the Gift of Coyote. The heroes may well put two and two together, in which case he will admit that yes, the leader of the Returners is his father and he has the same powers as C does, but even stronger.

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.

The Spice Runner

Need some extra events on the way back. Build up the Bluestripe encounter.

- A shoal of flying fish come leaping out of the water nearby. They can be caught in mid-air by people with F 5 and above. Wishbone, Rathgard and Fish Trader can have a competition.
- Stupid razor bills tear the sail cloth.
- Seahook gets a warning from his brother **Bluefin** that the Bluestripes are patrolling the entrance to Shimmermoon Bay. The Falcon and the King's Hammer.

Some Options:

- Rathgard can try to steer them through. But the Bluestripe caravels are roughly twice as fast as the Spice Runner with her current loading. Rathgard's wind weaving would have to be exceptionally good.
- Land at **Flashfin**, a small fishing village that Seahook knows some 50 miles south east of Everway. The problem here is that it will take several days to get the goods in to Everway and some of them are perishable. Also the countryside to the south of Everway is heavily patrolled and there are toll gates on the Desert Road to the south of Strangerside. Merchants have to get passes to bring goods in.
- Get help from the heroes in Everway. Wishbone can send Hawk. Slight could make the entire ship disappear if he can get within viewing distance, though he may not be keen.
- Get help from a contact that Three Trees knows. **Scythe Henbane** is a farmer and smuggler who operates from **Silksand Cove**. She has her own ship (**The Milch Cow**) which is as fast as the Bluestripe caravels, and she has access to weapons. The only problem is that a) she was one of Granite's lovers and will not be too happy with heroes for killing him and b) she is after Three Trees' blood for introducing her to a contact (**Deepwell**) who turned out to be Snakering spy (the result was a fight where her friend **Harrow** was killed and two more of her gang were captured).
- She'll agree to stage a diversion, but for a price. Rathgard can negotiate. The following things will get her onside:
 - Promised revenge for Granite's murder
 - Recompense for Harrow's death
 - Rathgard "takes Granite's place". [Is this too crass? It's good to give R. a genuine ethical dilemma but is a bit obvious]
 - Financial support for Eel, her daughter

Everway Session Notes

- Rathgard promises to ensure that favourable winds happen.
- A long-term smuggling deal. Scythe currently has to smuggle her goods in via Snakehead Harbour and arrange imports the Blackhearts and the Halyards, who always take a major cut (40%) of the earnings.
- Any reveal that the heroes know Granite's killer will likely result in the deal being cancelled.
- The Milch Cow is a 50' two-masted sloop. It has large sails which require a very experienced team to handle.

The Final Encounter

- The *King's Hammer* and the *Falcon* are patrolling near Shimmermoon Point. This is a high rocky outcrop at the end of the western arm of Shimmermoon Bay. The remains of a lighthouse, long abandoned, can be seen at its tip.
- The Shimmermoon Bay entrance is about three miles wide.
- The weather is light cloud and quite breezy.
- There are various others ships going in and out, but the Bluestripes are only stopping the occasional one.
 - A Sea Lord longship is in evidence (The **Sea Otter**, a Fellslayer family ship)
 - A grand ship from the Civil Kingdom (the **Princess Pleasant**).
 - A flotilla of 20 sailing boats, all roped together. These are the **Crabhooks**, a floating family.
 - A peculiar-looking fishing boat with a flat bottom. It is loaded with fish.
- Scythe's plan is simple – go and sit in sight of a Bluestripe as if waiting for someone. If the Bluestripe comes to investigate, sail off in a suspicious fashion. Dealing with the other ship will be up to the heroes.
- The fight option. Not easy - there are 17 crew on the *Falcon*, all of whom are trained in combat.
 - Rathgard can make things awkward for the Falcon with his weather control. Can distract 3-4 Bluestripes.
 - Flame can put the ballistae out of operation and can cause fires with the firepots that are used for flaming arrows.
 - Fish Trader can outrun anyone on the ship.
 - Slight can confuse things.
 - Wishbone's hawk can confuse and she might want to use her stored spirits.
 - Seahook, Slate and Reel can jointly take on 2 crew.
- Award points for suitably piratical behaviour, such as swinging in on ropes. If successful, the heroes end up with a new caravel and some prisoners. The sensible (if brutal) thing to do is kill the prisoners and sink the ship – if the heroes want to keep the latter, TT knows of a suitable secluded cove where it could be stashed. TT will point out that they will likely have a price on their heads.
- Foxglove's stats:
 - A 3 Resist persuasion**
 - E 3 Sea legs**
 - F 5 Gunnery**
 - W 5 Spot evasions**Powers:
 - Dead reckoning** (F, M): Always knows where is north.
- Keepers: **A 3 (Command) E 3 (Resist falling) F 3-4 (Ship fighting) W 4 (Spot contraband)**

Developments in Strangerside

Trouble in the Gang

Want to build this up over the next few days. See how heroes respond to problems of leadership.

Names of competent gang members: **Shank, Polearm**

- Names of ex-Daggerboy members: **Stickblood, Gash, Scar, Edge, Swish, Gouger**
 - Names of ex-Blackhearts: **Bludgeon, Blackeye, Skullsmasher, Baton, Cosh, Cudgel, Boomerang, Clubber and Crusher, Pommel, Mangle, Pelt, Blister**
1. Relations between ex-Daggerboys, ex-SotW and ex-Blackhearts will deteriorate without Rathgard's guiding influence unless Slight thinks to take control.
 2. Heron has trouble getting the BDotW to take her seriously. People keep stealing things from the stores when she hasn't authorised it.
 3. Dark Alley has all sorts of lowlifes 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.
 5. Restaurant and tavern owners around Talespinner's Square start getting uppity. Example:

Blackhearts – Repercussions

- 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), Sir Happy, Tickle.**
- Restaurants and taverns around Talespinner's 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 Talespinner's 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.

Retaliation

- If they don't get their cut, 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.

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. *Use this if the heroes reject the Trade Dispute plot.*
 - 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.

Random Beggartown / Dark Alley Events

- An exploding still. An attempt to brew illicit hooch goes horribly wrong and causes terrible injuries.
- Heroes encounter a young man being mugged for refusing to pay 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.
- 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's Revenge

- **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.

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 and Talespinner's 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.

A Beggartown Revolution?

- It's possible that the heroes might decide to use the momentum of their victory over the Blackhearts to stir up a revolution in Strangerside. Point out that they are not, in fact, very powerful at present:
 - 26 SotW (10 injured)
 - 18 Daggerboys (12 injured)
 - 22 Blackhearts (4 injured)
 - Total: 66 (26 injured)
- The people of Beggartown and Dark Alley (20,000 in roughly one square mile) 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.
 - Lack of schooling: Beggartown children grow up illiterate and ignorant. Their only skills are in begging and theft. **Didact Billows** could help, though would need funding for a school.

Smuggling Plans

- Other commodities that Everway lacks / bans
 - **Gold**
 - Drugs: Bluegrow, Brighteye
 - **Artisanware** from the Civil Kingdom or Glorious Empire
 - **Basahnware and engraved Fortune Decks**
 - **Weapons**
 - **Wines** – heavily taxed
 - Pornography – not illegal (except if depicting illegal acts), but embarrassing
 - **Medicines**. Some family members do not like going to the Mothers particularly for embarrassing personal problems, thinking knowledge of their weaknesses gives them undue power. (The Mothers assure confidentiality but no-one quite believes them). There is a thriving black market in dubious remedies for diseases such as Libertine's Itch.

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.

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.
- **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.

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 Nippers - Repercussions

- In Carrot's papers, the heroes could find the following interesting things:
 - 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.

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".
- 7Bliss 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.

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.

Thinking 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.

Some questions to encourage them to answer:

What do you want to do with your 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.

Do you want to keep the Cellar as your HQ?

Nicer places are available. The Cellar has the merit of being defensible (though not as defensible as the Water Tower). The Lodge in the marshes has the most potential for a comfortable dwelling.

What other lines of income do you want to pursue?

- Protection: According to the brothel accounts, the Plumes are being paid for their policing of Talespinners Square.
- Restaurants and Taverns. Steady income but low margin.
- Gifts from wealthy "well wishers" and tradesfolk, particularly if The Trade Dispute resolves well.
- Blackmail opportunities from the brothels.
- Expand the smuggling operation. Find additional contacts in nearby realms. Lands of Everway, Sea Lords, Keep in the Woods, Blacksand Desert, Civil Kingdom.
- Possible smuggling goods:
 - Basahnware and engraved fortune decks
 - Wine – heavily taxed
 - Gold and other precious metals. Everway has a shortage
 - Medicines – it is known that some people don't like using the Mothers because they don't trust them to keep embarrassing medical conditions secret. Includes groups strongly affiliated with the Great Council such as the Golds, Diggers, Stonebreakers, Scratches, Weavers and Moondancers.
- Smuggling across worlds. Sphere walkers are rare
- Undercut the Golds by setting up a tax-free alternative to the Bazaar.

Which Everway Families would you like to contact?

- Families you (probably) don't like: Masks, Golds, Mothers, Emeralds
- Families you have (probably) annoyed: Snakerings, Watchers, Golds, Diggers
- Families you have (sort of) worked with: Crookstuffs, Scratches, Plumes

Other families: Crows, Hosts, Keepers, Moondancers, Mudbanks, Stonebreakers, Smiths, Tenders, Wailers, Weavers

What (if anything) do you want to do about the Old Town Merchants?

They nominally run Strangerside but appear to have done little or nothing to help the people of Beggartown or Dark Alley. Do you care?