# Detail Design

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World: Miradania

Series: The Miradania Crown Series

Episode: Jack Toresal and the Secret Letter

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Table of Contents

[Detail Design 1](#_Toc173397853)

[Map of Miradan 8](#_Toc173397854)

[The World of Orphan 9](#_Toc173397855)

[The People 9](#_Toc173397856)

[Ascension 9](#_Toc173397857)

[Magic 9](#_Toc173397858)

[In People 9](#_Toc173397859)

[In Things 10](#_Toc173397860)

[Physics 10](#_Toc173397861)

[Astronomy 10](#_Toc173397862)

[Recent History 10](#_Toc173397863)

[Before The Story Begins… 11](#_Toc173397864)

[Royalty Reference 12](#_Toc173397865)

[The Players 13](#_Toc173397866)

[The Player Character 13](#_Toc173397867)

[Jacqueline Toresal (aka Jack) 13](#_Toc173397868)

[Major Non-Playing Characters 13](#_Toc173397869)

[Bobby 13](#_Toc173397870)

[Baron Fossville (aka The Baron, Fossville, the Dark Hunter) 13](#_Toc173397871)

[Mercenaries (group of men) 13](#_Toc173397872)

[Hester Rodop (aka the Magistrate) 13](#_Toc173397873)

[Jacobs 13](#_Toc173397874)

[Olmer 13](#_Toc173397875)

[Darens 13](#_Toc173397876)

[Other Major Characters 13](#_Toc173397877)

[Duke William Toresal (aka Lord of the Keep, the Old Lord, the Prince, the Queen's Son) 13](#_Toc173397878)

[Minor Non-Playing Characters 14](#_Toc173397879)

[Teisha 14](#_Toc173397880)

[Angeline, Clara, Fiona, Theresa, Shannon (Maiden House) 14](#_Toc173397881)

[Table of Dramatic Topics 14](#_Toc173397882)

[Germaise (In Bakery) 15](#_Toc173397883)

[Old man Holstenoffer (In Butchery) 15](#_Toc173397884)

[Olgan Minor (Armory) 15](#_Toc173397885)

[Mrs. Sandler (Jewelry) 15](#_Toc173397886)

[Pieter (Jewelry) 15](#_Toc173397887)

[Rudolph (Jewelry) 15](#_Toc173397888)

[Chorus Brothers 15](#_Toc173397889)

[The Screenplay 16](#_Toc173397890)

[SYNOPSIS 16](#_Toc173397891)

[Game Features 18](#_Toc173397892)

[Time Keeping 18](#_Toc173397893)

[Details 19](#_Toc173397894)

[Chapter I – Grubber's Market 19](#_Toc173397895)

[Map 19](#_Toc173397896)

[Rundown 19](#_Toc173397897)

[Notes 20](#_Toc173397898)

[Design 20](#_Toc173397899)

[Chapter II – Commerce Street 42](#_Toc173397900)

[Map 42](#_Toc173397901)

[Rundown 42](#_Toc173397902)

[Notes 42](#_Toc173397903)

[Design 42](#_Toc173397904)

[Chapter III - East Commerce Street 69](#_Toc173397905)

[Chapter IV – Bobby 71](#_Toc173397906)

[Map 71](#_Toc173397907)

[Rundown 71](#_Toc173397908)

[Notes 72](#_Toc173397909)

[Design 72](#_Toc173397910)

[Chapter V – Maiden House 87](#_Toc173397911)

[Map 87](#_Toc173397912)

[Rundown 87](#_Toc173397913)

[Notes 87](#_Toc173397914)

[Design 87](#_Toc173397915)

[Chapter VI – Captured 93](#_Toc173397916)

[Map 93](#_Toc173397917)

[Rundown 93](#_Toc173397918)

[Notes 93](#_Toc173397919)

[Design 93](#_Toc173397920)

[Chapter VII – Underground 102](#_Toc173397921)

[Map 102](#_Toc173397922)

[Rundown 102](#_Toc173397923)

[Notes 102](#_Toc173397924)

[Design 102](#_Toc173397925)

[Chapter VIII – Black Gate Estate 105](#_Toc173397926)

[Map I - Rooftops 105](#_Toc173397927)

[Map II – Black Gate Estate 105](#_Toc173397928)

[Rundown 105](#_Toc173397929)

[Notes 105](#_Toc173397930)

[Design 106](#_Toc173397931)

[Chapter IX – Maiden House II 117](#_Toc173397932)

[Map 117](#_Toc173397933)

[Rundown 117](#_Toc173397934)

[Notes 117](#_Toc173397935)

[Design 117](#_Toc173397936)

[Chapter X – Red Gate Estate 124](#_Toc173397937)

[Map 124](#_Toc173397938)

[Rund own 124](#_Toc173397939)

[Notes 124](#_Toc173397940)

[Design 124](#_Toc173397941)

[Chapter XI – Pieter 131](#_Toc173397942)

[Map 131](#_Toc173397943)

[Rundown 131](#_Toc173397944)

[Notes 131](#_Toc173397945)

[Design 132](#_Toc173397946)

[Chapter XII – Mercenaries 135](#_Toc173397947)

[Map 135](#_Toc173397948)

[Rundown 135](#_Toc173397949)

[Notes 135](#_Toc173397950)

[Meet and Greet 135](#_Toc173397951)

[Design 135](#_Toc173397952)

[Chapter XIII – The Baron 142](#_Toc173397953)

[Map 142](#_Toc173397954)

[Rundown 142](#_Toc173397955)

[Notes 142](#_Toc173397956)

[Design 142](#_Toc173397957)

[Chapter XIV – The War Room 146](#_Toc173397958)

[Map 146](#_Toc173397959)

[Rundown 146](#_Toc173397960)

[Notes 146](#_Toc173397961)

[Design 146](#_Toc173397962)

[Chapter XV – The Princess 149](#_Toc173397963)

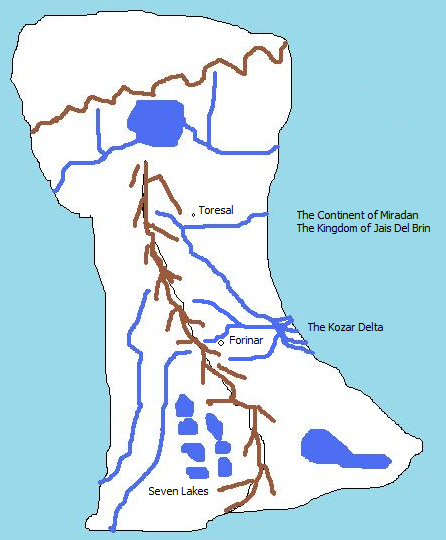
[Map 149](#_Toc173397964)

[Rundown 149](#_Toc173397965)

[Notes 149](#_Toc173397966)

[Design 149](#_Toc173397967)

# Map of Miradan



# The World of Orphan

In this world there exists a single planet where humans live and magic is extremely rare. The world has large bodies of water and at least one land mass as of this history. This continent is known as Miradan and is loosely ruled by the Kingdom of Jais Del Brin.

## The People

The people of Jais Del Brin are generally farmers, fisherman, and townspeople. Commerce is rugged and local, and the Kingdom generally functions without much taxation. Royalty includes the King and Queen, Princes, Princesses, Dukes and Duchesses, Earls and Countess, Barons and Baronesses.

## Ascension

The Kingdom generally selects new Kings based bloodlines, but this is married to the fact that the vast majority of Kings have sired strong, popular, and healthy sons to ascend to the throne. The key here is popularity. The Kingdom has rarely had to think about succession and when it has, it has generally been between two strong choices, not a complete lack of strong choices.

In the absence of a strong and popular blood prince, the laws of the Kingdom state that the King or Queen must choose a successor. In the event of the death of the King and the Queen before a successor has been named, all of the primary royals will select a Regent to handle Kingdom affairs until a successor is selected by vote. Voting is weighted in that Princes and Princesses get ten votes, Dukes and Duchesses get five votes, Earls and Countesses get three votes, and Barons and Baronesses get a single vote. But again, the general public's opinion is taken into consideration before a successor is selected. A special People's Regent role has always been filled, but never used but for ceremony. The role in the case of an unclear successor is to poll the people and make known their wishes. Obviously, in certain circumstances, this could become a very dangerous and powerful role.

## Magic

### In People

Magic is known to exist and is treated respectfully by the general population. They consider it either lucky or unlucky to have good or bad things happen due to magic respectively. Everyone always dreams of some minor magic to help their daily lives, but almost no one goes in search of it. Life is hard and there is no time for such endeavors. Those people that have discovered a talent for magic generally keep it to themselves and help or hurt those as they would with any other talent. There is no general commerce in magic, but if a magic user is available, some may intrude to ask for a favor and offer some token in return. Magic tends to develop in women more than men, although an analysis of those with "talent" would show that girls are encouraged to look within and boys are not, so never develop whatever ability they may have. Girls with talent are considered blessed or cursed, depending upon their nature (if a girl is a trouble-maker, she's cursed…if a girl is kind, she is considered blessed).

Most magic is minor. Very little "grand magic" is know about or has ever been seen. The common uses of magic are to mend clothes, cure minor ailments, fix broken tools, and the like. On occasion a magic user will have more interesting abilities.

### In Things

There are artifacts that are imbued with magical ability, giving the owner of the artifact some magical ability, albeit focused and limited.

## Physics

The general physics of this world are the same as Earth.

## Astronomy

The night sky of this world is full of stars. One section of the sky that is seen in summer is a strip of very bright stars known commonly as "The River of Light". It also has two moons, one noticeably large than the other. They are known commonly as Big Sister and Little Brother.

## Recent History

The Realtic Kingdom has been seemingly healthy for hundreds of years, with successions going without any problem. But the last two kings have ruled poorly and the most recent king has left the land to an elderly queen, who only late in life realized she would need to rule and determine a successor. Although her children and grandchildren may vie for the crown, their particular fates have produced a great deal of concern from the public and the Lord's council as to their ability to rule.

Succession rights are simple where blood is concerned, but with so many inline, the fate of the kingdom is not so simply decided. It's almost a game or a sport. Whoever shows the Queen that they deserve it, and then garners public approval, will become the heir to the throne. Because the Kingdom has had such a peaceful history, the public would balk at a heavy-handed ruler.

Orphan is the story of a young girl that is at the top of the blood lines, along with many other potential successors. Her father was the last son born of the current queen, with seven siblings in front of him. Unfortunately, his fate was decided by Baron Fossville. Having seen the coming turmoil, he wished to vie for the thrown himself, and turned to dark means to attain it.

In the 756th year of the Kingdom, Baron Fossville managed to slowly poison Duke Toresal, making it look like a mysterious illness. What Fossville did not know until taking over the Duke's keep and lands was that the former Lord had bore a child with a woman in secrecy. Since the Duke was already married, the secret remained buried for years. But before his death, Duke Toresal left written claim to all of his estates to his only daughter. He had loved the woman that bore her, but could not openly recognize her or their child…a mandate from the Queen herself, since the woman was not of royal blood.

But his will left the door open for young Jacqueline, and this is her story….

# Before The Story Begins…

Your name is Jacqueline, but everyone outside of the Maiden House knows you as Jack. A few people have come to know you well enough to know that you are a girl and some have figured it out on their own. A few suspect that you are special and some think it's because you are the daughter of a royal personage. No one knows for sure. There is proof of the matter within your father's personal papers and some people in the royal government know. The fact that you exist and there is no other clear heir to the local lands (much less the Kingdom's throne) is the intrigue into which you were born. If you were to be recognized a royal heir it would cause a great deal of upheaval and if you were not recognized, things would probably progress more smoothly, albeit in a fashion the crown is not comfortable with. It would elevate a family that is highly ambitious, placing their heirs in a position to marry into the throne.

Your sponsor has in fact been your father by blood. He loved the woman that bore you to him, but as a mistress, there was no way to bring her or you to court. For the first ten years of your life, your father watched as you grew. He made sure that some of the women in Maiden House were well-educated and paid them to tutor you.

In your eleventh year, Lord Duke Toresal died of a mysterious illness. He left a legacy of goodwill among the people, but the succession to his lands was clearly going to Baron Fossville, a man who hired mercenaries for mysterious businesses and who had clear ambitions for the royal court. Fossville's machinations were coming to fruition as a royal ball was planned at which he would be betrothed to one of the Queen's daughters.

You are a fourteen year old girl on the verge of becoming a woman. Your mother died when you were born and you do not know who your father was. You do know that someone sponsored your early upbringing at Maiden House. Even though they care for you and feed you, and even though you do appreciate everything they did, you always felt you were destined for something else. You learned to read and write; a great deal of history of the land, to speak and act properly, and how to be respectful. You even were given the gift of a solid self-esteem. You possess all of the things that most orphans never even know about.

Eventually you decide that the stodgy lifestyle of the Maiden House was more than you can bear and you began taking to the streets at the age of eleven, nearly the same time Lord Toresal died. Wearing trousers and a boy's shirt and continually cutting your hair off with a blade and covering it with a hat, you instinctively realized that certain doors were open to you pretending to be a boy.

The maidens counted it a phase and although they worried if you were out all night, they never questioned where you'd been or what you'd done. It was as if they accepted your maturity and decision making almost entirely without question. But they did look out for you too. More than once you caught one of the younger maidens "accidentally" bumping into you.

For the next three years you manage to befriend other orphans, although of less luck. They happily show you how to beg, steal, and sneak around town without ever getting caught by the magistrate or his soldiers. One of the beggars you befriend is a boy named Bobby, who appeared on the streets shortly after your eleventh birthday. Never questioning the appearance or disappearance of any of the orphans, you don't realize that he is in fact a spy for the royal court, and in some ways, your protector.

# Royalty Reference

King, Queen

Prince, Princess

Duke, Duchess

Prince, Princess (if they have royal parentage)

Earl, Countess

Baron, Baroness

# The Players

## The Player Character

### Jacqueline Toresal (aka Jack)

Jacqueline is a fourteen year old girl coming of age in a rugged town on the outskirts of the Kingdom.

## Major Non-Playing Characters

### Bobby

Bobby is an orphan, sixteen years old, and seems to do things for various people for money, but you can never quite figure out what he does. You don't know where he sleeps, but he always seems "taken care of". Well, sometimes he looks a wreck, but he never seems bothered by it.

### Baron Fossville (aka The Baron, Fossville, the Dark Hunter)

Baron Fossville is a nobleman by birth, the son of some cousin of the royal family. He's been sent on many a mission for the crown to deal with uprisings and skirmishes with the western people. Through these efforts he has gained a formidable following. It is commonly believed that he is maneuvering to marry the eldest daughter of the Queen and become heir to the throne.

### Mercenaries (group of men)

The mercenaries are generic men with tunics, pants, swords, helms. They all speak in broken language laced with common slurs. They aren't very smart either.

### Hester Rodop (aka the Magistrate)

The magistrate, Hester Rodop, is a very bad man. He will try very hard to catch you doing something wrong and if he does, it will not go well for you. You could wind up in a cell with bad men.

### Jacobs

Jacobs is the son of a wealthy merchant. He's a big brutish man. Though he is slightly insane, he will talk about anything to anyone.

### Olmer

Olmer is a typical town bum. On some days he'll work and some days he'll steal. He's never seen without Darens.

### Darens

Darens is another typical bum. He's always with Olmer.

## Other Major Characters

### Duke William Toresal (aka Lord of the Keep, the Old Lord, the Prince, the Queen's Son)

Lord Toresal ruled the namesake lands for several decades in peace and prosperity. The keep was always open to commoners and the town was built to provide a place for commerce. Everyone seemingly benefited from the prince's rule, except for Baron Fossville. Toresal kept Fossville at arm's length for some unknown reason and two were known to have verbal jousts in public.

## Minor Non-Playing Characters

### Teisha

Teisha is a girl in Grubber's market that is somewhat of a friend. She teases about the Maiden House and is somewhat aloof, but she is never mean to you. Although there is no blood relationship, the two of you look somewhat alike, if not a perfect match.

### Angeline, Clara, Fiona, Theresa, Shannon (Maiden House)

Angeline, Clara, Fiona, Theresa, and Shannon are the women in the Maiden House. They are all widows that look out for each other. They do various odd jobs for town folk and farmers who pay them in food and bare necessities. They know many things about the town and surrounding area, although they will very rarely offer details without some prior knowledge.

These women are the help system. They will offer information on how to solve problems within the game as you learn about them. So when you find a door you can't unlock (unlikely), they will know how to help you.

All of the women will occasionally be caught gossiping about town drama.

### Table of Dramatic Topics

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Crown Politics/Ascension/Queen |  |
| Grubber's Market |  |
| Lord's Market |  |
| Commerce Street |  |
| Jacob's |  |
| Eligible Bachelors |  |
| Jack |  |
| Lord Toresal |  |
| The Ball (when announced) |  |
| Baron Fossville |  |
| The Princess |  |
| Each Other |  |
|  |  |

* **Angeline** – Widow, looking for new husband. Plump and pleasant. Not generally an ugly person.
* **Clara** – Widow, looking for a new husband. Skinny and Uptight. Despite her personality faults, not an ugly person.
* **Fiona** – A Royal Instructor assigned to Jack by Lord Toresal. This relationship is not known about by the crown. Probably had some close relationship to Lord Toresal before he died. Fiona tutors Jack in Jack's room.
* **Theresa** – Widow of a previously wealthy man who was so far in debt that he left her with nothing. She does not like Jack because Jack has been "spoiled" from birth compared to the rest of the orphans. She is very suspicious and will lie about everything Jack asks about.
* **Shannon** – Plain and not interested in marriage. She loves taking care of the orphans. Loves to cook, clean, and help in the Maiden house. She isn't very bright. She's in charge of the toddlers.

### Germaise (In Bakery)

Germaise is a big gossip who harmlessly eyes young women despite being married.

### Old man Holstenoffer (In Butchery)

The butcher, an affable man, will talk incessantly while you are in his shop. Some of the things he says will give you some clues to puzzles.

### Olgan Minor (Armory)

Olgan, a very serious man, will talk about Fossville's recent purchases of armor, as if he plans to build an army. Olgan see the world through darker eyes and anything important that you say will get back to the Baron.

### Mrs. Sandler (Jewelry)

As it turns out, Mrs. Sandler knows who your mother was and liked her. She also is in possession of something that belongs to you; a diamond and ruby necklace.

### Pieter (Jewelry)

Pieter is also a spy for the crown, but plays a guard. He knows all about you.

### Rudolph (Jewelry)

Rudolph is a simpleton guard, and friend of Pieter's.

### Chorus Brothers

When rumors start floating about your possible inheritance, the Chorus brothers are more than willing to lend you money, considering it an excellent investment.

# The Screenplay

## SYNOPSIS

A young orphan girl pretending to be a boy discovers people are trying to kill her, that she is royal born, and that she must save herself by finding out as much information as possible, as well as proving that she is worthy of being recognized as the heir to the local lands.

1. Jack is chased by mercenaries and does not know why.
2. Jack has opportunities to talk to people about the environment. (Butcher, Baker, Armory, Moneylender, Jeweler, Clothier)
3. Jack meets Bobby. She returns to Maiden House for the evening, but sneaks out again to meet up with Bobby.
4. Bobby takes Jack to Lord's Keep. They find about the Queen's visit and the upcoming ball where the Baron will marry into the Royal Family.
5. Jack tries to get back through town to the woods and is captured. Bobby is beaten up badly in an adjacent cell. He whispers about secrets in Black Gate Estate, the in-town residence of Baron Fossville. Jack meets crooks that help her escape and tell her where to hide in the sewer.
6. Jack gets back to Maiden House, where the women hide her in a secret room. Here she learns about her mother.
7. Jack comes out of hiding and gets into Black Gate Estate. She finds out about her father, including the letter that recognizes her as heir.
8. Jack hears that Bobby has been hung and returns to Maiden House. The women open up about everything and tell her that the Red Gate Estate (previously her father's residence) is her home now, but dangerous to go there.
9. Jack gets into Red Gate Estate with key from maidens and one of the maidens coming with her. She finds artifacts about her father. She also finds fresh clothes and a bath. One of the maidens helps her bath and suggests she buy a new gown and to sneak into the ball to seek audience with the Queen.
10. Jack visits the moneylender and with the letter is able to take money out. Jack visits the clothier and jeweler to get ready for ball. Pieter decides to accompany her. Jack visits the armory and buys a stiletto knife and hides it in her bodice.
11. Jack and Pieter cannot enter Lord's Keep directly as the mercenaries are all stalling guard.Jack shows Pieter the secret entrance. On their way through the woods, an odd old woman approaches them. She cryptically offers Jack a potion. The potion makes Jack's hair grow out. They enter the Keep and filter into the ball room, uninvited. The Queen has not arrived yet.
12. The mercenaries start filtering into the Keep. They begin to recognize Jack and Pieter disappears.The Baron appears at Jack's side and holds her arm tightly. He walks her to the War Room.
13. Jack enters the War Room. Pieter is slumped on the floor, bound hand and foot. Several mercenaries glare at Jack menacingly. The Baron has the door guarded and sits down. He asks Jack what you're doing. Jack shows him the letter. He seems nervous, but confident. The Baron burns the letter in the fireplace and picks up his sword. He approaches. Suddenly there is an argument outside. A fight is heard.The door is knocked down and Bobby comes charging in. He fights a dual with the Baron.
14. Jack releases Pieter with your knife. He takes it and begins fighting mercenaries. The Baron knocks Bobby down and runs out of the room. The mercenaries follow, as do Pieter and Bobby.The Princess comes into the room from a secret passage. She has more mercenaries with her and they kidnap Jack.

# Game Features

## Time Keeping

The setting must have night and day characteristics.

Room locations should note light regarding the sun and moon where appropriate.

Room locations should note crowdedness based on the time of day. For instance, the markets are crowded during the day and empty at night.

We should be able to easily enough implement "wait for darkness" or "wait until morning". This could potentially be an extension.

# Details

## Chapter I – Grubber's Market

### Map



### Rundown

You have no money. You are wearing a wool cloak. You have an apple.  
You may steal a knife from a mercenary.  
You may trade the knife for nearly anything in the market including herbs, fruit, candles, rope, pottery, silk, belt, boots, coin, small gem, or a hat. You will always be able to steal another knife, but never hold more than one at a time.  
The monkey wants a banana.  
The monkey has a necklace and will trade for a banana.  
The monkey runs across the postal wires all the time. If you're at the Exotic Gems stall, he will come down to its roof and taunt you with the necklace.  
Teisha, in the silk stall, will give you a silk cloak for the necklace.  
You can get a hat by trading your cloak.  
You can get a belt by trading a hat.  
You can get fruit with coin.  
You can never go east to the Eastern Edge or you will be caught and have to escape back to the west.  
You can go up the center post and slide down to any of the outer posts.  
When you slide down, the guards will see you. You should not be wearing the cloak yet.  
When you go down from the n, w, or s post, you should wear the cloak and undo your hair so that you look like a girl.  
Now you can leave the market before the men recognize you.

### Notes

Should the monkey be able to block you from sliding down? If so, how should we get rid of the monkey? This \_has\_ to be a funny response. I can just feel it.

If you simply turn into a girl and start walking directly out of the market, the mercenaries at the eastern edge are so loose that they're pretty much accosting everyone and will catch you. In order to get past them, they must be on edge from seeing you traverse the wire from the center post.

### Design

1. Introduction
   * **Event [before play begins]:** Mid-morning always sees the Grubber's Market at its most crowded. Servants from the aristocratic districts and villagers from outside Toresal crush themselves into the maze of stalls and stretched canvas, hoping to beat the noontime heat and get the farmers' produce while it's still fresh. The press of bodies, the din of haggling and bargains struck – it all makes getting around unnoticed easier, although not necessarily more pleasant. No fewer than half a dozen stall-gazing bumpkins have trod on your feet already this morning. You've kept your mouth shut, though. People remember an urchin who gives lip.

"See anything you like?" asks the woman at the silk stall, with a teasing smile. You smile back. You couldn't afford the cheapest of her cloaks if you nicked ten purses in a morning, as Teisha well knows.

"Oh, these are *much* too plain," you scoff, even as you gaze wistfully at the bright colors, the beautiful embroidery. Time for a bit of breakfast, you decide, and anyway if you linger too long, people will wonder what a boy is doing shopping for women's cloaks. "Perhaps I'll come back this afternoon, when you've put out your better wares."

Teisha laughs. "Don't be a stranger, Jack."

You make your way through the market, nicking an apple from the fruit stall while its owner haggles with some fat outlander over a bushel of kello fruit, until you reach a quiet alley where you can catch a breath from the crowds and enjoy your breakfast in peace. All in all, just another ordinary day at Grubber's Market.

But the first bite is barely in your mouth before you hear rough voices at the alley's entrance, and in a moment your life is turned upside-down.

1. The Player Character
   * **Description:** Most people know you as "Jack," a fourteen-year-old street urchin of uncertain means. You are slight of build for a boy your age, though your baggy clothes hide much of your physique. Your shoulder-length hair is ragged, a victim of many self-inflicted trimmings. Though usually in need of a good scrubbing, you are an attractive youth, with a softness to your face that makes you seem younger than your years.

Fortunately, it also leads people to underestimate your wiles and resourcefulness, which has caused more than one stall keeper to call you by your second most common sobriquet, "That Damn Thief!"

Only a few people know you by your real name, and you are pleased to keep it that way.

1. Inventory
   * **Object**: Apple.
     + **Description:** Round, taut, green at the bottom shading up to red near the stem.
     + **Command [eatingeating or tasting while the mercenaries are in the marketplace]:** No time for breakfast right now!
     + **Command [eatingeating or tasting after the first scene]:** Crisp and delicious!
   * **Object**: Cloak. (wool, masculine)
     + **Description:** Your cloak is made of un-dyed wool, stained and patched in several places. You wear it in the masculine style, buckled to the side and thrown back over your right shoulder.
   * **Object**: Satchel (cloth)
     + **Description:** Your trusty cloth satchel: big enough to hold the things you nick, small enough to not hamper your getaway.
   * **Object:** Hat
     + A woolen cap, patchy and stained like the rest of you. Your hair is a bit longer than the fasion for boys your age, so you usually keep it stuffed up into your hat.
2. Alley
   * **Description**: This narrow alley is tucked away between a wooden storehouse on one side and the canvas wall of a stall keeper's tent on the other. It serves primarily as somewhere out-of-the-way for stall keepers to sweep their garbage into, so it's not exactly the most pleasant-smelling place in all of Miradan, but at least no one is likely to bother you here. You can leave to the southwest.
   * **Object:** Crates.
     + **Initial Appearance:** Several crates are stacked up against the back wall of the alley.
     + **Description**: Just ordinary wooden crates, used by merchants throughout Miradan to store and ship goods. There are scores more just like these to be found all over the market.
     + **Command [taking or pushing crates]:** Oof! What's in these things, gold bricks? At any rate, the crates are far too heavy for you to move.
     + **Command [opening or searching crates]:** The crates are all nailed shut.
     + **Command [climbing on crates]:** You nimbly hop up on top of the crates; from there, it's only a short scramble to the roof of the market.
   * **Command [leaving Alley while mercenary dialogue is still going]:** Something – an intuition? – tells you it would be a good idea to stay out of sight for the moment. Maybe if you got some elevation, you could hear better.
   * **Event [first turn in the Alley, after the room description]:**
     + **Programming Note:** [The following messages start on the first turn and continue for the next five turns, one message. The messages can be heard from the Alley and from the Outher Market Roof. The text of each message is different depending whether the player is in the Alley or the Outer Market Roof.]
     + **First message, Alley:** A group of people have gathered just outside the alley. You can't quite hear what they're saying from here, but there is a grim, ugly tone to them that speaks of dangerous doings.
     + **Second message, Alley:** The voices continue. You make out the phrase, "…spread out…"
     + **Second message, Outer Market Roof:** "…we know he skulks Grubber's most mornings, so spread out quick, cover all streets from the square," growls one of them, evidently the group's leader.
     + **Third message, Alley:** The voices continue. You make out the phrase, "…knives covered…"
     + **Third message, Outer Market Roof:** The leader spits on the dusty ground. "Keep your eyes open and don't take guff. But for the love of Brigid, keep your tempers and your knives covered unless you really need em. Ain't bein paid to toss the locals."
     + **Fourth message, Alley:** The voices continue. You make out the phrase, "…stay out of sight…"
     + **Fourth message, Outer Market Roof:** "And keep sharp!" the leader snaps. "Remember this is a kid we're lookin for. Kids move fast, stay out of sight, slip through crowds easy. I find out later he got away under your nose, I'll have it off!"

Suddenly, that bit of apple you swallowed a minute ago turns into a cold, hard chunk in your belly.

* + - **Fifth message, Alley:** The voices continue. You make out the phrase, "…got all that?"
    - **Fifth message, Outer Market Roof:** "Now, everyone memorize the description." The leader pulls a dirty, folded bit of parchment from his belt and squints at it. "Shoulder-length brown hair," he reads, haltingly. "Green eyes. Slight of build. 'Ten, maybe twelve spans high." He holds his hand out flat, at what happens to be exactly your height. "Wears a gray cloak."

He refolds the parchment and jams it back into his belt. "You dims got all that?"

The others nod.

* + - **Sixth message, Alley:** Someone barks, "Okay, go!" You hear the jingle of mail and buckles as several heavy pairs of boots tromp past the alley entrance. You're not sure what just happened, but something tells you that it can't be good.
    - **Sixth message, Outer Market Roof:** "Okay, go!" barks the leader, and the mercenaries set out in several directions, moving at a brisk walk. Two men position themselves at the gate to Lord's Road, leading out of town; the others enter the crowded market and start shoving their way through the suddenly flabbergasted crowds.

Your heart sinks. This is definitely not good.

1. Outer Market Roof
   * **Description:** The tiled roof of the storehouse is steep, but there's just enough purchase for you to scramble up to the top and get a look around. From here you have a good view of the market's northwest junction and the gate to Lord's Road heading north.
   * **Command [going any direction other than down]:** Not a good idea; the rooftops of the buildings surrounding the market are steep and slick, and the tiles have been known to come loose and fall off. It's precarious enough just staying here in one spot. If you're to make your escape, you'll have to make it down on the ground.
   * **NPC:** Mercenary Group (as visible from Outer Market Roof, during opening dialogue)
   * **Initial Appearance:** A group of tough-looking mercenaries has gathered at the Northwest Junction. One of them is barking orders at the others in an angry voice.
   * **Description:** They're not Lord's Guards, that's for sure. They wear no insignia, for one thing. Their arms and armor are mismatched, ugly, and scarred – not an unfit description of the men themselves, either. Also, while the Guard would be concerned with keeping the peace in Grubber's Market, these bravos look ready to clobber anyone who gets in their way, and maybe burn down a few stalls while they're at it.

So what are they doing here, you wonder? And come to think of it, where are the Lord's Guard, anyway?

* + **Command [talking to the Mercenary Group]:** Somehow, you think it might be unwise to attract their attention.
  + **Command [doing anything to the Mercenary Group]:** Not while they're down on the ground and you're up on this roof.

1. **NPC:** Mercenary (encountered in Grubber's Market locations)
   * **Programmer's Note:** [Although the descriptions give the sense of several mercenaries searching through the market, there should be only one game entity "Mercenary". He should either wander randomly through the Grubber's Market rooms (though not into the Alley or inside the Silk Stand), or he can simply be out of play until the player lingers in one location for too long (10-15 turns), and then "appear" in the player's location.]

[If the player and the mercenary are still in the same location after three turns, the mercenary spots the player. If the player does not immediately move to a different location, the mercenary will grab the player. Three turns after that, the mercenary captain arrives and the game ends. If you attack the mercenary before the captain arrives, he lets go, but he will grab you again one turn later. This cycle continues until the player runs elsewhere or is finally captures.]

[Once the player moves to a different location, the mercenary "resets".]

* + **Initial Appearance:** One of the mercenaries is nearby, scanning the crowds.
  + **Description:** Rough and ugly, with dirty clothes and a mean, scarred face. A serious-looking sword hangs at his hip, and a long knife is buckled at the small of his back.
  + **Idle Behavior:** (1 in 5 chance each turn, but only if he hasn't noticed you yet)
    - The mercenary peers around aimlessly. He hasn't seen you yet.
    - The mercenary looks bored and spits on the ground.
    - The mercenary scratches his head and scowls.
    - The mercenary scowls at a passing shopper.
    - The mercenary bumps into a passing shopper, and angrily shoves him out of his way.
  + **Command [stealing the mercenary's knife before he sees you]:** You tiptoe up behind the oblivious mercenary. Your heart is pounding, but the trick to successful nicking is not to dither about it. With one smooth, practiced movement you slip the knife from its sheath, then dart off in the opposite direction, hiding your new prize under your cloak.
  + **Command [doing anything to a mercenary when he hasn't noticed you yet]:** You resist the foolish impulse, reminding yourself that what you want is for them to *not* catch you.
  + **Event [after remaining in the same location with the mercenary for 3 turns]:** Suddenly the mercenary does a double-take. "Hey, you there!" he yells, and starts shoving his way towards you.
  + **Initial Appearance [after the mercenary spots you but before he grabs you]:** The mercenary is heading straight for you, arms spread to block your escape.
  + **Command [going to another location after the mercenary has spotted you]:** You dash away into the crowd, weaving between strolling customers and pushing your way through the thickest knots of people. The mercenary pounds after you, yelling and shoving people out of his way, but he's too big and too slow, and you quickly manage to lose him.
  + **Event [one turn after the mercenary notices you, if you don't run]:** A rock-hard fist closes around your upper arm. "Gotcha!" the mercenary sneers.
  + **Initial Appearance [after the mercenary has grabbed you]:** The mercenary has one huge, hammy fist firmly clamped around your arm, and is shouting for the others to come.
  + **Command [talking to the mercenary after the mercenary has noticed and/or grabbed you]:** The mercenary ignores your pleas.
  + **Event [three turns after the mercenary grabs you, if you don't break free]:** The leader of the mercenaries soon arrives, followed by two more of his men. They take your other arm as their leader smiles. "Good work, dims. Got ourselves a nice little commission with this one." And before you can react, he takes a sack of black cloth from his belt and jerks it down over your head.

Everything goes dark. You can't breathe. You struggle, but you can no more break the iron grip on your arms than you could uproot a tree. The men holding you curse. Dimly, you hear shouts from the crowd – someone protesting this rough treatment of a child.

"Don't worry, m'lady," laughs the mercenary leader. "We'll treat her nice an gentle. Like this, see?"

Something huge and heavy crashes into your head, and the rest of your senses are ripped away.

* + **Command [trying to leave the location after the mercenary grabs you]:** You pull and struggle, beat on the mercenary's arms with your fists, claw his skin with your fingernails, but the man is just too strong.
  + **Command [attacking the mercenary after he grabs you]:** Thinking quickly, [one of] you kick the mercenary in the shin. [or] you elbow the mercenary as hard as you can, aiming below the belt. [or] you spit at the mercenary's face, and a gob of spittle lands right in his eye. [or] you scream your head off. People from two stalls away stop what they're doing to see what the commotion is, and when the mercenary clamps his hand over your mouth, you bite down hard. [at random] "Argh! Dammit, you miserable runt—" the mercenary's grip on your arm loosens, and you twist away. You're free!
  + **Command [stealing the knife after the mercenary grabs you]:** Desperately, you start grabbing and pulling at the mercenary's clothes, hoping to get free by getting in close. Your hand grasps something smooth and heavy on the mercenary's back. With a jerk, it pulls free.

"Dammit, he's got my knife!" shouts the mercenary.

* + **Command [stealing a knife when you've already got one]:** You've already got one knife – don't press your luck.
  + **Command [attacking the mercenary with the knife]:** You jab the point of the blade into the mercenary's enormous bicep. It's a clumsy attack, but it does the trick – the mercenary instantly lets go and steps back, pressing his hand against the wound.
  + **Object:**  Mercenary's Knife
    - **Description:** Not some decorated dandy's blade, this. The steel is dull and tarnished, and honed to a wicked edge. An eight-inch-long, deadly practical tool for stabbing people.

1. Northwest Junction
   * **Description**: This is the northwest corner of Grubber's Market. You can skirt around the edge of the market to the northeast or south, or head into the center of the market to the southeast. A wide, paved road leads north, towards Lord's Keep. You can also duck back into the alley to the northwest.
   * **Command [going north from Northwest Junction while mercenaries are present]:** You can't get out that way – two of the mercenaries are loitering near the gate that leads out to Lord's Road. They haven't seen you yet, but you'd never get by without their noticing.
2. Fruit Stall
   * **Description**: Bins heaped high with bright-colored fruit lend a pleasant fragrance to this end of the market (though by afternoon it will have become a cloying reek that attracts more flies than customers). Aisles between the stalls lead southwest and southeast.
   * **Object:** Bins/Fruit
     + **Description**: Mostly domestic, apples and pears from the city orchards, or brambleberries from the northern counties. A few of the baskets contain more exotic fare: oranges, limes, and kello fruit – even a bushel of bananas from the Kozar Delta.
     + **Fruit Descriptions:** [each of these should be a separate object]
       - **Kello Fruit:** Normally you'd *kill* for a slice of kello, but these look a bit too green. Not quite in season.
       - **Bananas:** You rarely see bananas this far north. These look just about perfect – plump, bright yellow with just a sprinkling of brown freckles.
       - **Apples:** You already sampled one this morning, and they're not half bad.
       - **Brambleberries:** The thumb-sized clusters are shiny and bluish-black. Your mouth waters at the thought of how tart they must be.
       - **Oranges:** The oranges look pale and disappointingly small.
       - **Limes:** The dark green limes look refreshing.
     + **Command [smelling the fruit]:** It all smells delicious.
3. Miscellaneous Food
   * **Description**: Baskets bristling with loaves of bread; yellow pyramids of cheese; spiced jerky hanging in bundles overhead – a typical grocer's stall. You can continue along the market's outer ring to the northwest or south.
   * **Object:** Baskets/Food/Bread/Cheese/Jerky
     + **Description:** The food looks tasty enough, but you don't really have time for a meal right now.
4. Eastern Junction
   * **Description**: You're near the eastern edge of Grubber's Market. Commerce Street lies to the east. You can travel along the outer ring of stalls to the north or south, or head towards the market's central hub to the west.
   * **Command [going east from Eastern Junction while mercenaries are present, without disguise]:** The ideal escape would be to head east, to Commerce Street, and lose yourself in the maze of the city. But a pair of mercenaries have planted themselves by the entrance to the square, and are eyeballing everyone who passes through. You'll need a disguise or a distraction – preferably both – to get past them.
   * **Command [going east from Eastern Junction with disguise, but without sliding down wires]:** You try to keep your head down and not walk to fast, but the mercenaries are being thorough. One of them points at you and says, "Check that one!"

The other one steps into your path. Before you can react, he bends down and stares into your face, then rips the bonnet off your head. "It's the boy!" he shouts, grabbing your arm. [**Programmer's Note:** This should start the three-turn countdown before the mercenary captain arrives, just as though the player had been grabbed as described above. The player should be able to escape by attacking the mercenary and/or stealing his dagger, as above.]

* + - **Command [going east from Eastern Junction after escaping from Mercenary]:** There's too many of them in that direction; you've no choice but to dive back into the market!
    - **Event [leaving Eastern Junction after escapting from Mercenary]:** That was close – *too* close. The mercenaries are paying too much attention for you to just slip by, even in disguise. You'll need to create some kind of distraction.
  + **Command [going east from Eastern Junction with disguise, after sliding down wires]:** You keep your head down and walk at a steady pace – not too fast, not too slow. The mercenaries posted at the market's entrance aren't paying attention: they're looking over your head at the market, trying to see what the big commotion is under the awnings.

You hold your breath as you walk past, close enough to touch one of them. No one stops you. Five more steps…four…three…

And then you are past them, out of Grubber's Market and into Commerce Street and the inner city.

1. Hat Stall
   * **Description**: Hats of all styles and sizes hang from scores of wooden pegs, surrounding the stall itself in forest of varied headgear. More stalls lie to the north and southwest.
   * **Object:** Hats
     + **Description:** If you can wear it on your head, it's sold here. Big, flop-brimmed traveling hats; small, leather workman's caps; wide *sappans* of woven straw from the Kozar delta; fancy, feathered hats for courtly balls; and even a few ordinary bonnets.
     + **Command [trade or buy hat]:** You already have a perfectly serviceable hat – better save your money for something more useful.
2. Exotic Gems Stall
   * **Description**: The shelves of this stall are lined with black velvet cloth, across which are spread dozens of jewels in exotic colors and cuts, all glittering in the dusty sunlight. Other stalls lie to the west and northeast.
   * **Object**: Gems (collectively)
     + **Description**: Some of them are loose stones; others are set in finely wrought rings and necklaces. Most of them were probably illegally smuggled from over the western mountains, which is why they're cheap enough to be affordable by anyone in Grubber's Market. Still, they're far, far out of your price range.
   * **NPC**: Monkey
     + **Event [after entering the Gem Stall]**: Suddenly you hear a commotion from the back of the stall: the crash of a display case hitting the ground; shouts and curses from the stall keeper; and a horrific, gibbering shriek.

"Come back here, you flea-bitten thief!" yells the stall keeper, and for a panicked moment you think he means *you*. Then you see something small and gray dart up to the roof of the stall… it's just a forest monkey, probably someone's pet running loose. And it's clutching one of the stall keeper's necklaces in its tiny black fist.

The monkey turns and screeches back at the stall keeper, dodges a clumsily thrown dirt clod, and scampers up the nearby support pole.

* + - **Initial appearance (up on the pole):** The monkey is here blanaces on the wire, just a few feet away.
    - **Description:** It has silvery fur and black mask-like markings on its startlingly human face. It seems to regard you with a mixture of curiosity and amusement, as though you were some strange little animal whose antics it found entertaining. [if it has the necklace] It grips the necklace like a cherished possession, tight against its tiny chest.
    - **Idle Behavior (1 in 5 chance each turn):**
      * The monkey bounces up and down on its wire, screeching happily.
      * The monkey turns the necklace over and over in its tiny hands, staring intently into the gem's blue depths.
      * The monkey tosses the necklace high in the air, swings itself under the wire and back up again with its tail, and at the last second catches the necklace in its little black hands.
      * The monkey hoots at you.
      * The monkey sniffs at you and shrieks with amusement.
    - **Idle Behavior when the player is holding the banana (1 in 5 chance each turn):**
      * The monkey sniffs at you excitedly, and emits a hopeful chirp.
      * The monkey hops up and down on the wire, and makes a gesture with its tiny hands as though it were peeling a banana.
      * The monkey stares hungrily at your banana.
    - **Command [taking the necklace from the monkey]:** [pick one at random]
      * The monkey screeches at you and backs away.
      * The monkey jumps back, chattering angrily and holding the necklace out of reach.
      * The monkey scampers back, clutching the necklace to its chest.
      * The monkey hops back a few feet on the wire and blows a raspberry at you, as though daring you to come after it.
    - **Command [trading the banana for the necklace/giving banana to the monkey]:** You hold the banana out and wiggle it enticingly. "Here, monkey. C'mon, little monkey," you whisper, trying to ignore how stupid it sounds.

The monkey creeps closer, eyes locked on the yellow fruit. It's only about a foot away from your out-stretched hand now. It's little face contorts into bizarre expressions as it wrestles with the conflicting desires to grab the tasty treat, hold onto the shiny trinket, and stay out of your reach, all at the same time.

Suddenly the monkey lunges. You make with your free hand. The monkey grabs the banana just as your fingers hooks around the necklace's chain. The monkey screams and jumps six feet straight up, lands on your head, and scampers off down the wire behind you. Your heart leaps into your throat as you lose your balance on top of the pole. You totter, pinwheel your arms… and stay on.

You're breathing hard, but you're safe. And you have the necklace.

Somewhere far below you, a stallkeeper is cursing and wiping smushed banana off his face.

* + **Object**: Necklace
    - **Description**: It's a beautiful gem, clear blue with a deep indigo star in its center, set in a silver-wrought starburst on a silver chain. You could easily trade it for any piece of merchandise in the market. Or you could… you know… wear it.

1. Weapons Trader Stall
   * **Description**: The weaponsmith's wares hang from wooden racks along the sides of this stall, a grim picket fence of down-hanging blades. You can find less intimidating stalls to the east and northwest.
   * **Object:** Weapons, Swords, Knives (collectively)
     + **Description:** Swords and knives, mostly. Nothing fancy; just sharp, practical, and deadly.
     + **Command [trade knife for coin, first time]:** The stallkeeper takes the weapon from you and turns it over in his large, scarred hands, frowning. He looks at you, then he looks over at one of the mercenaries swaggering around at the far end of the market, bullying the other market-goers and scaring away business. Then he smirks.

"Here you go," he says, reaching into his apron pocket and tossing you a coin. "Spend it wisely."

* + - **Command [trade knife for coin, subsequent times]:** The weaponsmith raises his eyebrow as you hand him another knife. [if a random chance of 1 in 3 succeeds]"Always in the market for more saleable merchandise," he says.[end if] He takes the blade and flips you another coin.
    - **Command [buy weapons]:** "I'm afraid most of my wares are out of your price range, boy," says the smith with a shrug. "But I do take trade."
  + **Object:** Coin
    - **Description:** It's a silver coin, thick and heavy. Stamped on one side is the Toresal coat of arms; on the other, a crescent moon. It's enough to buy something inexpensive, if you're not too picky about getting change.

1. Leather Shop
   * **Description**: You pause here for a few deep breaths – you've always enjoyed the smell around the leather merchant's stall. More stalls lie to the north and southeast.
   * **Command [smell]:** The smell of leather reminds always makes you think of traveling in distant, dangerous lands. It's the smell of adventure.
   * **Object**: Leather goods (collectively)
     + **Description**: This merchant deals in riding equipment – reins, harnesses, stirrups, and the like. A full riding saddle sits on proud display near the back. There are a few items of clothing for sale as well, mostly various styles of scabbards and belts.
   * **Object:** Saddle
     + **Description:** It's well out of your price range. Besides, horses make you nervous.
   * **Object:** Scabbard
     + **Description:** Some of the scabbards are very pretty, but they're not much use to you without a sword.
   * **Object:** Belt
     + **Description [looking at belts on display]:** Now, a good belt is always useful. The ones on display here aren't anything fancy, but they're sturdy and well-crafted.
     + **Description [looking at individual belt, after you've bought it]:** A sturdy and supple strap of leather, three feet long.
2. Herb Stall
   * **Description**: The herb stall is usually a quieter place. Customers like to browse, poke their noses into the various jars and pouches, and judge the potency of a potential purchase at their leisure. You've never understood the fascination, yourself. More interesting stalls are to the south, and the market opens out a little to the north.
   * **Object:** Herbs (collectively)
     + **Description:** The herb stall is usually a quieter place. Customers like to browse, poke their noses into the various jars and pouches, and judge the potency of a potential purchase at their leisure. You've never understood the fascination, yourself. More interesting stalls are to the south, and the market opens out a little to the north.
3. Candle Maker Stall
   * **Description**: The heat and fumes from the candle maker's tallow pots make this stall an unpleasant place to loiter. Still, people need candles, and customers seem to be buying them as fast as the stall keeper can dip them. Other stalls are to the southeast and southwest.
   * **Object:** Candles (collectively)
     + **Description**: The candles hang in pairs from long wooden dowels, connected to each other by their common wick. Most of them are tallow, fast-burning and cheap, but near the back there are boxes of premade wax candles in different colors.
   * **Object**: Tallow Pots
     + **Description**: The candle merchant keeps a pair of small cauldrons at a constant boil, filled with bubbling, yellowing goop.
4. Rope Stall
   * **Description**: One thing you can say about the rope stall: you'll never spend a moment wondering what's for sale. Rope and lots of it, thick and thin, knotted or loose, in heaps and in coils, stacked on the floor or hanging from pegs. More stalls are to the northeast and southeast, and the market opens out a bit to the northwest.
   * **Object:** Rope [on display]
     + **Description:** Coarse braids of scratchy hemp, stiff and tough.
     + **Command [purchase rope with coin]:** The rope merchant takes your coin and looks at it for a moment, considering its worth. Then he takes the end of one of his cheaper coils, measures out about ten feet, cuts it, and tosses it to you.
   * **Object:** Rope [inventory object]
     + **Description:** The rope is thick and stiffened with tar. The rough hemp scratches your hands when you try to grip it.
5. Pottery Stall
   * **Description**: The wares at the pottery stall are spread out on the ground or set on low benches, forcing browsers and passers-by to step carefully around them. There are more stalls to the northwest and southwest, or you can head out to the market's edge to the east.
   * **Object:** Pottery (collectively)
     + **Description:** From tall, narrow, precariously balanced urns to round, gourd-like jars to shallow bowls, each is uniquely shaped, yet they all share a common, graceful curve. Most of them are made of fired clay from the Westlands, decorated with colorful glazes.
6. Outside Silk Stall
   * **Description**: Teisha has done well enough for herself that her "stall" is actually a full-on tent. You can enter the tent to the north, or continue on to other stalls to the northeast or northwest.
7. Inside Silk Stall
   * **Description**: The fabric walls lend a bit of privacy and quiet from the crowds outside (in addition to keeping dust off the merchandise). Beautiful silk garments hang from racks on either side. The main market lies to the south. A narrow gap in the back leads behind the tent.
   * **Object:** Garments (collectively)
     + **Description:** Gowns, robes, capes, cloaks, and shawls – their hems rippling with the slightest movement of air, shimmering with that soft, liquid glow that only silk has. You sigh. Dressing up like a boy is definitely *fun*, but looking at Teisha's wares always makes you yearn for something a little bit more… elegant.
   * **NPC**: Teisha
     + **Initial Appearance**: Teisha sits on a stool in back, smiling distractedly.
     + **Description:** Teisha is a short, busty woman with a smile as warm as her tumbling red curls. She likes you, and she knows that you'd never nick from her stall, so she lets you hang around the stall and look through the merchandise. She also knows your big secret (guessed it the very first time she caught you loitering at the tent flap), which is a little bit scary and a little bit of a relief – it's nice to be able to let your guard down and talk to someone outside the Maiden's House.
     + **Idle Actions:** (Randomized)
       - Teisha hums quietly to herself.
       - Teisha smiles at you warmly.
       - Teisha brushes a loose thread from the sleeve of one of her gowns.
       - Teisha toys with her measuring cord, spinning it idly.
     + **Command [entering the tent for the first time]:** "Hello, Jack," says Teisha. "Change your mind about that cloak?" Then she gets a look at your face and frowns. "Something the matter, sweetie? You look spooked."
     + **Command [entering tent subsequent times]:** Teisha looks up. "Hi Jack. Hanging in there?"
     + **Command [talk to Teisha about Mercenaries for first time]:** "Mercenaries searching the market?" Teisha peeks out through the front flap. "Brigid help us," she mutters, glancing back at you. Although you know she cares about you, you also know that Teisha is a smart, practical woman, and first and foremost she is worried about losing her customers. "All right," she sighs, letting the flap fall closed. "You don't need to tell me if they're after you. I don't want to know. There's no room for you to hide in here, but if you want to you can slip out that way—" she points to the narrow gap in the back wall of the tent— "and I'll pretend I never saw you."
     + **Command [talk to Teisha about mercenaries – subsequent]:** She makes a face. "I don't like it, Jack, but there's nothing I can do. Just try to stay out of their way."
     + **Command [talk to Teisha about the monkey]:** Teisha rolls her eyes. "That pesky thing came in on with the fruit vendor's wagon yesterday and just made itself at home. Now it's all over the place, bothering everybody. Fortunately, it likes shiny things more than it likes women's clothes. Oh, and bananas. The little rodent loves bananas. Constantly drops the peels on the roof of my tent, too."
     + **Command [talk to Teisha about the necklace]:** "That monkey got one of Hathid's necklaces?" Teisha laughs. "Ha! Serves the old huckster right. You should try giving it a banana, see if it'll trade."
     + **Command [talk to Teisha about the cloak]:** "I can't just give you one, sweetie," Teisha says, sadly. "These silks are expensive, and I have to pay my suppliers and make a living for myself. If you have coin, or something worth trading, maybe I can cut you a deal. Otherwise…"
     + **Command [trade something other than necklace for cloak]:** Teisha shakes her head and hands the [whatever] back to you. "This just won't do," she says, not unkindly.
     + **Command [trade necklace for cloak]:** Teisha's eyebrow shoots up when you show her the necklace, but she manages to hide her excitement with the coolness of a professional haggler. "Not top quality," she mutters, "but very nice…" She gives you a look. "Now, tell me the truth, Jack, you didn't just steal this from somewhere, did you?"

You shake your head proudly. It's not *exactly* a lie.

"All right." The necklace disappears into one of Teisha's pockets. "Let's see…" she starts searching through the clothes on the racks, looking for something in your size. "This should fit. I think it suits you, too." She holds out a girl's cloak, simple but elegant. "What do you think?"

It's beautiful. Eagerly you nod your agreement.

Teisha smiles. "Then it's yours."

* + - **Command [putting on the cloak in Teisha's presence – first time]:** Teisha leans over and adjusts the fit, plucking at the fabric where it hangs from your shoulders. "I was right," she says. "It brings out your eyes. You look… almost *royal*."
    - **Command [north – first time]:** Teisha holds the back flap back as you duck through. "Be careful now…" she says, "…*Jacqueline*."
    - **Command [north – subsequent]:** "Careful out there," calls Teisha as you duck through the back again.
  + **Object**: Silk Cloak
    - **Description**: It comes down to your ankles, a simple drape of soft, dusky green with silver trim. [if worn]You're wearing it in the feminine style, forward over both shoulders and clasped under your chin.

1. **NPC:** Stallkeeper
   * **Description:** The stallkeeper looks nervous and irritable. Armed thugs stomping around the Grubber's Market is not good for business.
     + **Command [talking to the stallkeeper]:** [random response]
       - The stallkeeper waves you off. "Take it somewhere else, kid."
       - The stallkeeper seems too distracted to talk to you.
       - The stallkeeper grunts noncommitally.
     + **Command [buying something from the stallkeeper]:** The stallkeeper barely glances at the coin before dropping it into his purse. "Sure, sure," he mutters, handing you [whatever]. "Here you go. Now beat it, all right?"
     + **Command [taking something from a stall without paying for it]:** Better not. Not only do the mercenaries have everyone on edge, but a good third of the normal shopping crowd have been scared off, which makes it that much easier for the stallkeeper to keep an eye on you. And if you get caught, the uproar will bring the mercenaries right to you.
     + **Command [doing anything to a stallkeeper's wares other than examining or smelling it]:** "Hey!" the stallkeeper glares at you. "Keep your sticky fingers away from the goods."
2. **Backdrop Object:** Support Post – Seen in Fruit, Weapon, Gem, and Herb Stalls, and East Junction
   * **Initial Appearance**: Nearby stands a thick wooden post.
   * **Description**: It's one of several posts that support the large canvas awnings stretched above the market square. You can see one of the main support wires running from the top of this post to the top of the high post rising up from the center of the market.
   * **Command [climb post]:** You could shimmy up there easily enough, but it would attract too much attention.
3. **Backdrop Object:** Center Post – Seen in Rope, Silk, and Pottery stalls
   * **Initial Appearance**: Rising up behind the stall is a tall wooden post.
   * **Description**: The central post that holds up the system of canvas awnings stretched over the market square. It rises up from the midst of a cluster of stalls in the middle of the market, to a height of about twenty feet. Thick, taut support wires stretch from the top of the post to the four cardinal directions.
   * **Command [trying to do anything with the post when not next to it]:** The stalls surrounding the center post are backed up tightly against it. You'll have to find a way behind them to get to the post.
4. Behind the Silk Tent
   * **Description**: This is an empty space formed by the backs of three stalls and Teisha's tent, meeting at the corners to form a cramped little square. It's barely big enough to stretch your arms out in. Right in the middle is the base of the huge central support post, which rises up a good twenty feet from here. You can duck back into Teisha's tent to the south.
   * **Object**: Center Post
     + **Description**: It's huge, almost too big to put your arms around. Way up at the top, you can see wires stretching out in each of the cardinal directions.
     + **Command [climb post, up]:** You're totally hidden back here, so there's no one to stop you from climbing. By the time you're high enough for people to see you, you're also high enough that no one will notice anyway; no one ever bothers to look up in the Grubber's Market. After a minute or so of grunting and sweating, you reach the top.
5. Top of Center Post
   * **Description:** Perched atop the high central post, you can look out over the whole market square. To the north, Lord's Road heads out of the city towards Lord's Keep. Commerce Street and the rest of the city beckon to the east. In every other direction the city is surrounded by rolling meadows and farmlands.

Four anchor cables stretch away in the four cardinal directions, attached to the smaller support posts at the perimeter of the market.

* + **Object:** Anchor Cable [four total; north, east, south, and west]
    - **Description:** The cable is made of thick, braided wire. One end is attached to the top of the pole that you are currently balancing on; the other end is attached to a shorter support post at the [north/south/east/west] end of the market, far below.
    - **Programmer's Note:** [The syntax for sliding down the wires needs to be forgiving. The default correct syntax is SLIDE ON/ALONG/DOWN WIRE WITH (something), where (something) equals the rope or the belt. HANG/LOOP (something) AROUND/ON/OVER WIRE should also work (this is considered identical to sliding – you can't hang something on the wire and *not* slide down). SLIDE ON/ALONG/DOWN WIRE, without naming a second noun, implies sliding down with bare hands, and generates the response detailed below, as does CLIMB WIRE, CLIMB DOWN/ON WIRE, or STAND ON/GET ON/ENTER wire. Simply typing NORTH, SOUTH, EAST, or WEST is synonymous with sliding down the wire with bare hands.]

[If the player successfully slides down a cable, she is moved to the room containing the corresponding support post.]

* + - **Command [sliding down wire with bare hands]:** The cable is too steep for you to climb down, and the rough cable would tear up your hands. But if you had something you could loop over the cable, you might be able to slide down the cable while hanging underneath.
    - **Command [sliding down wire with something other than the rope or the belt]:** You can't loop [whatever] around the cable.
    - **Command [sliding down wire while wearing disguise]:** You should take off your cloak and put your hat on first. People are going to see you when you slide down – your disguise won't do you much good if everyone recognizes you as the crazy girl on the support cables.
    - **Command [slide down wire with rope]:** You loop the rope over the cable and push off from the support post. Almost immediately, you realize it isn't going to work: the rope is too thick, too stiff and hard to hold. Halfway down your grip fails, and you land with a crash in the middle of the [room where player ends up]. Stallkeepers and shoppers alike are yelling and pointing at you. By the time you get to your feet, the mercenaries are already closing in you! [**Programmer's Note:** move the Mercenary to the player's location, with the Mercenary already aware of the player and moving to grab her in one turn.]
    - **Command [slide down wire with belt]:** You wrap one end of the belt around your hand and sling the supple leather over the anchor cable. Then, after giving it one more good yank to test your grip, you push off.

The wind is exhilarating as you zip down the line to the ground below. Several people look up, including the mercenaries. Shouts ring out and fingers point. You hit the support post with your feet, let go of the belt, and drop to the ground next to the [room where player ends up], slightly breathless. Not everyone saw where you landed – most people are still staring up at the wires. You've only got a few moments while the guards' chins are still in the air. Better make the most of them.

[**Programmer's Note:** Move the Mercenary to the player's location in three turns, with the Mercenary *unaware* of the player.]

1. Eastern Edge
   * **Description**: Grubber's market is to the west, along with the searching mercenaries. Commerce Street beckons to the east.
2. **NPC:** Shoppers/Marketgoers/Townsfolk (scenery, present in all Grubber's Market locations)
   * **Description:** The crowd here includes all sorts: country folk; poorer townsfolk; middle-class merchants looking for a bargain; servants of the upper class; even a few tourists and sea merchants come upriver from the coast. [if the Mercenary is in the location]Most of them keep their heads down and give the mercenary a wide berth.[end if] All of them are far too busy to pay attention to you.
   * **Command [talking to the shoppers, first time]:** Some of the marketfolk glance at you; a few put their hands protectively around their moneypurses. But no one seems interested in having a conversation with a common street urchin.
   * **Command [talking to the shoppers, subsequent tries]:** It's no use; these people just want to get on with their business and be left alone.
   * **Command [doing anything else to the shoppers]:** (pick at random)
     + "Here, you! Scamper off, why don't you?"
     + The shopper roughly shoulders you aside.
     + The shopper waves you off, irritated.
     + "Take it somewhere else, kid, fore I call the guard."
   * **Idle Behavior:**
     + [**Programmer's Note:** Each turn that the player is in a location with the shoppers, there is a 1 in 10 chance of seeing the following sentence, with the blanks randomly filled in as indicated:]
     + A \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ [if 1 in 4 chance succeeds] with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ [end if] \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
       - **First Blank:** fat/gangly/pock-marked/piebald/sweaty/red-faced/ugly/gawking/sour-faced
       - **Second Blank:** bumpkin/farmer/shopper/marketgoer/matron/servant/merchant
       - **Third Blank:** an overstuffed basket over one arm/a scraggly moustache/a wen the size of a robin's egg on (his/her) nose/a look of grim determination on (his/her) face/crooked teeth/lice jumping out of (his/her) clothes/near-paralyzing halitosis
       - **Fourth Blank:** shoves you out of the way, muttering something about "street trash"/bumps into you hard enough to send you reeling against a nearby stall/steps on your foot/squeezes past you/argues loudly with a nearby stallkeeper/pauses to inspect the merchandise, then moves on/hurries through the crowd, muttering something about "bloodthirsty hooligans" invading the market/stalks by, muttering something about "penny-grubbing trinket-sellers"
3. Grubber's Market (Night Scenes)
   * **Programming Note:** [During night scenes, this single location represents the entire Grubber's Market. You can go north to Lord's Road, northwest to the Alley, or east to Merchant Street.]
   * **Description:** At night, the normally crowded marketplace becomes an empty maze of shadows, abandoned stalls and rolled-up canvas. The Lord's Road lies north, your little alley lies northwest, and Merchant Street lies back east.

## Chapter II – Commerce Street

### Map



### Rundown

Jack has opportunities to talk to people about the environment.

* Baker
* Butcher
* Armory
* Clothier
* Jeweler
* Moneylender

### Notes

There isn't much to this scene other than gathering information. The player can end the scene at anytime by going to find Bobby.

### Design

Scene Begins when Jack enters Commerce Street for the first time.

**Event [first turn after Jack enters Commerce Street, before the room description]:** You let out a long, shaky breath. You're safe now. Commerce Street is home to a slightly more upscale class of merchant, and business here is not quite as frantic as in Grubber's Market. Transactions tend to be calmer, more deliberate, and involve significantly more money. The Lord's Guard will be far less tolerant of a pack of armed bullies menacing the citizens of the upper class, so it's unlikely that the mercenaries will follow you here. And even if they did, there are too many streets and side alleys for them to block off your escape.

Now it's time to pause, catch your breath, and try to figure out why they were after you in the first place.

1. Commerce Street
   * **Description:** Commerce Street runs from Grubber's Market, to the west, to Lord's Market to the east. Raised sidewalks allow pedestrians to avoid the mud, horse dung, and occasional teamster's cart rumbling by. The shops here are actual buildings, spaced evenly along the avenue. Storefronts for a bakery, a butcher's shop, and an armory line the north side of the street from west to east; they are faced on the opposite side by a clothier, a jeweler, and a moneylender, respectively.
   * **Event [entering this street for the first time after acquiring jewel, gown, and dagger]:** Evening is falling over the city, and the streets are clearing of people. The ball at Lord's Keep will be starting soon – you'd better hurry!

[switch to night description]

* + **Description, Night Scenes:** Commerce Street at night is eerily quiet and empty. Your footsteps seem echo on the cobbles as you walk past the shuttered shopfronts.
  + **Command [entering or examining a shop during a night scene]:** All of the shops are shuttered and locked up for the night.
  + **Scenery:** Outside of Bakery
    - **Description:** A hanging sign above the door depicts a loaf of bread, and the warm smell of fried dough wafts out from the open door, making your stomach rumble.

Squeezed in between the bakery and the butcher's shop next door is the entrance to a tiny alleyway.

* + **Scenery:** Outside of Butcher's
    - **Description:** A brightly painted pig decorates the sign over this shop. The smell of burned sausage masks the darker odor of butchered animals.

Squeezed in between the butcher's shop and the bakery next door is the entrance to a tiny alleyway.

* + **Scenery:** Outside of Armory
    - **Description:** The walls over this shop are built of heavy, blackened bricks – a grim exterior to house grim business. The sign over the door is painted with an axe and shield.
  + **Scenery:** Outside of Clothier
    - **Description:** A large window, trimmed in fine, dark wood, lets light into the front of the shop. A clothier's dummy dressed in a smartly cut tunic stands in front of a velvet backdrop, advertising the latest fashion to be found inside.
  + **Scenery:** Outside of Jeweler
    - **Description:** The sign above this store is painted with a necklace of pearls. The windows are blocked with thick (but decorative) iron bars, and the door sports a heavy lock. An engraved brass plaque reads "Sandler and Son."
  + **Scenery:** Outside of Moneylender
    - **Description:** A discreet placard next to the door reads "Chorus Brothers." " The remainder of the windowless storefront is painted blue.
  + **Command [going west from Commerce Street]:** It would be a good idea to lay low for a while before returning to Grubber's Market.
  + **Command [entering any of the stores or going east from Commerce Street while still dressed as a girl]:** You'd better take off your "disguise" first – most of the merchants on this street know you as Jack, and would be very confused to see you dressed as a girl.
  + **Object:** Tiny Alleyway
    - **Description:** Almost more of a gutter than an proper alley, barely big enough for you to fit your shoulders through.
    - **Command [entering an alley]:** By sucking in your gut and turning sideways a bit, you manage to squeeze in between the two buildings.
  + **Event [first turn after entering Commerce Street, after room description]:** As you are standing there getting your bearings, the door to the moneylender's shop suddenly slams open. A tall, dark-cloaked figure storms out, shouting over his shoulder, "…regret refusing my business! I know import—*OOF!"* —and before you have a chance to react, he crashes into you. You both hit the cobbles in a tangle of limbs.

Muttering apologies, you try to disentangle yourself, but the man is on his feet in an instant, dragging you up by your elbow. "Why you insolent little cutpurse—"

A woman standing next to him places her hand on his shoulder. "Calm yourself, Fossville," she says. Only her chin and a few curls of long, golden hair are visible beneath the shadow of her hood, but the woman's voice is cool and commanding. "She's only a foolish little girl. You've already terrified her."

The man – you realize now that he must be Baron Fossville, Lord of the city since the old Duke died, and one of the most powerful nobles in Toresal – eyes you suspiciously. Even flustered, his sharp features are intense, handsome, and dangerously intelligent. His lips twitch slightly beneath his trim moustache. Finally, he releases you.

"Off with you then, urchin," he growls, flicking his fingers as though he had just touched something filthy. "Sell your paper flowers elsewhere, and learn to stay out from under the feet of your betters."

Fossville strides off towards Lord's Market, followed closely by his hooded companion. As she brushes past you, you can hear her talking in a low voice, "…have the money you need, but we must be subtle about it. The Queen can not appear to play favorites…"

And then they are gone.

1. Bakery
   * **Description:** The air is heavy with the warm and slightly damp smell of freshly baked bread, and the wooden counters are piled high with golden loaves, baguettes, and rolls. You can leave the bakery to the south.
   * **NPC:** Baker
     + **Initial Appearance:** A man dressed in flour-dusted baker's whites stands behind the counter, watching you expectantly.
     + **Description:** Germaise the Baker is a tall, thin man from the south. He has a thick accent and likes to stroke his sparse moustaches with his fingertips while he talks – the lower half of his face is almost always covered with a grayish coating of flour. He's a gossip and a shameless flirt, always eyeballing the young ladies who come into his store. It's moments like those that make you grateful for your disguise.
     + **Idle Actions** (at random):
       - Germaise strokes his moustaches idly.
       - Germaise works on a mound of dough, pounding and pushing it into shape.
       - Germaise rolls several strips of pastry dough into a complicated shape, then slides it onto something that looks like a flat-bladed shovel. Then he turns and shoves the end of the shovel into the glowing mouth of the brick oven behind him.
       - Germaise peers into his oven, checking on the status of his latest batch of rolls.
     + **Conversation Table** (with Germaise):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Subject | Response |
| Me | "You live with the Maidens, yes?" he says with a shrug. "I should know more about you?" |
| Mercenaries | Germaise shakes his head. "When I see steel, I mind my own business." |
| Bobby | At the mention of Bobby's name, the thin man stiffens. "You see Bobby, you tell him, yes? He comes around here again, he gets the wrong end of this bread knife!" |
| Teisha | Germaise smiles. "Lovely girl, that Teisha. I send her my best pastries, maybe she gives me a discount, little something for the wife, yes?" |
| Father | He shrugs. "Theresa's never mentioned him. If he loved your mother, I guess he wasn't so bad, but who knows?" |
| Mother | "Theresa was talking about you last time she came in here, mentioned your mother. Beautiful woman, very kind, she says. Died when you were very young, yes?" Germaise strokes his moustache solemnly. "Sad, very sad. But without a proper home and husband, I guess it's no surprise." |
| Maiden House | "Fine women, those. They do good work, taking in orphans like you. I give them discounts," he adds, proudly. |
| Fossville | Germaise busies himself with a pile of dough, obviously reluctant to be drawn into discussing politics. "Eh, Fossville seems a good enough man. They say he has a temper, but it's not my place to criticize." |
| Black Gate Estate | "Black Gate Estate, that is where Baron Fossville stays when he is in the city. He throws parties there, places big orders with my shop." He shrugs, rubbing ruefully at his moustache. "What can I say? He is a good customer." |
| Red Gate Estate | "The old Duke, goddesses keep his soul, stayed at Red State. I brought fresh loaves to his doorstep every morning." Germaise rubs his moustaches sadly. "A good man, he was, and a good lord. I miss him." |
| Jacob's Mansion | "Bah!" Germaise waves a hand in the air, flicking a puff of flour from his long fingers. "They hire their own cooks and never buy anything from town. They say they are merchants, but of what? No one knows. I will say it – they are thieves!" |
| Jacobs | Germaise shakes his head. "Just like his father, that boy is. Thinks he owns everything, and what he doesn't own he takes, and what he can't take he steals. But money always opens doors in this city. Even bad money." |
| Commerce Street | "You know this street was planned and built by the old lord of Toresal, yes?" Germaise nods and strokes his moustaches. They were to expand it too, open up the block north of here, but then the lord died so unexpectedly. Shame." |
| Grubber's Market | "Eh, it's an eyesore, but it keeps the money going round and round," says Germaise. "Half the people in this city couldn't survive without it." |
| Lord's Market | "Now that's a lovely place," Germaise says, beaming. "I send a cart out there every day and sell out by the time the bells ring noon. Rich people love their sweets," he laughs. |
| Lord's Keep | "Duke Toresal built that keep. Laid the foundation stones with his own two hands." Germaise gets a faraway look in his eye that you usually only see when he talks about his homeland. "Now there was a bright and honorable Lord. He'd have been in line for the throne if he hadn't married below his station. Bah, palace politics. It's no use to try to understand." |
| Ball | "A ball?" Germaise perks up a bit. "At the Lord's Keep, yes? It's been a long time since we held a big party up there. I'll have to keep the ovens fired all night and day to keep up with it, you can be sure." |
| Queen | Germaise makes a short, dismissive noise – *"Pfff!"* – blowing a cloud of flour from his lips. "The old king valued a pretty face over a sharp mind. I won't say more about that. But now that the king's dead, the kingdom suffers for his choice." |
| Princess | Germaise smirks. "The Queen's daughter is a prize that no one wants to win, but to win it means the crown. That is a difficult choice for anyone honorable, yes? I tell you, the throne has dark days ahead." |
| Spies | "Spies? The King has always employed spies, and after he died the Queen continues to employ them. They keep her appraised of what is happening in her kingdom, and an honest man has nothing to fear from them." He chuckles, "I even used to know some of them, in the old days. They changed them all around since the king's death, though. If any are around here, I wouldn't know them anymore." |
| Jail | Germaise shakes a white-dusted finger at you. "A boy like you should stay out of trouble and not think about such a filthy place." |
| Rooftops | "I better not catch you up there, yes?" he warns. "It's not safe." |
| Food | A smile spreads across Germaise's flour-streaked face. "What can I interest you in?" he asks. "I have round breads and flat breads, grain breads and white breads, hard breads and soft breads, long loaves and demi-loaves. I make rolls, muffins, pastries, cakes, and the most delicious fried dough you will ever taste. It is no joke to say that my buns are the most firm and delicious in all of Toresal." |
| Sewers | "The sewerrs are a place to avoid," Germaise warns you. "There are rumors that thieves and scoundrels and worse hide down there, and traverse the city through the tunnels." |
| Inheritance | Germaise laughs. "Inheritance? Where your fancies take you, boy, I just don't know. Hope that you inherited some wits, so that you can learn a trade and live a good life." |
| Ascension | "Bah. I do not think of crown politics. I make my voice heard when the time comes, but it is not my voice that decides things. The local regent reports the people's sentiment to the court." |
| Toresal | "It's a good city to live in," Germaise says, stroking his moustache. "There is respect for the law here, and money to be made if you work hard and stay smart. It cannot compare in beauty to the cities of my beloved southlands," he sighs, " but it lacks in aesthetics, it makes up for in opportunity." |
| Kingdom | "It's a good time for the kingdom nowadays. The king's law is respected, and there have been no clan wars in over a century." Germaise sighs. "I hope it lasts." |
| Taxes | "There is no use in complaining about taxes," says Germaise. "But they are not too much of a burden." |
| Clans | "Don't you read your history?" smirks Germaise. "Before the rule of the southern crown, there were dozens of clans fighting over land, cattle, daughters… it was an era of barbarians, yes? We are better off today, you can be sure." better off now, that's for sure. |
| Sea | Germaise gives a theatrical shudder. "Ships. You couldn't get me on a ship at swordpoint, not even the river boats or coastal shuttles. Awful things." |
| Small Woods | "Those woods are for the lord's private hunting, but the old Duke always kept them open to the public. A romantic place to take your girl, yes?" |
| Mermaid Fountain | "Ah, yes, I remember that fountain," Germaise says, stroking his moustaches. "A beautiful garden around it, wonderful place to take your sweetheart. It fell into disrepair since the Duke died, more's the shame." |
| Secret Passage | "Eh? Secret passage?" Germaise looks at you suspiciously. "I don't know anything about it, but it sounds like the kind of thing you shouldn't be messing with – or talking about. Talk like that gets you into trouble with the King's spies, it will." |

* + **Object:** Bread
    - **Command [examining, smelling, eating, tasting, buying, touching, or doing pretty much anything to the bread]:** It looks and smells delicious, but right now you need answers more than you need a snack.
  + **Object:** Brick Oven
    - **Description:** Most of the shop's back wall is actually the front of Germaise's huge brick oven. A warm, orange glow and the delicious smells of baking bread drift from its wide opening.
    - **Command [doing anything to the oven other than looking at it]:** It's behind the counter, and Germaise wouldn't want you messing with it in any case.

1. Butcher's Shop
   * **Description:** Chains of linked sausages and thick, red cuts of meat dangle from hooks in the ceiling, and trays of less identifiable and less pleasant-looking bits sit out on the counters. It's better than some butcheries you've seen, but it's still not your favorite place in the city. You can leave to the south.
   * **Object:** Meat/Sausages/Trays/Bits
     + **Description:**The sausage looks tasty enough, and the hanging meat cuts would probably look good once they're cooked. The rest of it just makes you sort of ill.
     + **Command [eat, taste, or smell the meat]:** For some reason, this place just kills your appetite.
   * **Object:** Chopping Block
     + **Description:** Holstenoffer's chopping block is cut from a single, gigantic piece of unstained oak. Its surface is stained black with blood, soaked three inches down into the wood's grain.
     + **Command [doing anything to the chopping block]:** The chopping block is behind the counter, out of your reach – and honestly, you prefer it that way.
   * **NPC:** Butcher
     + **Initial Appearance:** Old Man Holstenoffer is leaning over his huge, bloodstained butcher block behind the counter, hacking up some carcass.
     + **Description:** Holstenoffer is a squat brick of a man, with a scarred bulldog's face and sailors' tattoos covering his arms from the wrists all the way up to his rolled-up sleeves. He's friendly enough, but he has a tendency to gesticulate with his cleaver in hand, which sometimes makes conversation with him a tense and athletic affair.
       - **Object:** Cleaver (carried by Holstenoffer)
         * **Description:** Holstenoffer calls his cleaver "Big Molly," and often talks to it as though it were a pet. The side of the blade is tarnished and dull from years of use, but the edge is so sharp enough that hacking through through thick muscle and bone is no more difficult than cutting pudding.
     + **Event [when player first enters the shop]:** He glances over his shoulder as you come in. "Ey, Jack!" he calls. "Long time, no see. Bobby was around this morning, looking for yeh. Up to something again, eh?" he laughs.
     + **Idle Behavior:** [1 in 5 chance each turn, picked at random]
       - Holstenoffer's cleaver cuts through a particularly tough joint with a gristly, crunching sound.
       - Holstenoffer chops deftly at the raw meat on his block, cutting into narrow strips.
       - Holstenoffer stops to wipe his hands on his blood-smeared apron.
       - Holstenoffer stops suddenly and holds up a slippery-looking chunk of red gristle. "Huh," he mutters, "never seen one of *those* before." With a shrug, he tosses it into a tray labeled "Bargain Bits".
       - Holstenoffer glances at you over his shoulder. "Not that I mind yer company, Jack," he says, "but maybe yeh should go find Bobby."
     + **Conversation Table (Holstenoffer)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Subject | Response |
| Me | "Looking healthy as ever, Jack. Why, somebody botherin yeh? You send em over to meet me an Big Molly, here," he says, waving his cleaver. "We can take care of it for yeh." |
| Mercenaries | Holstenoffer's squinty eyes narrow even further when you tell him about the mercenaries scouring Grubber's Market. "Filthy mercs," he growls. "Let em try coming up here…they'll find more than some timid stall merchant!" He shakes his cleaver to emphasize the point, forcing you to take a quick step backwards to avoid a deep facial scar. |
| Bobby | "He said something about waiting for you over by Lord's Market somewhere." Holstenoffer waves his cleaver vaguely eastward, flinging a bit of gristle across the room. "Yeh know, yeh oughtta stick around Bobby more, Jack. He's a big, strong lad. Teach a skinny boy like yeh to take better care of yehself, eh?" |
| Teisha | "The silk merchant? She's a pretty one. Mention her to the doughboy next door, and yeh'll see more'n his bread rising, if yeh know what I mean." |
| Father | Holstenoffer gives you a queer look. "Whaddayeh askin me for, Jack? I dunno nothin about yer past." |
| Mother | He shrugs. "I heard she was an unlucky soul. Dunno what else I could tell yeh, Jack." |
| Maidens | "Ah, the lovely ladies." Holstenoffer smiles. "Been eyein the plump one meself… what's her name again? It's about time I took in a wife, and ol' Holstenoffer ain't too picky, if yeh know what I mean." |
| Maiden House | "A fine place, it is," he says. "Keeps yeh urchins out of trouble… mostly. That's what's important." |
| Fossville (first time) | Holstenoffer's cleaver *whacks* into the carving board, and he turns to glare at you, red-faced. "Dammit, Jack, I told yeh, don't be sayin that name in my shop. Makes me so angry, I'm like to cut a man's hand off. The Baron's a rat and I'll not be afraid to say it. He don't care about this city. He don't care about nothin' but his own purse and his own power." He leans closer to you. "Yeh ask me, him an the old Lord was at odds, back in the day. Methinks the Baron won that battle, though, an not by playin fair." |
| Fossville (subsequent times) | Holstenoffer shakes his cleaver at you. "I said I don't wanna be talkin about it, Jack. The Baron's no good." |
| Black Gate Estate | "Ah yeah, that's a pretty house the Baron has there," scoffs the butcher. "Would yeh like some tea?" he squeaks in a mocking falsetto, twirling his cleaver. "Or maybe some crumpets? Ha! Old Baron Fussypants likes his fancy things, that's for damn sure." |
| Red Gate Estate | "That place has been collectin dust since the old Lord's death, may the Goddesses carry his soul. No one's taken up the place, not even the Baron – though yeh'd think he'd be interested just so as to tear it down and build a new wing for his own place. Ah, there's been rumors about an heir, coming back to claim the place, but I have my doubts. They say the old Lord never had much luck siring a son with that old battleaxe the Queen forced him to marry." |
| Jacob's Mansion | Holstenoffer grunts, swishing his cleaver dismissively. "Don't know much about that house, and glad of it. The Jacobs're all thieves, always have been. Nothin but trouble that way." |
| Jacobs | "I try to stay out of his way," he admits. "Not that I'd have much trouble with one or two of 'em givin me trouble. But there's a whole family of 'em, yeh know. Best to not get on his bad side." |
| Commerce Street | He smiles. "Ah, I do love it here. I came from farm country, yeh know, before me days on the seas, and I couldn't get out fast enough. But choppin' chicken necks was something I always had a knack for, and this is as good a place as any to practice a trade." |
| Grubber's Market | "Some of the shopkeepers around here turn their nose up at Grubber's," says Holstenoffer. "Not me. Get me cleavers special made there, and me leather aprons too. Soaks up blood better than any cloth, and at a bargain, too." |
| Lord's Market | "Pah!" He waggles his cleaver with a fluorish of contempt. "Yeh wouldn't catch me over there for a sweet calf and ten fat hens. Not me kind of place at all. Course yer pal Bobby's over there all the time. Likes to oggle the high-class ladies, I guess. 'Smatter, Jack, need some air?" You turn away before Holstenoffer can see you blushing. |
| Lord's Keep | "Never been there meself," says Holstenoffer. "Would that a better soul were occupying it now. That Baron is likely to foul the place with his stink." |
| Ball (before announce-ment) | "A ball, eh? Haven't had a ball up at the Keep in ages. Not since the old Lord…" he trails off, and turns back to his chopping with a grim vigor. |
| Ball (after announce-ment) | He looks bashful. "Eh, well, about that… I got a big order came in this morning. From the Baron, paid up front. Makes me sick, it does, but business is business, yeh know? A man has to eat." |
| Queen | Holstenoffer's cleaver flashes as his chopping gets faster and angrier. "That daft old bat can't rule so much as her own temper. What a sorry mess we'll all be in when she croaks." |
| Princess (before announce-ment, first time) | "Goddesses preserve yeh, Jack!", he yells, and throws a handful of salt on the floor. "That creature's worse than her mum! I'm not superstitious by nature, but I'd rather not suffer under *her* reign any sooner than I have to, so let's not push our luck, eh?" |
| Princess (before announce-ment, subsequent times) | Holstenoffer cuts you off, pointing his cleaver at you menacingly. "I warned yeh, Jack. Don't speak of her here." |
| Princess (after announce-ment) | His shoulders slump. "We're doomed, Jack," he says, his cleaver dangling from limp fingers. "Yeh know what they're sayin, don't yeh? The Baron plans to court the Princess at this ball; he'll maneuver for the crown, next, and then that scoundrel's got the whole kingdom in his grubby paws. We're doomed, I'm tellin yeh." |
| Spies (before Bobby's death) | "Well," he muses, "The King had quite the network of informers, or so I hear. But that was more than ten years ago. I doubt they're still around." He thinks for a moment. "But if they are… who'd they loyal too, yeh think? The Queen? That wouldn't bode well for anyone." |
| Spies (after Bobby's death) | "I *knew* there was somethin funny about that Bobby," says Holstenoffer, shaking his head. "I guess he had us all fooled, and good." |
| Jail | "Well," he says, sheepishly, "I been in a couple of times, only for bein drunk. It's not so bad. Most fellas in there know me and Big Molly here," he brandishes his cleaver, "so they leaves me alone. You know, Jack," he adds, "a good woman'd keep me out of the taverns, so she would. Put in a good word for me with the Maidens, and I'd consider it a kindness." |
| Rooftops | "Been up there once to patch the leaky roof, but I don't much care for heights," Holstenoffer says. "Word is, though, some of these old buildings are so close together, yeh can jump right across, go whole city blocks without touching the street. Bobby once told me, he hopped over to the Baron's rooftop garden and had himself a sandwich! Ha! Braver lad than me." |
| Food | "Ain't got nothin' cooked, but if yeh want scraps for stew back at the maiden house, I'm sure I can come up with something. Make sure yeh let the ladies know where you got it though, eh?" |
| Sewers | "Another of Duke Toresal's little improvements. Those tunnels are a blessing to this city, yeh know. I'd be paying a fortune to have me garbage hauled away if it weren't for the sewers." |
| Inheritance (before he knows who you really are) | Holstenoffer scowls, but with a sad kindness, Jack," he says, "yeh're just an orphan. No tellin who yer mum hooked up with, and chances are yeh're better off no knowin. You're a lucky boy, Jack. Don't jinx it wishin for somethin' that's just a dream." |
| Inheritance (after he knows who you really are) | Holstenoffer sighs. "Goddesses save me, Jack!  First yeh showup dressed out like a girl; now yeh say yeh're the old Lord's daughter and true heir? It's getting so a man can't keep his own head straight. Well, if it's true, yeh can count on Holstenoffer to back yeh up. But yeh're gonna need a lot more help than a fat old butcher from the country." |
| Ascension (before he knows who you really are) | Holstenofffer shrugs. "Rules of the throne are tricky, Jack. I never did understand 'em. Yeh'd do better askin someone else about that." |
| Ascension (after he knows who you really are, first time) | "First yeh want to be a princess, now yeh want to be Queen?" Holstenoffer spreads his arms wide in a disbelieving shrug, slopping bloody suet from his cleaver onto the walls. "Now look here, Jack – er, Jacqueline – er, Jack! Dammit, this whole mess has me head spinnin. I need to sit down a moment." |
| Ascension (after he knows who you really are, subsequent times) | He shakes his head. "I don't know, Jack. This is all just too crazy." |
| Toresal | He smiles ruefully. "It was a good town, yeh know… until the old Lord died." |
| Kingdom | "The kingdom's been peaceful for as long as I can remember – the clan wars were all before I was born, yeh know. Mark my words though, that Baron will bring it all to ruin." |
| Taxes | He waves his cleaver. "Eh, don't talk to me about taxes. The Baron's been gettin more and more greedy every year, and he's not takin care of the land. There'll be a price to pay when Fossville is fully recognized as the new Lord, but it's us workin folk who'll bear the cost." |
| Clans | "There's some that still hold to the clan ways over the mountains," Holstenoffer says, "though it's been a long time since the clans played any part in the kingdom's politics." |
| Sea | Holstenoffer glances at his tattoos. "Truth be told, Jack, most my sailin days were all on river boats. Never been down to the sea. Like to hitch a ride on a tall ship some day, though. Wouldn't that be something?" |
| Small Woods | "Never been up there, meself. Heard it's quiet and peaceful there." |
| Mermaid Fountain | "Never heard of it." |
| Secret Passage (before he knows who you really are) | "Secret passages, Jack? Yeh've been listenin' to too many of Bobby's tall tales." |
| Secret Passage (before he knows who you really are) | "Be careful, young lady," Holstenoffer warns. "Yeh're talkin about things that're dangerous to know. Don't be messin with those things less you've a trusted friend by yer side." |

1. Armory
   * **Description:** The tangy smell of oiled steel is nearly overpowering in this small, windowless shop. All of the really interesting weapons – axes, flails, spiked gauntlets and the like – are high up on racks on the back wall, well behind the high counter. However, there is a display of assorted knives and daggers sitting out where you can get a close look at them.
   * **Object:** Dagger Display
     + **Description:** Over a dozen gleaming blades neatly lined up on a rectangle of dark green velvet; from long, wicked stilettos, to demure little stickers you could hide inside an opera glove, to gigantic cleavers that would make Holstenoffer next door jealous.
     + **Command [buring a dagger]:** Pieter leans over your shoulder as you inspect the daggers. "Having the right weapon is as important as knowing what to do with it," he tells you. "You don't want big or fancy; you want something sharp, long enough to do damage to a man when you stick him with it, but slim enough to hide under your, er…" he suddenly blushes and clears his throat. "Anyway. That one," he says, pointing to a plain-handled blade about six inches long. "That's the one you want."

Olgan Minor grumbles, but Pieter glares at him again and suggests that if your gold is no good here, then perhaps some other metal might suit the shopkeeper better. Grudgingly, Minor hands over the knife and sheath, and makes a show of biting your gold coin to make sure of its worth.

* + **Object:** Interesting Weapons/Axes/Flails/Gauntlets
    - **Description:** The sheer variety of ways to grievously injure someone with a sharp, metal instrument leaves you both impressed and vaguely disturbed.
    - **Command [doing anything to the weapons]:** The big weapons are all behind the counter, high out of reach.
    - **Command [buying one of the big weapons]:** Pieter shakes his head. "Those sorts of weapons are too big to wear discreetly," he tells you, "and most are too heavy for you to lift in any case."
  + **Event [buying anything without money]:** Minor barks an unpleasant laugh. "Run along, *girl*, before you cut yourself."
  + **NPC:** Armory Shopkeeper
    - **Initial Appearance:** Olgan Minor, the proprietor, leans against the counter, watching you intently.
    - **Description:** Olgan Minor is short but muscular, with a lined face and graying, military-cut hair. He says nothing as you browse his wares, but his eyes seem to bore right into you. You are suddenly certain that he knows you're not really a boy – that he knew it the instant you walked into his shop.

**[first time only]** You've heard that Olgan Minor is not one to trifle with – and now that you've seen him, you believe it.

* + - **Idle Behavior:** [1 in 5 chance each turn, pick randomly]
      * Minor's eyes seem to drill right into you.
      * Minor takes a small knife from his sleeve and starts trimming his nails. The whole time, he never stops staring at you. He never blinks.
      * Minor's constant staring is really starting to creep you out. You find yourself wishing you'd never entered his shop.
    - **Conversation Table (Olgan Minor):**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Subject | Response |
| Me | Minor's eyes drill into yours. "And why exactly should I be interested in you, boy?" |
| Mercenaries | Minor smirks. "Those are some of my best customers you're disparaging, boy. I'd try to be more respectful, if I were you." |
| Bobby | "I know the lad," he says, and then falls silent. |
| Father | "Never met him," Minor says, "but I wouldn't think much of him just by looking at you, boy." |
| Maidens | "Bloody charity." He fairly spits the word. "Those mother hens should be married off, and their charges put to work." |
| Teisha | "Should I know every doxy, beggar, and trinket-seller in the city? You take me for some chirping marketstall gossip, boy?" |
| Maiden House | "That building used to be a hotel for travelers," says Minor. "Now it's a bloody waste of taxpayers' coin." |
| Fossville | "What's it to you what I think of the Baron, boy?" he sneers. "He's a bloody sight better than the old Lord, at any rate. Make a fine King as well, maybe." |
| Black Gate Estate | "Never been there." |
| Red Gate Estate | "More waste," spits Minor. "That house should be sold. The old Lord has been dead long enough." |
| Jacob's Mansion | Minor shrugs. "A fine mansion. What of it?" |
| Jacobs | "They're an… interesting clan," Minor says, but then says no more. |
| Commerce Street | "What of it? It's a place to sell goods. I'd be grateful for better-smelling neighbors," he adds, with a contemptuous glare towards the butcher shop, "but otherwise I can't complain." |
| Grubber's Market | He shrugs. "I do trade with a man there sometimes; he's a good customer and gives a good bargain in return." |
| Lord's Market | "Useless dandies and spoiled women buying overpriced trinkets," Minor sneers. |
| Lord's Keep | "A keep is meant for fortification, not displays of frivolous excess. Hopefully the Baron will make better use of the place than the old Lord did." |
| Ball (before ball is announced) | "I've no use for such affairs." |
| Ball (after ball is announced) | "I've heard that Fossville will likely announce his engagement to the Queen's daughter, so perhaps there will be some point to the ceremony after all." |
| Queen | "Bloody useless woman," he mutters. "The old King was as poor a judge of character as he was a tactician." |
| Princess | Minor's lip curls in what might be a smile. "They say she's a temperamental woman, but a resourceful one." |
| Spies | Minor chuckles. "Aye, boy… you never know who might be listening in on your conversations or your nosey questions, do you?" |
| Jail | Minor narrows his eyes in a way that makes you want to take a step or two back. "Never been," he growls. |
| Food | "I'm no grocer, boy," says Minor. |
| Sewers | "More wasted tax dollars," he sniffs. "A man does just as well with a chamber pot and the occasional rain." |
| Inheritance (before he knows who you are) | "There is no inheritance, boy. The old Duke Toresal had no heir; his estate will be absorbed by the crown."  (after)  "You're lucky to live through the night. I seriously doubt you'll have any chance of being recognized." |
| Inheritance (after he knows who you are) | Minor grins in an unpleasant way. "Careful who you talk to about that, girl," he says. "Not that you've a bloody chance of being recognized, but there's some who'd see your claim as a threat. There's some who'd like to see someone like you disappear, and plenty who'd be willing to make it happen." |
| Ascension | "The crown should go to whomever is strong enough to take it," says Minor. "These ascension games are a waste of time." |
| Toresal | Minor snorts. "This town thinks itself so bloody important, but it's never been more than a provincial trading post where the rich dress themselves up to look sophisticated." |
| Kingdom | "Taxes are high, people are lazy, women scorn their husbands and walk the streets dressed as tramps." Minor spits. "The kingdom is in poor shape, I'd say." |
| Taxes | "Sanctioned thievery," snaps Minor, "corruption at its worst." |
| Clans | Minor smiles; it is not a pleasant sight. "I'm originally from the Su' Hart Klan, over the mountains and far to the west. I may yet return, someday." |
| Sea | "I've sailed the Eastern Sea, boy," Minor says with a mysterious smile. "I did many things before learning the craft of weapons." |
| Small Woods | "More extravagance. The Lord stages his pretty hunts on land that could be put to better used." |
| Mermaid Fountain | "Useless and pretty; now it's broken and decayed." Minor smirks. "Just like everything else from the old Lord's rule." |
| Secret Passage (before he knows who you are) | Minor's eyes narrow, but he says nothing. |
| Secret Passage (after he knows who you are, first time) | Minor smiles a thin, deadly smile. He is idly twirling his little knife with one hand, but you don't remember seeing him draw it from anywher. "That's a very dangerous bit of information you know there, young lady," he says quietly. "Not the kind of thing you'd want to let just anyone know that *you* know about it, if you take my meaning." |
| Secret Passage (after he knows who you are, subsequent times) | He says nothing, just continues to stare at you and smile. |

1. Clothier's (Royal Tunic)
   * **Description:** The walls are hung with tasteful curtains, and a deep, soft carpet covers the floor. Several clothier's dummies stand about the room, displaying gorgeous formal court apparel for both men and women. The street lies north.
   * **Object:** Dummies
     + **Description:** Armless, headless torsos carved from wood, stuck atop iron tripods, and dressed in fancy clothes. They're actually a bit ghoulish, now that you really look at them.
     + **Command [doing anything to the dummies]:** Since there's nothing here you could afford to buy, and nothing you could easily steal, you make an effort to keep your hands to yourself.
   * **Object:** Clothes
     + **Description:** The clothes here are lovely – rich velvets and flowing silks, dyed with brilliant colors and embroidered with lace and gems. [first time only]These are the sorts of costumes that you imagine while lying on your straw mattress back at Maiden House, dreaming about dazzling the Prince at the Royal Ball. Stupid fantasies, you know, but oh – if you could only wear something as beautiful as these, just for one evening…

[if you have not bathed]Suddenly, you remember that you're supposed to be looking at the *men's* clothing. You glance nervously at the shopkeeper, but he doesn't seem to find your intense interest in ladies' formal wear strange in the slightest.

* + - **Command [buying clothes if you haven't bathed]:** The clothier is not likely to sell anything to a dirty urchin such as yourself. Besides, you're only interested in the dresses, and it would raise awkward questions if you asked him to sell you one.
    - **Command [buying clothes if you haven't any money]:** You point to one of the dresses, and the clothier quotes you a price that leaves you feeling distinctly queasy. Of course, your old wardrobe consists entirely of cast-offs from the older orphans and whatever interesting bits you were able to scrounge from back-alley trash bins. Who knew *real* clothes cost so much?

"You need to listen to Mrs. Sandler, kid," remarks Pieter. "Get yourself some money first."

* + - **Command [buying the dress when you do have money]:** After several agonizing minutes of indecision, you point to the dress you want.

The clothier flutters his hands and practically giggles, "Oh, a *splendid* choice! You'll look like a princess!" He dances around you, taking measurements with his cord and muttering numbers to himself as he goes. Then he takes the dress off its dummy and retreats with it into the back of his shop. "This will be *just* a moment," he calls over his shoulder.

You look at Pieter and shrug.

"Er, I'll wait outside," he says.

And afterwards, as you look at yourself in the full-length mirror while the clothier kneels at your feet, tugging, plucking, pinning, making adjustments, you realize that he was right – you *do* look like a princess.

[remove dress, now the player is wearing the ball gown]

* + **Object:** Ball Gown
    - **Description:** The dress is pale blue with tiny pearls embroidered into the bodice and dagged sleeves.
    - **Event [after you exit the Clothier's shop while wearing the dress, after printing the room description]:** Pieter blinks and does a double take as you step out onto the sidewalk in your new finery. "*Wow*," he stammers. "You look… different. I mean, you looked good before, er, with the other dress, I mean, but this is… *wow*." He blushes, then grins, then shakes his head. "Come on, Lady Toresal. We still have much to do."
  + **Event [when you first enter the shop]:** A small bell above the door tinkles as you enter, and a man comes rushing out of the store's back room with a measuring cord in his hands, held up as though ready to begin fitting you immediately. When he sees that you're merely a boy (and by all appearances, not one with much in the way of discretionary income at that), he stops in his tracks and his expression grows distinctly pouty. He manages to keep most of the disappointment out of his voice as he asks, "May I *help* you?"
  + **Event [when you first enter the shop after having bathed]:** A small bell above the door tinkles as you enter, and a man comes rushing out of the store's back room with a measuring cord in his hands, held up as though ready to begin fitting you immediately. When he sees that you are a clean, respectable, and evidently well-to-do young lady, he practically squeals with delight, clapping his hands and plucking at the fabric of your clothes with soft, nimble fingers.
  + **NPC:** Clothier Shopkeeper
    - **Initial Appearance [before bath]:** The clothier stands nearby, eyeing you with some distaste.
    - **Initial Appearance [after bath]:** The clothier hovers nearby, waiting to serve.
    - **Description:** Tall, thin, and impeccably dressed, although his fashion sense seems a bit…decorative, compared to the more austere look preferred by men of Toresal's upper class. His hairline is receding, and what hair he has left is plastered back onto his scalp with fragrant oil. He look as though he'd secretly prefer to wipe things down with a scented handkerchief before touching them; somehow, through good breeding and intestinal fortitude, he manages to soldier on despite not doing so.

1. Jeweler (Sandler and Sons)
   * **Description:** The inside of this store is tasteful but austerely decorated, perhaps to better draw the eye towards the glass display cases in the center of the room, and the king's ransom in jewelry contained therein. You can leave to the north.
   * **Object:** Display Cases
     + **Description:** There are four glass-topped cases, each sitting on a carved wooden pedestal. Light from hanging candelabras glitters across the diamond-encrusted rings, bracelets, pendants, brooches, and necklaces spread out on black velvet.
     + **Command [open cases]:** The cases are locked, of course. And Pieter and Rudolph have their eyes on you constantly.
       - **Object:** Jewelry
         * **Description:** Any one piece is several times more valuable than everything you've ever nicked in your entire life, put together. The thought of wearing something that extravagant on your wrist makes your skin tingle.
   * **NPC:** The two guards (collectively)
     + **Initial Appearance:** Two guards stand discreetly near the back of the room.
     + **Description:** Rudolph and Pieter are good fellows. You've traded friendly words with them in the past, but most of the time they stay quiet to preserve a sense of professionalism. Rudolph gives you a slight smile and nod when you catch his eye.
   * **NPC:** Rudolph
     + **Description:** Rudolph is the smarter of the two, and tends to treat you more like an adult.
   * **NPC:** Pieter
     + **Description:** Pieter is a bit dim, but loyal to Dame Sandler and tirelessly vigilant. He's nice enough, but he tends to think you're about eight years old, and speaks to you accordingly.
   * **NPC:** Mrs. Sandler
     + **Initial Appearance:** Dame Sandler stands near the central display case. A small, dignified smile plays on her lips.
     + **Event [when you first enter the jewelry shop]:** Dame Sandler is here as usual. Her eyebrows raise slightly as you walk into her store. "Well, hello there, Sire Jack," she says, in her typically smooth (and the slightest bit mocking) tone. "We haven't had the pleasure of your company in a while. You look a bit out of breath – nothing ails you, I hope?"
     + **Description:** Though in her elder years, Dame Sandler is still a tall and striking woman. Her long, silver hair is pulled back in a complicated bun, and she has a habit of inspecting her merchandise through a monocle on the end of a long, slender, gold-filigreed handle. Sometimes you wonder what she's doing running a shop (even such a relatively high-class one as this); her demeanor is more that of an aristocrat, if not full royalty.

Although you almost never come to her shop (everything in here is too expensive to buy and too well-guarded to nick), for some reason Dame Sandler has always taken a liking to you, and never runs you out when you visit, even when she important customers to tend to. It's more of a bemused curiosity than real affection, but feels good to be on a friendly basis with such an intriguing woman.

* + - **Event [when you first enter the jewelry shop, after having a bath]:** Dame Sandler looks you over and smiles. She does not seem at all surprised by your change in dress.

"Lady Jacqueline," she says, inclining her head, "how nice to see you finally looking yourself, after all these years. Come, child, let me get a look at you." She takes your chin gently between two fingers and tilts your face back and forth. "Hmm. You've simply destroyed your hair, of course, but there's nothing to be done now. It will grow out eventually."

She catches your eye then, and laughs. "Oh, child, did you think I didn't know? More people have had their eye on you than you realize. We've been waiting for the Duke's daughter to finally make herself known, and now here you are."

* + - **Command [trying to leave the shop while the following monologue is taking place]:** Dame Sandler takes your elbow, gently but firmly. "Please don't go yet, dear; what I have to tell you is dreadfully important."
    - **Event [one turn after entering the jewelry shop, after having a bath]:** Her expression turns serious. "What you must realize, Jacqueline, is that you represent a threat to certain people with ambitions toward the throne. Oh, yes," she says, seeing your incredulous expression, "even though your birth was illegitimate, you have a credible claim. The laws of ascension in our land are clear: in the absence of a clear blood successor, the ruler is determined by the will of the common people.

"The Duke was *very* popular with the common people. Baron Fossville…is not."

* + - **Event [second turn after entering the jewelry shop, after having a bath]:** "The other thing you should realize is that there are *also* a number of people who are interested in seeing you succeed. Some of them may believe that you are the better candidate; more of them simply with to spite Fossville; *all* of them will expect you to be appropriately grateful for their aid should you actually succeed.

"But before you can enlist their aid," says Dame Sandler, "you must let it be known that you are in the game, and that you are a player worth backing. You must announce yourself. And to do that, you must attend Fossville's ball tonight."

You can barely catch your breath to respond. *You?* Attend a *royal ball?* This is all happening so fast…

Her voice softens a bit, and she puts a hand on your arm. "I realize this is a bit sudden and frightening, my dear, but you must accept it and act quickly. This will not simply go away; Fossville does not care whether you *want* the ascension; he will hunt you down regardless. So why not take him head-on? This is who you are, now. Enjoy it, play it to the hilt."

* + - **Event [third turn after entering the jewelry shop, after having a bath]:** "Of course, you cannot attend the ball looking like this," she says, her tone becoming brisk and businesslike again. "You will need a dress, some jewelry…and a weapon. It is unlikely that Fossville would try to kill you in front of a hundred guests, but you can never be too careful. This will require money, of course, but now that you have proof of your heritage, the Chorus Brothers should be willing to help you in that area.

"And just to reassure you of my own good intentions…" Dame Sandler unlocks the display case with a tiny silver key and lifts up the lid. She gestures to the sparkling jewels within. "This will get you started. Take any one you like, child. I'm one of those who would see you succeed; this is my gift to you."

* + - **Event [after taking the jewel]:** "A fine choice," says Dame Sandler. "Now hurry – Fossville's ball is tonight, and there's not much time left. See the moneylenders first, then get a suitable dress and a discreet blade. Pieter will go with you—"

Pieter blinks. "What, to the ball?" he asks.

"Yes, Pieter," Sandler says pointedly, "to the ball. Just do what you always do – keep your mouth shut and make sure no one harms the valuables, and you should be fine."

She turns back to you and smiles. "On your way, now. And good luck, Lady Jacqueline."

1. Moneylender (Chorus Brothers)
   * **Description:** Theinside of this shop is dark – dark wood paneling on the walls; deep, wine-dark carpeting on the floor; even a pair of huge, leather armchairs over in one corner. The back half of the room is hidden behind a wall of reinforced wood, with a wide window cut through the center.
   * **Object:** Armchairs
     + **Description:** The armchairs are overstuffed, upholstered in rich, dark leather.
     + **Command [sit on/enter the chair]:** They look very comfortable, but it would feel awkward sitting in the chair and yelling across the room at the counter.
   * **Event [after entering for the first time]:** A moment after you enter, two faces suddenly appear at the window, each seeming to slide smoothly in from either side. They look at you with identical expressions of curiosity and a sort of mild, almost professional contempt.

"Good afternoon," says one.

"May we help you?" asks the other.

* + **Object:** Window/Counter
    - **Description:** The window forms a sort of counter, with an ornately scrolled, brass grating that opens to the inside, allowing customers to speak with the proprietors on the other side. In fact, it appears that the *only* way to get service here is by standing up at the counter, so it's not exactly clear what the fancy chairs are for.
  + **NPC:** The Chorus Brothers
    - **Initial Appearance:** The Chorus Brothers hover behind their window, staring at you.
    - **Description:** It's in some ways fortunate that you're not on a first-name basis with these fellows, because you'd never be able to tell them apart. Their faces are utterly identical, from the tops of their bald, cadaverous heads down to the black, dusty collars of their coats.
    - **Command [ask brothers for loan, before bath and before showing them the letter]:** The brother on the left sniffs. The brother on the right ever-so-slightly twists up the corner of his mouth.

"I think…" says one.

"…*not*," says the other.

* + - **Command [ask brothers for loan, after bath but before showing them the letter]:** A pair of sympathetic smiles, perfectly identical and simultaneous, appear on the brothers' faces.

"My dear," begins one, "you certainly *look* respectable, but without…"

"… some form of credit history…" adds the other.

"…our hands our tied," finishes the first.

"Some form of collateral, someone to act as surety, some proof that you are capable of paying your debts…"

"…would help assure us that we were making…"

"… a sound *investment*."

* + - **Command [showing the brothers the letter proving your identity]:** The brothers both reach out, one with his right hand, the other with his left, and delicately take the letter from you. Their eyes flicker back and forth in unison as they scan the words. When they reach the end, four identical eyebrows shoot up.

"How very…"

"…*interesting*. It would seem you are a personage of more…"

"…*importance* than first we assumed."

They hand the letter back to you, smiling, and ask in chorus, "How may we help you?"

* + - **Command [ask for loan after you've shown them the letter, but before you've had a bath]:** The brothers manage to look both pained and solicitous at the manage, with one of them handling one expression while the other handling the other.

"Of course, there is no question…"

"…of your *bona fides*. However, there is the issue of…"

"…your *presentability*, shall we say? We cannot be seen lending money to an unwashed street child, even if she does happen to be a Duke's daughter. It would attract…"

"…the wrong sort of applicant. Before we discuss the particulars of your loan, perhaps we could prevail upon you to…"

"…clean up?"

"…just a bit?"

* + - **Command [ask for a loan after you've had a bath *and* after you've shown them the letter]:** The two brothers lean forward eagerly, as though they've been waiting for you to ask.

"We would be *delighted* to extend to you…"

"…our most prestigious line of credit!"

Over the next few minutes they hand you dozens of sheets of paper covered in dense, tiny script, full of bizarre words like "amortization", "compound interest", and "escrow". Pieter tries to read some of it, with his brow furrowed up and his lips moving slightly; eventually he shakes his head and mutters, "Just sign all of them." You dutifully write your name where the brothers show you.

After it's all done, they sweep all the papers into a slim leather folder, and place a small sack of coins on the counter. "That's *it?*" complains Pieter, but when you tug open the drawstring, you see the sunlight gleam of gold.

"When you have secured your position, please remember us…" says one brother.

"…not merely as your creditors…"

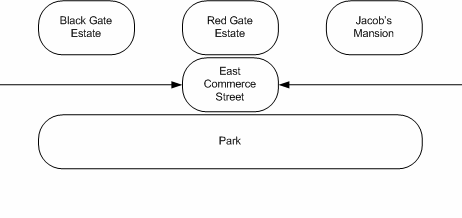
"…but as your *friends.*"

And both brothers smile in unison, revealing two sets of wide, white teeth.

[move bag of money to player's inventory]

* + **Object:** Bag of Coins
    - **Description:** The sack is about the size of your fist. It's very heavy. Even a little bit of gold goes a long way in Toresal, and there's more than just a little bit of gold in here. The drawstring is [closed/open].
    - **Command [open/close bag/pull drawstring]:** You pull the drawstring [open/closed].
    - **Command [give bag or coins to someone]:** Very generous of you, but you're going to need the money for yourself.
    - **Command [drop the bag, put the bag in/on something]:** It wouldn't be very wise to leave a bag full of gold coins sitting unguarded. Better keep them on your person for now.
    - **Object:** Gold Coins
      * **Description:** Each coin has the Great Seal of the Kingdom of Miradan on one side; the face of some old, dead king that you've never heard of on the other. You've never seen real gold before, and nothing you've ever seen is quite like it. The coins seem to shine with an inner light.
      * **Command [remove coins from bag]:** The bag is the safest place for them, for now. There's no need to take them out unless you're planning to purchase something.

## Chapter III - East Commerce Street



1. East Commerce Street
   * **Description:** The east end of Commerce Street winds through an upper-class residential neighborhood before winding up at Lord's Market. Behind spiked, iron fences stand the "city cottages" of Toresal's wealthy merchants and nobility, built tall and narrow to make the best use of limited real estate.

Three stately houses are built close together on the north side of the road: Black Gate Estate to the northwest; Red Gate Estate to the north; and the Jacobs family mansion to the northeast. The street itself continues east and west, and the City Park lies to the south.

* + **Scenery Object:** Black Gate Estate
    - **Description:** Black Gate Estate is the home of Baron Fossville, the current Lord of Toresal since the old Duke's death (though he has yet to be fully confirmed). It is a somber building of dark flagstone and slate, although you've heard the Baron keeps a beautiful rooftop garden.
    - **Command [open, enter, knock, go northwest]:** The servants would never let someone like you enter unless you had urgent business with the Baron, which they'd never believe you had anyway.
  + **Scenery Object:** Red Gate Estate
    - **Description:** This is where the Duke and former Lord of Toresal lived, until his death several years ago. Now it stands empty, slowly crumbling. No one has ever made an attempt to claim the property, and the Baron seems content to let it remain vacant.
    - **Command [open, enter, go north]:** The front gates are securely locked.
    - **Command [knock]:** No one answers.
  + **Scenery Object:** Jacobs Family Mansion
    - **Description:** Old Man Jacobs is rumored to be the richest merchant in Toresal. His lavish city residence is built to resemble a miniature castle, complete with turrets, crenellations, and a heavy portcullis over the front door.
    - **Command [open, enter, knock, go northeast]:** You don't have any business with Jacobs, and even if you did, you might think twice before knocking on his door. Rumor has it that many of his dealings are decidedly less than legal.
  + **Scenery Object:** City Park
    - **Description:** The park is a couple of acres of open meadow and sparse woods in the middle of the city, set aside by the previous Lord to promote health and relaxation among Toresal's citizens. It still sees strollers and the occasional picnicker by day, although it's become infamous as a haunt for cutpurses by night. The park is surrounded by a high stone wall, with a gate on the north side.
    - **Command [enter park or go south]:** At the gate you hesitate. Several street kids have congregated in the middle of the park, chasing each other and playing at knights and villains in the late afternoon warmth. Some of them know you from Maiden House, and know that you're really a girl. That could lead to an awkward situation if one of them called you out in front of someone who only knows you as a boy. *Especially* if that someone was Bobby.

Better visit the park another day.

* + - **Command [enter park or go south during a night scene]:** The park is not a safe place at night.

## Chapter IV – Bobby

### Map



### Rundown

### Notes

Most of this chapter (everything that takes place after you sneak out of Maiden House in Chapter IV) takes place at night.

### Design

1. Lord's Market
   * **Description:** Lord's Market is the high-class mirror to Grubber's Market: a wide, cobbled square, uncrowded and clean, shaded by tall buildings on either side. Here Toresal's upper crust can hunt for bargains inaccessible to the ordinary rabble. Horses, carriages, antiques, custom jewelry, and similarly high-priced goods are available behind the discreet, tasteful shopfronts. You can return to Commerce Street to the west, and an alley leads south.
   * **Night Description:** At night, lanterns hung from ornate posts light the empty square of Lord's Market. Their warm yellow glow seems to make the shadows in the alleys that much darker.
   * **Scenery Object:** Shopfronts
     + **Synonyms:** stores/shops/horses/carriages/antiques/jewelry/buildings
     + **Command [examining or entering the stores]:** All of these shops are far too exclusive – and expensive – to admit the likes of you.
     + **Command [examining or entering the stores at night]:** The shops are all locked for the night.
   * **NPC:** People
     + **Description:** Most of the people wandering about Lord's Market are well dressed servants of the upper class (even for merchandise as nice as this, rich people rarely do their own shopping). Everyone looks to be in a dreadful hurry, with dreadfully important business to attend to, and no one affords you so much as a second glance.
     + **Command [talk to people]:** No one pays a scruffy urchin such as yourself any heed.
     + **Command [do anything to people]:** It's usually not a good idea to bother these people. They are quick to assume you're a pickpocket and yell for the City Guard.
2. Back Alley
   * **Description:** A little-known shortcut between Lord's Market and the less affluent neighborhoods of the city's south end. A narrow street to the southwest leads to Maiden House, or you can return to the market square to the north.
   * **NPC:** Bobby
     + **Description:** Bobby is a few years older than you, a tall, broad-shouldered lad with touseled blonde hair and a rakish grin. He's an orphan, like you, and like you he makes the streets of the city his home and lives by his wits. Unlike you, he doesn't have the safety net of Maiden House to fall back on, but somehow he always seems to do well for himself.

You also happen to think that he's devastatingly handsome, although you would never admit that under the worst torture the King's interrogators could devise. He doesn't even know that you're really a girl, and you're not about to tell him, because if he knew he would certainly stop inviting you along on his exploits.

* + - **Initial Appearance [the first time you enter the Alley and see Bobby]:** At the end of the alley, a group of young urchins – none older than their eighth year – are clustered around something. As you draw closer, you see Bobby crouched in the midst of them. He's holding his arm out, his fist loosely clenched in front of a dirty-cheeked child of six.

"Go on," says Bobby. "Go on, take a look."

The little boy, his eyes wide and solid, reaches out and pries Bobby's fingers open. His hand is empty. The little boy looks dismayed.

"Ah, but what's this?" asks Bobby. And he reaches forward and draws a copper coin from behind the boy's grimy ear. A collective gasp, then squeals of delight from the rest of the children, and the little boy's eyes look ready to fall out of his head.

Bobby presses the coin into the little boy's hand, then passes out more coins to the others. "Here," he says, "keep it safe in your pocket. Spend it on bread, not candy." The children take their prizes and scatter.

Bobby stands and stretches, then he sees you. The corner of his mouth goes up in that lop-sided grin you know so well. "'Lo, Jack," he says. "What's happening?"

* + - **Initial Appearance [in the alley, after the first time]:** Jack leans carelessly against the alley wall, watching you with a slight, wry smile.
    - **Event [after you've spent three turns in Bobby's presence]:** "Hey listen," says Bobby, "So I've been looking for you, right? I found this new place, big secret, extra tricky. I was thinking of doing a bit of exploring there later tonight. You want to come with?" He smiles that knowing half-smile of his, the one that always means he's about to suggest something that will be very fun, or land you both in a pile of trouble, or – the usual case – both.

What, you're going to say no? Heart thumping a bit harder than you'd like it to, you give an enthusiastic nod.

"Good fellow," says Bobby. "Now, you don't want the Maidens worrying about you, so head on home for now. Once it gets dark, sneak back out and meet me in the Grubber's Market. Right? Good. See you later, Jack." He claps his hand on your shoulder, then turns and strides all grace and overconfidence, out of the alley.

* + - **Idle Behavior [while in the Alley, first encounter]:**
      * Bobby whistles a few notes of some popular mummer's tune.
      * Bobby smirks at you in that way he has, that makes you want to smile and blush and run and hide, all at the same time.
      * You realize you're staring, and quickly find something else to look at. Goddesses, but he's handsome.
      * Bobby rakes his fingers back through his tangled hair.
    - **Conversation Table:** (Bobby)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Subject | Response |
| Me | Bobby very carefully walks a fine line of treating you like a guy friend, but also not offending you because he knows you're a girl and he also knows you have a bit of a crush on him. |
| Mercenaries |  |
| Bobby |  |
| Teisha |  |
| Father |  |
| Mother |  |
| Maidens |  |
| Maiden House |  |
| Fossville |  |
| Black Gate Estate |  |
| Red Gate Estate |  |
| Jacob's Mansion |  |
| Jacobs |  |
| Commerce Street |  |
| Grubber's Market |  |
| Lord's Market |  |
| Lord's Keep |  |
| Ball |  |
| Queen |  |
| Princess |  |
| Spies |  |
| Jail |  |
| Rooftops |  |
| Food |  |
| Sewers |  |
| Inheritance |  |
| Ascension |  |
| Toresal |  |
| Kingdom |  |
| Taxes |  |
| Clans |  |
| Sea |  |
| Small Woods |  |
| Mermaid Fountain |  |
| Secret Passage |  |

* + - **Initial Appearance [in Grubber's Market, after dark]:** Bobby is standing in the middle of Grubber's Market, under the shadow of the center pole. When he sees you he jogs over quietly and puts his hand on your arm.

"Had a spot of trouble getting away from the Maidens, eh, Jack?" he whispers.

"Yeah, some," you shrug. Not really, but maybe Bobby will be impressed if he thinks you made a daring escape.

Bobby smiles. "Well, you made it. Nice and tricky. Now come with me, keep your hood up, your head down, and land your feet soft. We're going to the Lord's Wood. That place I wanted to show you is there. You game?"

He points north, to the road leading out of the city.

* + - **Programmer's Note:** [from the time the player meets Bobby in Grubber's Market to the time the player gets captured at the end of this scene, Bobby automatically follows the player wherever she goes.
    - **Description [after dark, while sneaking to Lord's Keep]:** Bobby is being more careful than usual; his eyes dart towards every shadow, and he pauses often to listen for some noise you can't here. But when he glances at you, his eyes still twinkle with his happy-go-lucky spirit, and he smirks as though nothing could possibly go wrong.
    - **Initial Appearance [after dark, while sneaking to Lord's Keep]:** Bobby is here, waiting for you.
    - **Command [going east from the Grubber's Market after meeting Bobby there]:** Bobby puts his hand on your arm. "Where you going, Jack?" he asks, chuckling. "You're not losing your nerve, are you? We need to go that way." He jerks his thumb north.
    - **Command [climbing the center pole when Bobby is with you]:** Bobby grabs your belt and pulls you back to the ground. "We don't have time for that," he whispers. "Now let's hit the road," he says, nodding his head towards the north end of the market.
    - **Idle Behavior [while sneaking to the Lord's Keep]:**
      * "Come on, Jack," Bobby whispers, "we need to hurry."
      * Bobby looks around nonchalantly.
      * "We should head that way," Bobby says, pointing [direction of the shortest path towards the Guard House].
      * Bobby grins at you. "Fun, yeah?" he says.
    - **Command [moving to another location while Bobby is following]:** [pick one at random]
      * Bobby follows close behind you.
      * Bobby saunters along next to you.
      * Bobby hurries ahead to scout the way, then waits for you to catch up.
    - **Command [talking to Bobby while going to the Keep]:** Bobby waves your question away. "Time for talk later," he says. "Let's get to where we're going, first."
    - **Description [while Bobby is with you in the tunnel or in the Keep]:** For the first time since you set out, Bobby looks a little bit nervous. He checks over his shoulder constantly, and urgently gestures you to keep moving.
    - **Idle Behavior [while in the tunnel or in the Keep]:**
      * Bobby looks around nervously.
      * "Come on," Bobby whispers, "we need to hurry."
      * Bobby walks ahead a bit and checks out the area to the [direction towards Guardhouse if you haven't listened there yet; otherwise back towards the fountain]. Then he hurries back to you. "It's clear," he whispers, "we should go."
    - **Command [moving to a new location in the tunnel or in the Keep, while Bobby is with you]:** Bobby sticks close to you.
    - **Command [talking to Bobby while in the tunnel or in the Keep]:** Bobby shakes his head and puts his finger to his lips.

1. Entrance to Maiden House
   * **Description:** The alley dead-ends in a small courtyard surrounded by old, run-down buildings.
   * **Object:** Wooden Door
     + **Initial Appearance (from the alley):** A battered wooden door provides entrance into the southern building.
     + **Initial Appearance (from inside):** The front door is [open/cosed].
     + **Description (from the alley):** There's no sign, but you know it well nonetheless – this is the door to Maiden House, your "home". It is currently [open/closed].
     + **Description (from inside, when it's closed):** The front door is closed and locked – and it will stay locked until sunup. The Maidens give you much of latitude generally, but curfew is one of the few rules they never, ever bend.
2. Lord's Road
   * **Description:** The wide and well-paved Lord's Road runs from Toresal's North Market Gate straight north to Lord's Keep, a mile or so from the city. To the east are rolling pastures; to the west, broken ground and scrub.
   * **Command [go west from Lord's Road]:** There's nothing much in that direction but rocks and the occasional thornbush.
   * **Command [go north from Lord's Road while Bobby is following, first time]:** Bobby holds you back. "Forget it, Jack," he says. "That way just leads to the front gate, and the guards will chase you off. I know a better way," he says with a knowing smile, and looks towards the open field to the east.
   * **Command [go north from Lord's Road while Bobby is following, first time]:** "Didn't you hear me?" Bobby asks, exasperated. "We need to go *east*."
3. Pasture
   * **Description:** This wide, open field is used by the city for tourneys and other holiday events, or by cattle-sellers driving their livestock to market. Tonight it is empty except for the occasional cow pie. To the north you can see the dark, rough edge of a forest.
   * **Object:** Cow Pie
     + **Description:** Last time youchecked, cow pies pretty much all looked the same.
     + **Command [smell or take cow pie]:** Um, *yuck.*
   * **Event [first time you enter the Pasture while Bobby is following]:** You feel nervous and exposed out here in all this empty space; you're more used to the narrow alleys and enclosing walls of the city. The urge to hunch over and make yourself small is near-irresistable.

Bobby, meanwhile, strides out into the middle of the moonlit field, standing straight and swinging his arms wide. "Fresh air, Jack!" he calls out, laughing. "Enjoy it! Take a deep breath!"

* + **Command [smelling while in the Pasture]:** Mostly you smell cow pies.

1. Stream
   * **Description:** A small stream bubbles out of the woods and cuts through the pasture's north end. The edge of the forest lies to the north, just across the water. The city is far away to the south.
   * **Backdrop Object:** Stream [located at Stream and adjacent Small Woods]
     + **Description:** The water is clean and clear, rippling over a shallow bed of stones and splashing over the larger rocks. It's only about ten feet wide here; you could probably pick your way across.
     + **Command [drink water]:** The water is fresh and shockingly cold.
     + **Command [swim or dive into stream]:** The water is only about shin-deep here; better for wading than for swimming.
     + **Command [going north from Stream/going south from Small Woods/crossing the stream while Jack is following, first time]:** Jack hops nimbly across, bouncing from rock to rock as though he were playing a game of "circles and stones" back in the city. He doesn't get so much as the hem of his cloak damp. When he gets to the opposite bank, he turns and beckons you to follow.

The first couple of rocks are easy enough, but the third one wobbles when you put your weight on it. You end up pinwheeling your arms desperately, contorting yourself in every direction to avoid a tumble and a thorough soaking. Finally, with arms outstretched and lower lip clamped between your teeth, you pick your way across the remainder of the stream with all the grace of a drunkard on a greased tightrope.

By the time you reach the opposite shore, Bobby is nearly doubled over with silent laughter. He claps you on the back. "You're a good sport, Jack," he says. "C'mon, we're nearly there."

* + - **Programmer's Note:** [CROSS STREAM should divert to going north or south, depending on which location the player is in.]

1. Small Woods
   * **Description:** You are in the woodlands just southeast of Lord's Keep, following the game trails that wind their way through stands of pale birch and black, spruce. There is just enough moonlight trickling through the upper branches to see your way by. [if the player is adjacent to the Stream]A bubbling stream flows out of the forest to the south, into an open pasture.
2. Clearing
   * **Description:** The woods open out here in a small, moonlit clearing.
   * **Object:** The Fountain
     + **Initial Appearance:** The ruins of an old pavilion lie here, pale pavestones poking up like bones from the grass. In the center of it stands a crumbling fountain, topped by a cracked statue of Brigid pouring an urn.
     + **Description:** The fountain is shaped like a large bowl, topped with a classical-style statue of Brigid pouring water from an urn. Of course, the fountain is dry now, its stone cracked, the bowl filled with bird droppings and dead leaves. But at one time it must have been very beautiful.

**[if the secret door is open, add]:** One side of the stone plinth supporting the statue, part of the stone is slid away, revealing a narrow opening into darkness.

* + - **Command [enter fountain]:** [this should be construed as entering the secret door]
    - **Object:** Statue (part of fountain)
      * **Description:** The statue's features are worn away and obscured by moss, but you've seen enough statues of Brigid to know that she's almost always depicted carrying water.
  + **Event [when you arrive at the fountain with Bobby]:** "Here we are."Bobby jumps up into the bowl of the fountain, dried leaves crackling beneath his boots. Then he reaches around the statue of Brigid as though trying to embrace her. His hands fumble at something on the underside of the urn.

Suddenly there is a deep, solid *thunk*, and a scraping sound. And part of the base of the statue *moves*.

Bobby hops down and pushes against the statue's base. A rectangle of stone about two feet square swings inward on protesting hinges. The space behind it is utterly black, and a cold, draft of damp-smelling air rises out of it.

"It runs all the way to Lord's Keep," says Bobby as he brushes off his hands. "I don't think anyone knows about it. Maybe Lord Toresal did, but now that he's dead it's basically unknown. It's not been used for decades, I'd guess. Well anyway, until now, that is."

He holds out his hand. His lop-sided smile is absolutely charming. "After you, kind sir."

* + **Event [arriving from below, after you've listened at the Guard house, before the room description]:** You crawl out of the hole in the base of the statue, into the dirt and leaves littering the bottom of the fountain. Apart from your scrabbling, it's quiet out here – very quiet. Even the crickets have stopped, you realize.

Finally, you get to your feet and look around.

Bobby is lying face-down in the grass, just a few yards away. One of the mercenaries from Grubber's Market is kneeling with his knee in the small of Bobby's back, binding his wrists together with twine. Standing around the outside of the fountain are several more mercenaries, looking relaxed and smug. Some of them are chuckling to themselves.

A gaunt man wearing red robes walks up to you. His mouth is half-hidden by long, drooping, black moustaches, but underneath them he is smiling like a snake. "Well now, young…sir? Or is it 'miss'? So much confusion, all to catch one little mouse. You led us a merry chase this morning, little mouse, but I think you will not scurry away from us again."

Leaves crunch behind you. You jump for it, but too slow – rough hands haul you back, and a sack of coarse, black cloth is pulled over your head.

"Good night, little mouse."

Something hard and heavy strikes the back of your head, and the night turns black as pitch.

**[Programmer's Note:** Move player to Jail Cell, begin chapter 5.]

1. Underneath the Fountain
   * **Event [first time you enter the location, before the room description]:** You grope your way down into the tunnel, carefully sliding your feet over steps you cannot see. Echoes fill the darkness: the scrape of your shoes on stone, the drip of water, your own loud breathing.

Behind you, you hear Bobby fumbling with something under his cloak; the *click* of stone on metal; and then a sickly orange glow spreads across the walls of the tunnel. Your own shadow wobbles hugely in front of you.

You turn around and see Bobby holding a torch. He grins at you. "Tricky, isn't it?"

* + **Event [arriving from the north, before the room description]:** Stealthily, you creep back up the long tunnel.
  + **Description:** The walls and floor are old, damp, and spotted with some sort of whitish fungus, and the air has a wet, sour smell to it. Steps lead up to the fountain above you. To the north, a long, low-ceilinged tunnel leads into the gloom.
  + **Command [going up without having listened at the Guardhouse yet]:** Bobby pulls you back. "Aw, come on, Jack," he says, "don't chicken out *now.*"
  + **Event [arriving at the Clearing from below, if you have listened at the Guardhouse, before room description]:** "I'll go first," whispers Bobby, "to make sure the coast is clear." He dunks his torch in a puddle of mud and bounds lightly up the steps. For a moment you can see him silhouetted against the starlight; then he moves away from the opening and disappears from view.

You wait for ten heartbeats. Behind you, you hear the distant *plip* of dripping moisture, far back in the dark tunnel. Above you, you can hear crickets chirping in the nearby forest.

Ten more heartbeats. "Bobby?" you call out in a hoarse whisper. Maybe he can't hear you, but you're too nervous to raise your voice. "Bobby? Are you up there?"

There is no answer.

1. Secret Door
   * **Event [arriving from the south, before the room description]:** Ducking your head to avoid the low ceiling, you follow the tunnel for some distance.
   * **Description:** The tunnel ends here at a blank, stone wall.
   * **Description when the secret door is open:** The wall at the north end of the tunnel has swung open, revealing a secret entrance to the castle.
   * **Event [when you first arrive at the Secret Door with Bobby]:** Bobby steps past you and brushes his fingertips across the stonework, holding the torch close. Eventually he finds a loose brick and pulls it free, revealing a rough, rectangular hole.

You wonder how many times Bobby has been down here. He exudes an easy confidence as he reaches into the hole, as though he has done this many times before.

There is a *click.* Bobby looks over his shoulder at you and winks. And then the wall swings away, revealing shadowed spaces beyond.

* + **Event [arriving here from the north, after listening at the Guardhouse, after room description]:** Bobby reaches back and pulls the secret door shut, carefully easing it the last few inches so that it doesn't slam. He puts the loose brick back in its place, just as before, and tugs his torch free of the bracket where he'd left it.

*We're out,* you realize with a sense of overwhelming relief. *We made it.* *It's like we were never here.*

"Some adventure, eh, Jack?" laughs Bobby. His voice is disturbingly loud after the long minutes of terrified silence in the keep. "Eavesdropping on the Lord's own guardsmen! That's a story that'll have the little ones wide-eyed at the Maiden House, eh?" He claps you on the back, and you manage a smile. It *was* fun, and you want Bobby to think you had fun, but it will be a while before you feel up to something that dangerous again.

* + **Command [closing the secret door]:** Better let Bobby handle the secret door. If you close it, you'll never figure out how to get it open again.
  + **Command [go north, or open the secret door after listening at the Guardhouse]:** You're more than ready to go home now, and you're not sure you could find the loose brick again in any case.

1. Chapel
   * **Event [first time you enter the room, from the secret door]:** Bobby jams his torch into a rusted bracket on the tunnel wall and steps through the secret door, gesturing you to follow. A prickle runs down your back as you step through after him. Are you really sneaking into the *Lord's Keep?* You're not even sure what the punishment for that is… something a lot worse than a few days in jail, certainly.
   * **Description:** The chapel of the Goddesses is a spacious, octagonal room, empty of furniture. The wood-paneled walls glow warmly, reflecting the light from dozens of devotional candles; the high ceiling disappears in the shadows overhead. A corridor leads southwest, and a secret passage in the south wall leads into subterranean gloom.
   * **Command [going south before listening twice in the Guardhouse]:** "Come on," Bobby whispers, pulling at your arm, "you don't want to go yet, we just got here. Let's explore some more." His eyes twinkle, and he gives you that smile that always says, *trust me this will be fun,*  but usually means, *if running pell-mell for safety with your heart in your throat and the Lord's Guard on your heels is your idea of 'fun'.*
   * **Object:** Devotional Candles
     + **Description:** The candles sit on little shelves built into the otherwise bare walls. It is traditional to light a candle when offering a prayer to one of the Goddesses; each of these wavering points of light is someone's hope, a wish, a dream.
     + **Command [take or extinguish a candle]:** That would be sacrilege!
2. Lower Bailey
   * **Description:** A thick wedge of shadow falls across the courtyard at the base of the Keep's outer wall, providing a relatively safe place to hide. The rest of the courtyard is flooded with moonlight, and bored-looking guards stroll back and forth over the gravel.
   * **Object:** Stone Stairs
     + **Initial Appearance:** Steep stone steps climb up to the top of the wall. You could make a dash up them, if you timed it right.
     + **Command [go up the stairs]:** You wait, watching the nearest guard until he turns and begins walking away, then sprint lightly up the steps.
   * **NPC:** Guards
     + **Description :** The Lord's Guards are dressed in polished mail and tabards emblazoned with the Toresal coat of arms, and each one wears a hefty sword at his hip. Fortunately, they haven't noticed you. Yet.
     + **Command [do anything to the guards]:** There must be less painful, though probably few quicker, ways of getting yourself killed.
3. Upper Bailey
   * **Description:** At the top of the wall you can lean out over the parapets and take in all the lands surrounding Toresal. It's a nice view, but torches set every few yards along the wall make this a dangerous spot to linger in. Stairs lead down into the courtyard below, and a dark archway opens to the north.
   * **Object:** Torches
     + **Command [doing anything, even examining, the torches]:** If you get anywhere near those torches, you'll be spotted in no time. Best to stay low and in the shadows.
   * **Object:** Toresal (view)
     + **Description:** The city is a pile of shadows in the distance, lit here and there with pinpricks of light: a guardsman carrying a torch, perhaps, or some night-owl sitting by the window with a lantern. Seeing it makes you realize just how absurd is your current predicament: you would be *safe* back in the city, snug in your bunk in Maiden House, or even skulking around the alleyways you know so well. Instead, you're breaking into Lord's Keep, sneaking along its walls, one slip-up away from getting yourself arrested or worse.
     + **Command [doing anything to the city view other than examining it]:** Unfortunately, the city is too far away.
4. Guardhouse
   * **Description:** A narrow antechamber, with an open archway to the south and an iron-reinforced door to the north. Arrow slits to either side lend the door an important and dangerous air.
   * **Event [when you first enter this room with Bobby]:** Bobby creeps forward and presses himself against the wall next to one of the arrow slits. He hunches closer, peering around the slit's edge. Then he looks up at you and smiles. He points at you, points at the arrow slit, then taps his ear. *Listen*, he's telling you.
   * **Object:** Door
     + **Description:** The door is big and tough-looking, with bands of riveted iron across its thick wooden planks.
     + **Command [knock on or open door]:** Bobby waves you off with an incredulous look. *Are you NUTS?* his eyes seem to ask.
   * **Object:** Arrow Slit
     + **Description:** The arrow slits are rectangular holes in the wall, about two inches high and six inches wide. Someone on the inside could stick the end of a crossbow in there and fire at anyone out here, all the while being totally protected by the wall. Fortunately, no one is manning the slits right now.

From here, you can see flickering firelight through the arrow slit, and hear voices on the other side.

* + - **Command [search or look through arrow slit]:** Bobby puts his hand on your chest, holding you back. He shakes his head. *Not so close. Too dangerous.*
    - **Command [listen to arrow slit, first time]:** You can hear several voices coming from the room on the other side of the arrow slit – guards relaxing on break, probably.

"…and I says, I don't care *who* hired you, people are tryin to do honest business here, and you're steppin on toes. Take yer men and hit the road, or else you can continue searchin for yer urchin boy in the city jail. And this tough fellow, him so hard with his sword and his scars and all, he just starts to cry, blubberin like a frightened scullery maid!"

"Haw! Yer lyin, so you are!"

"Goddesses witness, tis the truth! I could hardly credit it meself, and I weren't that impressed with the man to begin with. Go on, I says, and gave him a boot to the arse to send him on his way."

There is general laughter. You glance at Bobby, but he motions you to keep listening.

* + - **Command [listen to arrow slit, second time]:** "You seen tomorrow's detail yet?"

"Yeah, dress-up duty. Polishing helmets so we can look all pretty for the lords and ladies coming down to Baron Fussypants' ball."

"Not just lords and ladies, I heard. Word has it the Queen herself is on the guest list, and she's expected to appear."

"Oh, pull the other one."

"Goddesses witness it. They say she's comin down with her daughter in tow, that's why Fossville's hosting the ball in the first place. He's trying to get in the Queen's good graces, he wants to marry the girl."

"What, the Queen?"

"No, you dim. He wants to marry the *Princess.* Our Lord Fussypants is trying to position himself for the throne."

"Well, he's welcome to it, long as I'm paid at week's end. Of course, I'm not looking forward to spending a night standing at attention for a horde of fancy, feathered fops to goggle and gaggle at, but I guess it's better than latrine duty…"

Bobby pulls you away. He's grinning, his eyes wide and his eyebrows cocked. *Isn’t it great?*

But you're too nervous to care. There are who knows how many men of the Lord's Guard right on the other side of that door. Someone could walk out at any second. You grab Bobby's arm and give it a firm yank – *It's time to go.*

* + - **Command [going south from the Guardhouse before listening twice]:** Bobby motions you back, pointing at the arrow slit again. There's something he obviously wants you to hear.

## Chapter V – Maiden House

### Map



### Rundown

### Notes

Front – dormitory for widows. Mostly older (30s) women, some nice, some not-so.

The secret closet is for hiding in when the guards eventually search Maiden House.

### Design

1. Hallway
   * **Event [first time you enter MH, before the room description]:** You slip quietly through the front door, into the familiar smells of cooking grease and laundry soap; the familiar sight of shabby, warped floorboards lit by dim, flickering tallow lamps. It's nothing fancy, but it's home, and you're familiar enough with the plight of most of Toresal's orphans to know that you're lucky to have it.
   * **Description:** The main hallway runs north-south through the center of Maiden House, with several doors leading to rooms on either side. To the southeast and southwest are the laundry and privy, respectively; to the east lie the kitches; and to the west, northwest, and northeast are the dormitories where you and the other orphans sleep.
   * **NPC:** Widow Shannon
     + **Description:** Widow Shannon is a harsh, sour-faced woman, with suspicious eyes and a mannish, angular jaw that she thrusts out when she is angry, which is nearly always. You gather that she was very poor before coming to Maiden House, and she harbors a bitter dislike for anyone whom she perceives as unjustly privileged. For reasons that persistently escape you, that includes you. Staying out of her way is generally the best tactic.
     + **Event [second time you enter the central hallway of MH, either from outside or returning from one of the side rooms]:** Widow Shannon strides over to the front door and slams it shut. "The evening churchbells are ringing, Jacqueline," she tells you, her mouth set in a grim little line. "Well past the time when any respectable young lady should be out on the streets." She locks the door with a long brass key that she wears on a ribbon around her neck.
2. Dormitory
   * **Description:** A long room lined with rough bunks, where the children sleep and, if they are too young to run about the city on their own, play. The main hallway lies [east/west].
   * **Object:** Bunks
     + **Description:** The bunks are spare and functional, straw mattresses on wooden frames. It's clean straw, but that's about all that can be said for them.
     + **Command [enter or sleep in bunk, if you have not yet visited Lord's Keep with Bobby]:** You're not even *close* to being tired. You couldn't possibly go to sleep until you've seen what Bobby wanted to show you.
3. Dormitory
   * **Description:** [same as #2 above]
4. Dormitory
   * **Description:** [same as #2 above]
5. Kitchen
   * **Description:** A low-ceilinged room with a fire pit at one end for cooking, a basin at the other end for washing, and rows upon rows of pots and pans hanging from the rafters. The long table at the side of the room is where the children take their meals. You can leave to the east.
   * **Object:** Table
     + **Description:** The table seats about 20 hungry orphans, with room at the end for two or three scowling widows to enforce discipline. You rarely eat here, yourself. Older kids are encouraged to scrounge around the city for their meals rather than rely on the kitchen, but the Maidens make sure that no one goes hungry.
   * **Object:** Pots and Pans
     + **Description:** Dozens of them, and you are familiar with each and every one. Scullery duty is not exactly your favorite day of the week.
   * **NPC:** Widow Angelina
     + **Initial Appearance:** Widow Angelina is here, washing the last of the dinner dishes.
     + **Description:** Angelina is a plump and genial woman, currently on the lookout for a new husband – and still youthful enough to stand a decent chance of finding one. She's a shameless gossip, so don't tell her anything you don't want the other Maidens to know about before day's end.
     + **Idle Behavior (random):**
       - Widow Angelina grunts as she leans over the basin's edge to dunk another gravy-encrusted plate into the soapy water.
       - Widow Angelina wipes a plate dry on her apron and stacks it on the counter.
       - Widow Angelina inspects a plate closely, [randomly select]and scrapes at a bit of stuck food with her thumbnail[or]then stacks it on the counter[or]then dunks it back into the basin.
       - Widow Angelina gives you a broad, rosy-cheeked smile.
   * **Object:** Basin
     + **Description:** The basin is filled with grayish, greasy water. It's not clear whether it's making the dishes more or less dirty.
     + **Command [drink/taste/touch water]:** No thanks; that stuff looks nasty.
   * **Object:** Dishes/Plates
     + **Description:** The kids did a number on them tonight. Angelina is about halfway through the stack.
     + **Command [take, touch, or wash the dishes]:** Is tonight your turn for dishwashing duty? No? Well, then you're not touching them.
   * **Object:** Fire pit
     + **Description:** The logs are down to glowing embers now.
6. Privy
   * **Description:** Not much more than a narrow closet, with a hole in the floor and a bench over it. At least it's more private than an alley.
   * **Command [smelling while in the privy]:** [same as smelling the hole, below]
   * **Object:** Hole
     + **Description:** The less said about that, the better.
     + **Command [search, touch, smell the hole]:** [repeat description]
     + **Command [insert something in the hole]:** You never know; you might want it backsomeday. Besides, the last thing you want is to accidentally clog that hole up.
     + **Command [enter the hole]:** It's way too small for you to fit into. Thank the Goddesses.
   * **Object:** Window
     + **Initial Appearance:** A narrow window over the bench provides some ventilation.
     + **Description:** The window has been stuck halfway open for as long as you can remember. No one's ever bothered to fix it, because no matter how cold it gets, no one who's been in that privy would ever consider closing the window for even an instant. There's a bit less than two hand-widths of clearance between the pane and the sill – just enough for you to scrape through.
     + **Command [open or close the window]:** The window is adamantly stuck halfway; the pane won't budge an inch, up or down.
     + **Command [going through the window]:** You sneak a furtive glance back at the hallway, then step up onto the bench. It wobbles under your feet, and you grab the window sill to steady yourself.

Then, holding your breath to keep from making a sound, you pull yourself up and through. The window is at ground level outside, and you wriggle out onto the slick cobblestones.

You're free! Of course, the widows will find out you're gone soon enough – Maiden House is not a very big place, after all. But you've snuck out before, and they know you can take care of yourself. At worst, you'll pull extra laundry duty for a few days.

1. Laundry
   * **Description:** The air in here is filled with steam and the sharp stink of lye soap. Moisture trickles down the walls, and puddles of water splash underfoot. The main hallway lies west.
   * **Object:** Washtub
     + **Description:** The wooden tub is huge enough to bathe in (and it has been used for that purpose on occasion). It's slopping over with soap-clouded water, pouring steam into the humid air.
     + **Command [get in tub]:** You don't need a bath right now.
     + **Command [drink/taste water]:** The grimy underpants of two dozen hygeine-challenged urchins have been steeping in that water all day.
   * **NPC:** Widow Shannon
     + **Initial Appearance:** Widow Shannon is bent over the big washtub in the corner, scrubbing out the toddlers' nappies.
     + **Description:** Shannon is the youngest of the widows in Maiden House. She is plain-looking, and none too bright, and, to all appearances, utterly uninterested in ever remarrying, which is perhaps just as well. She devotes herself to the children, particularly the toddlers, and does most of the cleaning and cooking for Maiden House.
     + **Idle Behavior (random):**
       - Widow Shannon picks up a thick wooden stick and jabs at the clothes soaking in the tub, stirring them about.
       - Widow Shannon steps back from the tub for a moment, wiping the sweat off her brow.
       - Widow Shannon pulls a [shirt/shift/pair of trousers/diaper/sock] from the grayish water, wrings it out, and hangs it up on the line behind her.
       - Widow Shannon gives you a friendly nod.

## Chapter VI – Captured

### Map



### Rundown

### Notes

### Design

1. Jailhouse
   * **Description:** The Jailhouse is hardly more comfortable than the cells themselves; a crude, small room of unfinished stone, with a wooden bench and table for the guards. Cells are south, west, and north, and a door to the southeast leads out.
   * **Command [look in a cell]:** [Same as looking through a door or barred window, below.]
   * **Command [enter a cell, go north, south, or west]:** It's such a huge relief just to be *out* of a jail cell; you definitely have no desire to get back into one.
   * **Event [first turn that Jacobs and player are both in Jailhouse Room]:** Jacobs pauses and turn to you. "I heard what your friend in the other cell said, before they dragged him out," he says. "Sounds like Fossville's taken quite an interest in you, girl."

Again, you nod.

He seems to consider something. "You can come with me if you want," he says. "I'll take you somewhere safe."

A shaky, wheedling voice from the north cell calls out: "Don't you listen to him, girl! That's Jacobs the Merchant's son; he'd as soon sell you to the slavers as help you."

*"Shut up, you!"* yells Jacobs, pounding on the cell door in a sudden rage.

* + **Event [second turn after Jacobs and player are both in Jailhouse Room]:** Jacobs turns back to you. "Don't listen to him, girl; he's nothing but an addle-minded drunk."

"Do us a kindness, girl, and free us as well," whines the man in the north cell. "We ain't done nothin terrible, just a bit o' public drunkenness, no worse than the Lord's Guard get up to themselves come payday. We can show you a way out, too, one that doesn't include leaving you dead in an alley for your shoes."

Jacobs snorts. "You must be dim, you pathetic boozer." To you he says, " We don't have time for him. I can take care of the guards; he can barely unlace his breeches to take a leak. If you want to do the smart thing, then let's go now." And he jerks his thumb toward the southeast.

* + **Event [seventh turn after Jacobs and player are both in Jailhouse Room]:** "Fine, then," Jacobs snarls, "find your own way past the guards, whelp." He turns on his heel and stalks out, leaving you alone with the other prisoners.
  + **Command [unlock the north cell door with the lockpick]:** [**Programmer's Note:** First, trigger Jacobs' departure, as described above. Then say the following:]

Picking a lock is *much* easier when you're standing on the ground and can see what you're doing. Twenty seconds, and you have the cell door open.

"Oh, thank you, girl, thank you," snivels the red-faced man as he stumbles out of his cell. "You did well to stay away from that Jacobs; his father is a thief and a murderer, and his father's son is no better. I am called Olmer, and this is my associate, Darrens." The skinny man standing behind him smiles and nods enthusiastically.

"And now," says Olmer, "let us make our escape – after you, dear lady."

* + **Command [going southeast before Jacobs leaves]:** "Smart girl," Jacobs says, following you closely. You can hear the other prisoner shouting something behind you, but soon their voices fade as you hurry down the corridor, leaving the cells far behind you.

Jacobs leads you down dim, torchlit halls until you reach a wooden door. Jacobs motions you to be silent, then puts his ear up to the wood. After a moment he nods, opens the door, and then shoves you through it into the next room.

Bright lantern-light blinds you, and when your eyes clear you see a dozen men of the Lord's Guard standing in a semicircle around you… and in the middle, the man in the red robes.

"Little mouse…" murmurs the man in the red robes, "…always finding some new hole to crawl through."

Behind you, Jacobs puts his heavy hand on your shoulder and grips it tight. "Like I said, girl," he laughs, "Fossville has taken a special interest in you. And aiding the Baron in his interests can be very profitable."

The red-robed man and the guards close in on you. This time, you do not escape.

* + **Command [going southeast after Jacobs leaves, but without freeing Olmer]:** There are more guards out there, and you don't know the way. You'll never escape from this jail all by yourself.
  + **Command [going southeast after freeing Olmer]:** Olmer leads you and nodding Darrens through the dim, torchlit halls, into an older part of the building where the floors are dusty, the walls crumbling with disuse. Eventually you find yourselves in a small, musty chamber, featureless except for a rusty grating on the floor.

Olmer squats down and pulls the grating free from the rotten masonry with surprising ease. The hole underneath is a couple of feet wide, enough for you to slip through with ease, and enough for Olmer if he sucks in his gut. "The anchors rusted away ages ago," he explains. "No one ever comes back here to check on it, so no one's ever bothered to fix it." Darrens, standing nearby, nods knowingly.

"How did *you* know about it?" you ask.

"Oh, everyone knows about it," Olmer says airily, although you wonder exactly who he means by *everybody*. "The trick is getting to it. The jailers are not usually kind enough to leave us a compassionate rescuer with a lockpick."

He sets the grating aside. "You go first, Darrens and I will follow."

*Well, in for a penny, in for a pound.* You sit down and dangle your feet over the edge of the hole. You can hear the sound of running water, and smell the sharp stink of sewage. You offer a quick prayer to Brigid – *Please give me a chance to wash up before seeing Bobby again* – take a deep breath, and drop down into darkness.

[**Programmer's Note:** Move Olmer, Darrens, and player into Sewer and begin Chapter VI.]

1. Holding Cell
   * **Event [when you first wake up in your cell, before the room description]:** Slowly the world comes back to you. You feel something cold and hard against your cheek; something gritty and scratchy under your hand. You hear footsteps on stone, muttering voices that fade in and out. Someone laughs, a raw, cruel sound. A loud squeak, and an echoing, metallic crash. The footsteps fade away.

You open your eyes. It's still dark.

No, it's just *dim.* Dim light trickles in from somewhere above you.

You sit up, and a tender spot on the back of your head throbs. Red and purple splotches bloom in front of your eyes, then fade away. After a moment or two, your head clears, and you can see where you are.

* + **Description:** A dank, cramped, foul-smelling cell. A pair of ragged burlap blankets and a few lumps of filthy straw, litter the floor. The barred door is to the [north/south/east].
  + **Object:** Cell Door
    - **Description:** The [if in the jailhouse, specifiy north/west/south] door is made of stout wood reinforced with bands of iron. A tiny viewing window in the upper half of the door allows guards to look in and prisoners to look out. The [if in the jailhouse, specifiy north/west/south] door is [open/closed].
    - **Command [look through door/barred window]:** [if the door is closed]You peer through the closely spaced bars.[end if] [if inside a cell]You can see the jailhouse main room on the other side. [otherwise]You can see a cramped, filthy cell on the other side. [if someone is in the cell, list people in the cell and add:] [is/are] inside.
    - **Programmer's Note:** [Once you've looked into a cell to see who's inside, you should also be able to talk to and examine the person in there, even if you're on the outside.]
    - **Object:** Viewing Window [part of door]
      * **Description:** The viewing window is just a tiny square, no more than two handspans to a side, fitted with tough, closely spaced iron bars.
  + **NPC:** Jacobs/hulking brute
    - **Initial Appearance [before he starts talking]:** A hulking shape squats in the corner, staring at you with bloodshot eyes.
    - **Description:** [Jacobs/The man] is a huge brute, with a face that looks young, but already grizzled and rough beyond his years. His wide, watery eyes jitter constantly. His lip is curled in a constant half-sneer, as though his confinement in jail is merely a passing diversion for him. His clothes, though stained and rumpled, seem too rich to belong to a common thug.
    - **Command [talking to Jacobs before you know who he is]:** He doesn't answer you at all; he just keep staring with those creepy, bloodshot eyes.
    - **Command [doing anything else to Jacobs whether or not you know who he is]:** He looks way to scary to mess with.
    - **Event [three turns after Bobby is dragged away]:** "Well," says a thick, rough voice behind you. The shadowy man in the corner puts his huge, thick-fingered hands on his knees and pushes himself up. "Now that the guards are busy takin care of *him…"* the man stretches, glances at you, and smiles. It is not a friendly smile.

"Name's Jacobs, by the way."

* + - **Event [four turns after Bobby is dragged away]:** The man called Jacobs wanders over to the cell door. "My father'll have me out of here by tomorrow, of course," he says, "but I don't like to wait that long." He barely looks at you – in fact, you're not sure that he's talking *to* you at all. It's more like he's just muttering to himself.

Jacobs bends over and digs something out of the side of his boot.

* + - **Event [five turns after Bobby is dragged away]:** Jacobs stands up and thrusts his hand through the viewing window. He curses and strains to push his arm through, but the bars are too narrowly spaced – he can't reach out past his elbow. "Damn," he mutters, "didn't expect this…" His face reddens with effort. "C'mon… *aaah!* Dammit!" He jerks his hand back, rubbing his wrist.

"Well, you gonna help me, or not?" he asks, and holds out a short, stiff piece of wire, pinched between his thumb and forefinger.

* + - **Initial Appearance [while Jacobs is holding out the wire]:** Jacobs is still holding out the wire, looking at you impatiently.
    - **Idle Behavior [while holding out the wire, every other turn]:** "C'mon, now, take it," Jacobs growls. "Ain't got all day."
    - **Command [take the wire]:** Gingerly, you pluck the wire from his thick, calloused fingers… and at that moment, he lunges.

Quick as a flash, his hands are around your waist. He picks you up as though you weighed no more than a sack of feathers, and hoists you around to the viewing window. His breath is close on your neck. His hands are huge, and feel strong enough to snap you in half. "You ever picked a lock, before, girl?" he asks,

You manage a nod. Bobby showed you a few tricks once, but you've never actually tried to pick a lock "for real" before.

"Good. This one should be easy, long as you can reach it."

* + - **Command [doing anything other than looking or listening while Jacobs has you]:** You can't, not while Jacobs has you firmly in his grip.
    - **Initial Appearance [while he's holding you]:** Jacobs is holding you up in front of the door, waiting for you to unlock it.
    - **Idle Behavior [while holding you, every other turn]:** "Hurry girl, unlock it," grunts Jacobs. "I don't feel like holding you forever."
    - **Command [unlock the door]:** You slip your arm through the bars and reach down for the lock. It's a stretch – Jacobs has to lift you higher and press your shoulder painfully against the bars – but soon you feel the metal of the lockplate, and your fingers find the tiny, sharp-edged hole in the middle.

You jam the end of the lockpick in and start wiggling it around. Almost immediately, you realize that this is not going to work. The angle is too awkward, and you can't see what you're doing, and you can't feel the tumblers the way Bobby showed you when you practiced on the front door of Maiden House…

Then you feel the wire bump against something inside the lock. You manage lever the end of the wire under something and push… you feel it start to give… you push a little harder, and it starts to pivot… you push harder, and it starts to slip off the end of your pick…

And then there is a *snap*, and the pick jumps out of your fingers and tumbles to the ground outside the cell door.

Jacobs puts you down. He puts his hand on the door… and pushes it open.

"Well," he says, looking you over with a sly expression, "you are a valuable girl, after all."

* + - **Programmer's Note:** [When the player successfully unlocks the door, the lockpick should now be in the central Jailhouse room. Next turn, Jacobs moves north to the Jailhouse room.]
  + **Event [three turns after you wake up in the cell]:** Suddenly you hear a voice whisper your name. *"Jack…"*

At first you think it's the creepy guy in the corner, but he hasn't moved. You're still staring at him when the whisper comes again, louder this time: *"Jack…"*

It's coming from somewhere outside the cell. You rush up and press your face against the viewing window, but you can't see anything out there except an empty room. "Bobby?" you call, trying to keep the fear out of your voice. "Bobby, is that you? I'm locked in here, Bobby, help me!"

The voice chuckles, then coughs weakly. "I'm in the cell next to yours, Jack. I'm locked in, too. Sorry."

Your heart sinks a little at that, but at least being trapped in a cell with Bobby nearby is a *little* bit better than being trapped in a cell with no one around to help you… right?

* + **Command [talking to Bobby during the turns that he's talking to you]:** Bobby cuts you off. "There's no time to answer all your questions, Jack," he whispers, "just listen to me…" [**Programmer's Note:** The player should be able to talk to Bobby, but not see or interact with Bobby in any other way; i.e., Bobby is not in scope except for purposes of talking (or listening) to him.]
  + **Event [four turns after you wake up in the cell]:** "Jack, listen," Bobby says. His voice is ragged and hoarse; you're worried that the mercenaries might have hurt him badly. "I'm going to get us out of this mess, don't worry. But in case I'm not able to meet up with you after, you need to listen carefully."

*In case you're not able to meet up with me?* You wonder, dismayed. *What does that mean?* You start to protest, but Bobby cuts you off.

"Jack, *listen to me.* Go to Fossville's estate in the city. Use the rooftops; there's an alley next to the bakery where you can climb up."

"You want me to break into *Baron Fossville's house?"* you whisper back, incredulously. "Bobby, I don't understand—"

"He has secrets," Bobby goes on, "that you need to know. Secrets about your *father."*

You pause, stunned.

* + **Event [five turns after you wake up in the cell]:** "Look for a letter—" says Bobby, but he is cut off by a door slamming open elsewhere in the room. Guards move past your cell door; one of them slams a wooden cudgel against the bars right in front of your face, and you stagger back.

"Bobby?" you cry, "*Bobby?* What's happening? What letter?"

A metallic rattling, the squeak of hinges. Several meaty *thuds*, mixed with grunts and cries of pain. The guards reappear, this time dragging Bobby with them. He looks up as he passes the viewing window, and you get a brief glimpse of his face – bruised, bloody, but still smiling. You'd swear he was trying to wink at you, except that his eye is swollen shut.

"Fossvile, Jack!" he yells as they bundle him off. "The rooftops! *Look for the letter!"*

Somewhere a door slams one final time… and then everything is silent.

1. Holding Cell
   * **Description:** [same as #2 above]
   * **NPC:** Olmer/red-faced man
     + **Description:** A short, bald-headed man, with a week's worth of stubble on his neck and a nose bright red from burst blood vessels. His breath reeks of cheap spirits, and his watery eyes shift constantly, as though always looking for a way out of his current predicament.
   * **NPC:** Darrens/skinny man
     + **Description:** [Darrens/The skinny man] is a tall, wobbly scarecrow of a man, with a huge nose, ears like jug handles jutting from the sides of his head, and a throat-apple the size of a child's fist that bobs up and down his skinny neck constantly. He never speaks; just smiles and nods whenever anyone says or does anything. You suspect he may be a few coins short of a full purse.
2. Holding Cell
   * **Description:** [same as #2 above]
3. Drain Room
   * **Description:** This is just a small alcove off the main room, which is southeast of here.
   * **Object:** Drain
     + **Initial Appearance:** In the middle of the floor is a wide, rectangular drain covered by a metal grating.
     + **Description:** The grating is rusty and bent, and the brickwork around it has partially broken away, exposing several of the bolts meant to anchor the grating in place.

## Chapter VII – Underground

### Map



### Rundown

### Notes

Sewers come up into Alley outside Maiden House.

If you go without Olmer & Darrens, you'll get totally lost.

### Design

1. Sewer
   * **Description:** The tunnels down here are made of ancient, unmortared brick, slimy with centuries of filth and mold. Branch tunnels split off in every direction.
   * **Object:** Water
     + **Description:** The water is sluggish and cold, knee-deep in most places. *Things* float past you in the ooze – garbage, dead rats, and worse. You try to avoid the worst of it, but it's already soaked through your shoes. You feel like you'll never be clean of it.
     + **Command [searching, drinking, or tasting the water]:** The thought makes you gag.
   * **Event [first turn after entering the Sewer, after room description]:** Olmer drops down into the muck next to you, followed by Darrens. He must have picked up a lantern somewhere along the way through the jailhosue, for now he holds it high. The steady flame paints the brick in a warm, yellow glow. Outside the circle of light, the tunnels are pitch black.

"Follow us close now, girl," whispers Olmer. His voice echoes off into the blackness. "These tunnels are twisty and befuddling, but we know the way." Darrens nods in solemn agreement.

* + **Programmer's Note:** [Olmer and Darrens then proceed to move through the sewers, each turn moving in a random, nonvertical direction. The player should follow each time. If the player stays where she is, or moves in some other direction, she gets a game-ending message as specified below. If she follows Olmer and Darrens, she ends up in an identical sewer room (they're all alike), and Olmer and Darrens move again. This goes on for ten turns.]
  + **Event [when Olmer and Darrens move]:** Olmer splashes off to the [direction], with Darrens following close behind.
  + **Event [if the player stays where she is instead of following Darrens and Olmer]:** Not realizing that you've fallen behind, Olmer and Darrens turn a corner up ahead. For a few seconds you can see the glow of Olmer's lantern reflecting on the tunnel wall… and then it fades.

You are left standing alone in utter blackness. Cold, smelly water numbs your feet. Despair and paralyzing panic close in on you as you realize that you have no means of finding your way through this labyrinth. You should have kept up; now you are stuck down here, blind, in this stinking labyrinth, forever.

* + **Event [if the player goes in some other direction instead of following Darrens and Olmer]:** Curious, you head down one of the side tunnels, Olmer and Darrens, not realizing you've fallen behind, continue on and turn a corner. For a few seconds you can see the glow of Olmer's lantern reflecting on the tunnel wall… and then it fades.

You are left standing alone in utter blackness. Cold, smelly water numbs your feet. Despair and paralyzing panic close in on you as you realize that you have no means of finding your way through this labyrinth. You should have kept up; now you are stuck down here, blind, in this stinking labyrinth, forever.

* + **Command [following Darrens and Olmer]:** You splash along after them.
  + **Event [after ten turns of following Darrens and Olmer]:** Olmer stops and looks up, holding the lantern high. Up in the tunnel's ceiling, you can discern the outline of another grating set into the bricks.

"Darrens and I must pursue our business elsewhere," says Olmer, "but this should put you somewhere near your own neighborhood."

"It was very kind of you to set us free, young lady," he says, shaking you by the hand. (His hands are slimy with filth, but then so are yours.) "We've only our meagre gratitude with which to repay you, but we won't forget your generosity." Darrens nods vigorously and shakes as well.

Darrens boosts you up onto his shoulders. "The grating is loose, and easily shouldered aside," notes Olmer, and he's right – you have no trouble at all scrambling up out of the sewer hole and onto the street. The last you see of your friends is Darrens, smiling up at you from the tunnel, waving – and then Olmer's lantern moves on, and the tunnel is dark.

You're in an empty alleyway. From the look of the sky, it's early morning. After a couple of turns, you figure out where you are, and soon find yourself back in familiar environs.

[**Programmer's Note:** move player to the Alley south of Lord's Market, and begin Chapter VII.]

## Chapter VIII – Black Gate Estate

### Map I - Rooftops



### Map II – Black Gate Estate



### Rundown

### Notes

The roof is flat, with a patio, a rooftop garden, and stairs that lead down from the roof.

Empty except for servants… they'll kick you out if they catch you. The letter is in a library (where bathroom is).

There's a new section of the bookshelves, different books (from Red Gate Estate), letter is in one of them.

Discover information about Baron Fossville – how close he is to the throne, learn that he's a bad guy.

Maiden House gets closed down.

First floor is off-limits – too many servants.

### Design

* + **Command [going west from Commerce Street after returning from sewers]:** It might be a good idea to avoid Grubber's Market for a while. Once they figure out you escaped from your cell, they'll be searching for you everywhere; they looked in Grubber's once, they'll look there again.
  + **Command [entering Black Gate Estate (northwest) from East Commerce Street after returning from sewers]:** No, you'll never get in through the front gate. *Use the rooftops,* Bobby said.

1. Alley Between Bakery and Butcher Shop
   * **Description:** Rough brick and mortar catches at your clothes. A few feet further in, and the walls draw too close together for even you to squeeze through. The main street is south.
   * **Event [entering alley after returning from sewers, after room description, one time only]:** This must be the alley Bobby was talking about… you don't see any ladders or footholds, but the walls are so rough and so close together, you might be able to climb just by wedging yourself between them.
   * **Command [climb up walls]:** Setting your shoulders against one wall and your feet against the other, you push yourself up. It's slow going: set one foot against the opposite wall, push, wriggle your shoulders up, repeat. The bakery occupies only the first floor of a three-story building, so you're quite a ways up by the time you reach the top. Finally, you grab hold of a rusted rain gutter and pull yourself onto the roof.
2. Roof of Bread Shop/Roof of Butcher/Roof of Axe and Shield
   * **Description:** The rooftops are like a miniature mountain range up here, with peaks and valleys sloping away into the distance. Chimneys and stovepipes stand sentry like the keeps and towers of castles. Bobby has exclaimed the virtues of rooftop travel before, and finally you see what he was going on about. It feels like you could explore forever up here.

**[if you are on the Bread Shop roof, add:]** The gap between buildings is narrow enough here that you can climb down by wedging yourself between the closely-spaced walls.

**[if you are on the Axe and Shield roof, add:]** Across a wide gap to the east, you spy a balcony, and behind it trees waving in the breeze. That must be Fossville's rooftop garden, atop Black Gate Estate.

* + **Command [go/climb down]:** Wedging yourself carefully, you slide down into the alley below, with only a few bruises and a skinned elbow for your trouble.
  + **Command [going east from Bakery Roof]:** Trying not to look down, you hop nimbly across the gap to the next roof.
  + **Command [going east from Axe and Shield Roof before being in jail]:** You're going to trespass on Baron Fossville's property? You must *really* want to go to jail. Besides, it's a long jump, and it's a *long* way down.
  + **Command [going east from Axe and Shield Roof, after being in jail]:** You peer across the gap at the balcony, judging the distance. Then you look down at all the little people going about their business on East Commerce Street, far, far below.

It's a *really* far jump.

Still, this is where Bobby told you to go. *A letter… secrets about your father*, he said. The thought of facing Bobby when he gets out, after they beat him up so bad, and telling him you were too scared to do what he asked you to do…

You take a few steps back, run… and *jump*.

The railing slams into your chest, knocking the breath out of you. Your feet pedal madly in empty air. You wrap your arms around the railing, trying to grab on, but you're slipping…

Then your foot finds the edge of the balcony, and you push yourself up and over.

* + **Command [going in a dead-end direction from a rooftop]:** The gap between this building and the next is too wide for you to jump across in that direction.
  + **Object (backdrop):** Chimneys/Stovepipes
    - **Description:** Cheery smoke billows up from several of them.
    - **Command [enter/climb down chimney]:** The chimneys are all too narrow for you to climb down.
    - **Command [insert something into the chimney]:** You'd just lose your [whatever], and rouse the suspicions of whomever lives below to boot.

1. Roof of Black Gate Estate
   * **Description:** Lord Fossville has transformed the rooftop of his estate into a landscaped folly. You're standing on a balcony, complete with ornate railing, that runs along the roof's western edge. To the northeast is a garden; to the southeast, a patio.
   * **Object:** Railing
     + **Description:** The railing is white marble with curved, gilt-iron balusters.
   * **Command [go west, jump]:** If at all possible, you'd much rather find an escape route that doesn't involve death-defying leaps over fifty-foot drops. Besides, you can't leave until you find the letter Bobby was talking about.
2. Rooftop Patio
   * **Descriptions:** The patio is an area of elegant paving stones surrounding a small fountain. Cushioned divans and low marble tables allow guests to enjoy refreshment while reclining under the open air. The garden is north of here, and the gallery is northwest.
   * **Object:** Furniture/Divans/Tables
     + **Command [doing anything with the furniture, including examining it]:** The furniture is certainly luxurious, but it's not what you're here for.
   * **Object:** Fountain
     + **Description:** Water trickles over a jumble of smooth stones, into a shallow pool. The sound of it is soothing.
     + **Command [listen to the fountain]:** It's nice, but you don't have time to sit here and listen to the water.
     + **Command [drink the water]:** It's not for drinking, and besides, you don't have time to linger here.
3. Rooftop Garden
   * **Description:** The garden is an impressive piece of greenery in a city otherwise dominated by stone. Most of the flowers are not in bloom this late in the season, but there are autumn roses, and some nice hanging lilies climbing up a lattice. The patio is south, and the gallery lies to the southwest.
   * **Object (enterable):** Shed
     + **Initial Appearance:** Over in the corner of the garden, against the eastern wall, is a small wooden shed.
     + **Description:** It looks like a storage shed for the gardening equipment. The door is [open/closed].
   * **Object:** Flowers/Roses/Lilies
     + **Command [doing anything to the flowers, including examining or smelling them]:** You haven't time to stop and smell the flowers right now.
4. Rooftop Stairs
   * **Description:** Gardening tools and burlap sacks of soil are stacked neatly in the corner, awaiting next spring. The door to the south leads back out to the garden, and through an archway in the east wall are stairs leading down into the house itself.
   * **Object:** Tools
     + **Description:** Ordinary tools – rakes, shears, trowels, that sort of thing.
     + **Command [doing anything with the tools]:** You don't have time to mess with that now.
   * **Object:** Sacks of Soil
     + **Description:** The sacks are stuffed with rich, black soil from the pastures outside the city.
     + **Command [doing anything with the soil]:** You don't have time to get your hands dirty.
5. Third Floor Landing
   * **Event [first time entering the room from the Shed, before room description]:** Holding your breath, you tiptoe quietly down the stairs. A prickle runs up your spine; you are now an intruder. If the Baron catches you here, he'll have you tossed back into a jail cell – and that's the *best* case scenario. If what Bobby told you is true, and Fossville knows secrets about you that he's trying to hide, it's more likely he'll just slit your throat.

Have to move quickly, then – search the house, find this letter, and get out.

* + **Description:** One of several landings along the main stair that winds up and down the back of Black Gate Estate. A hallway leads south.

1. Music Room
   * **Description:** The walls of this room are painted with the Fossville coat of arms, intertwined in a pattern of gilded vines. Your footsteps are muffled by a deep, Cerulean carpet. Hallways continue north and south.
   * **Object:** Harp
     + **Initial Appearance:** A harp stands on a raised wooden platform.
     + **Description:** It's a beautiful instrument, and taller than you are. The frame and soundboard are carved of rich, dark kielwood; the strings shine copper in the dim light.
     + **Command [play the harp]:** Though you long to hear it play a note, you can't quite bring yourself to pluck the strings. What if someone hears you?
     + **Command [take or move the harp]:** The harp is much too heavy for you to drag around.
2. Audience Area
   * **Description:** Several rows of benches allow guests to sit and enjoy a recital. The hallway continues to the north, and glass-paneled doors open onto a balcony to the south.
   * **Object:** Glass-paneled doors (also visible from the Balcony, below)
     + **Initial Appearance:** The doors are [open/closed].
3. Third Floor Balcony
   * **Description:** The balcony looks out over East Merchant Street, below, and beyond it, the park.
4. Second Floor Landing
   * **Description:** One of several landings along the main stair that winds up and down the back of Black Gate Estate. A hallway leads south.
   * **Event [after entering this room for the first time from the 3rd floor landing, after room description]:** You hear a door slam open somewhere on the floor below.

"Damn and blast it all!" someone yells. You recognize Baron Fossville's voice from running into him yesterday. "*Servants!* Bring me spiced wine – hot – and something to eat. No, you dim fool, down here – I'll be leaving again within an hour. Bring it *now*, damn your hide!"

The sounds of sudden, frantic activity drift up the stairs: footsteps, chairs scraping on wooden floors, glasses and dishes clinking.

* + **Command [going downstairs]:** You can't go down to the first floor – Fossville is down there!

1. Living Area
   * **Description:** A wealthy bachelor's parlor, furnished with comfortable chairs and portraits of Fossville's illustrious ancestors hanging from the walls. A hallway leads north, and sliding doors lead south.
   * **Object:** Chairs
     + **Command [examining or searching the chairs]:** A quick search reveals that the letter isn't hidden under the cushions.
     + **Command [sitting on the chairs]:** No time to sit down!
   * **Object:** Portraits
     + **Description:** You can spot the family resemblance, certain features that repeat themselves in the faces of Fossville's relatives. The sharp nose, the aristocratic jow. Perhaps you are only imagining it, but there seems to be a certain cruel gleam in their eyes, as well. You wonder how closely the current Baron resembles his forefathers.
     + **Command [search, look behind portraits]:** Youcheckbehind each of the paintings in turn, but find no letters glued to the backs of frames.
   * **Object:** Sliding Doors (also visible from the Master Bedroom)
     + **Description:** The sliding doors are [open/closed].
     + **Command [open or close the doors]:** The doors rattle slightly in their tracks – not very loud, but enough to make you cringe.
2. Master Bedroom
   * **Description:** The bedroom, as you might have expected, is dominated by an enormous four-poster bed. Sliding doors lead north, back to the parlor, and another doorway leads south.
   * **Object:** Bed
     + **Description:** The bed is the most impressive piece of furniture you've seen in the house yet. In addition to being simply gigantic, it's… fancier… than what you would have imagined a man like Fossville might own. Four carved mahogany pillars hold up a silken canopy; the coverlet is delicately embroidered with the Fossville coat of arms; the pillows are like bulging, feather-stuffed clouds, piled nearly higher than your head. Whatever else might be said about Baron Fossville, he certainly likes to sleep in comfort.
     + **Command [search or look under bed]:** You check under the bed-frame, behind the headboard, even under the thick, overstuffed mattress. No letter.
     + **Command [enter or sleep in bed]:** You're tired, but it's neither the time nor the place to take a rest.
   * **Event [entering this room from the south after the player has found the letter, before the room description]:** You leave the library in a rush – and run smack into someone coming the other way.

It's all you can do to bite back a scream. You try to duck around the person and run, but he grabs your arm and pulls you back. "Little thief!" a voice hisses, "What are you doing here? What do you have?"

He turns you around to face him. He's an older man, wearing a servant's uniform – Fossville's butler.

* + **NPC:** Butler
    - **Description:** The butler is tall and somewhat gaunt, with a heavy brow and a sour, twisted cast to his mouth. He looks like he doesn't like kids very much, *especially* when they're somewhere they shouldn't be.
    - **Command [going somewhere while the butler has a hold of you]:** The butler is stronger than he looks, and his grip on your arm is firm.
    - **Command [doing something to the butler other than talking to him]:** The butler gives your arm a vicious shake. "Be still, child, or I'll forget my charity and turn you over to the master."
    - **Command [saying something to the butler, first time]:** "Hush," the butler snaps, cutting you off. "I've no great desire to see the master inflict his cruelties upon a child, but I'll not lose my position over it. Keep your lips sealed if you want to leave this place unscathed."
    - **Command [saying something to the butler, subsequent times]:** The butler silences you with a stern look.
    - **Command [showing/giving the letter to the butler, first time]:** The butler stares intently at the letter in your hand for a long moment. His eyes flicker towards the library, then settle back on you. "They say no dark deed goes unpunished," he mutters. "I'll not stand between a man and the just fruits of his ill-gotten gains. Put that away, child; I never saw it, and I don't want to know what's in it."
    - **Command [showing/giving the letter to the butler, subsequent times]:** The butler pointedly does not look at it.
    - **Event [one turn after you bump into the butler]:** The butler drags you into the stairwell, then stops, his thin, bald head cocked, listening. From downstairs you hear more voices.

"…difficult *is* it to keep one half-witted street urchin locked in a cage for a single night?" That's the Baron again, you realize. "Because it is evidently far more difficult than I imagined. Perhaps I am not paying you enough for your heroic efforts so far?"

You hear a low, mumbled response.

"No, I daresay you don't," snaps the Baron, his voice acid with sarcasm. "I cannot express how galling it is that I still require your services; were it otherwise, I would sooner turn you all over to the Lord's Guards and let them deal with you like the useless curs you are."

The butler glances at you. You're beginning to suspect that Baron Fossville is not particularly well liked by his servants.

[Move player and Butler to 2nd floor landing, without triggering room description.]

* + - **Event [second turn after you bump into butler]:** "Gather your men at Lord's Market," says Fossville. "We'll deal with the spy first. Once that business is finished, we pay a visit to the Maidens. Though I suppose I should warn you – there may be several unarmed women. Let us hope they pose no greater challenge to your mercenaries than a fourteen-year-old girl."

The second voice mumbles another response.

"See that you do. I will be there shortly."

You hear footsteps, and then a heavy door slamming.

The butler holds his hand up, palm out. *Wait.*

* + - **Event [third turn after you bump into butler]:** Several agonizing minutes later, you hear the door slam a second time. The butler waits a few minutes more, then drags you downstairs. He takes you through the kitchens to a side door, and shoves you unceremoniously out onto the street.

"Go now, and don't come back," he says. "Next time, it won't be me that catches you. And if it is me, it'll go that much worse for you. A bit of advice girl," he adds, just before turning away, "keep yourself out of the Baron's way. He's not one to let a trifling of blood get in between him and his ambitions."

He slams the door.

[Move player to East Commerce Street, triggering room description.]

1. Library
   * **Description:** Tall bookshelves line all four walls, and a stately writing desk sits like an altar in the center of the dimly lit room. A doorway leads north to the bedroom.
   * **Object:** Desk
     + **Description:** The writing surface is a huge, polished slab of red oak. Documents, ledgers, and half-finished letters are strewn across it in disarray.
     + **Command [searching the desk; searching, reading, or examining the papers]:** Shuffling through the papers, you find much about Fossville's various holdings and business accounts, but nothing incriminating, and nothing like the letter Bobby described to you.
   * **Object:** Bookshelves

**Description:** The shelves reach almost to the ceiling, and each row sags beneath the weight of dozens of thick, dusty tomes. They look to be equally divided between the great classics of literature, and treatises on government, economics, and other scholarly topics.

One shelf on the east wall catches your eye. The books on those rows seem newer than the rest, as though they were very recently acquired.

* + - **Command [search bookshelf]:** [same as examining bookshelf]
  + **Object:** Books
    - **Command [take or read books if you have not examined or searched the bookshelves]:** There are so many books here; perhaps you should examine them closer before pulling a random one off the shelf.
    - **Command [take or read books if you HAVE examined or searched the bookshelves]:** On a sudden impulse, you go to the shelf of newer books and pull out a volume on dynastic lineages in Miradan.

A folded sheet of parchment slips out from the pages and see-saws to the floor.

* + **Object:** The Letter
    - **Description:** The parchment thin and the ink faded, but the writing is still quite legible, a strong, graceful script that flows down the page.

*Your Royal Highness,* it begins,

*It is with a sad but hopeful heart that I write to you, for I must reveal deeds that I am not proud of, and yet perhaps I may thereby put an end to an injustice that has gone on far too long.*

*My lawful marriage was determined by political expediency rather than by the urgings of my own heart, as you well know. My wife was ever a dutiful companion, but never truly happy. I do not blame her. For my part, I did my best to ensure that she lived a lifestyle fitting for a Duchess of the nobility, and that she wanted for nothing save my love.*

*Were this the full extent of my shame, I would have no need to write to you, for a loveless marriage is hardly a rare thing in our kingdom. However, it is to confess yet a further disgrace that I must pen this letter: I was not merely a cold but an unfaithful husband. I took a mistress, a woman on whom I bestowed all the tenderness I was unable to give my wife. And with this mistress, I had a child*

*I kept the child's existence a secret, as much to spare my wife the ignominy as to avoid the political complications that would otherwise have ensued. From my private finances I established an orphanage here in the city, and paid a tutor from the Royal College to pose as one of the mistresses, to raise and educate the child properly. In secret I have sponsored this child for ten years.*

*I feel it is past time for this secrecy to end. I have grown ill with a mysterious sickness these past months, and I fear that my life will soon come to a close. My wife was never able to provide me with a lawful heir, and yet I would not see my family name extinguished merely because I had not the courage to face up to my failings as a husband.*

*Therefore it is my wish that the crown recognize this child, who bears no fault for the circumstances of her birth, as my sole and lawful beneficiary, to inherit my title and estate in full upon my death, or upon her sixteenth birthday should I die before she reaches the age of majority. I hereby, by my will and by royal law, and in full possession of my faculties, declare my heir:*

*Jacqueline Toresal*

*Signed and witnessed therewith,*

*Lord William, Duke of Toresal*

* + - **Event [first time you read the letter, after printing the description]** Your hand is trembling as you refold the letter. You tell yourself that it's a coincidence, just someone who happens to have the same first name as you – but in your heart you know it must be true.

And yet… it poses so many more questions than it answers. The letter is addressed to the queen, and dated three years ago, just a few months before the Duke's death. Why was it never posted? And what is it doing in Baron Fossville's library?

A noise from the bedroom startles you out of your puzzling. Now that you have what you came for, you need to get out of here – fast.

* + **Command [take the letter for the first time]:** [this should move the letter to the player's inventory and then automatically read it]
  + **Command [leave the room without taking the letter]:** Don't forget the letter!
  + **Command [take or read books, search bookshelves, or search desk when you have already discovered the letter]:** No need to rummage around anymore – you have the letter. It's time to get out of here!

# Chapter IX – Maiden House II

### Map



### Rundown

First the player encounters Bobby being hanged in Lord's Market; then, after she returns to the orphanage, Fossville's mercenaries raid and search Maiden House.

### Notes

### Design

1. East Market Street
   * **Event [each turn after being kicked out of Black Gate Estate]:** There seems to be some sort of spectacle going on in Lord's Market; pedestrians are crowding the streets, pressing east.
2. Lord's Market
   * **Description [after being kicked out of Black Gate Estate]:** Lord's Market is packed with people from every part of the city. Aristocrats, servants, merchants, and beggars, all rubbing shoulders and pressing in, craning to see something in the center of the square.
   * **Command [leave the location before the crowd disperses]:** More people have squeezed in behind you, crushing you into the crowd. You can't get through all the densely packed people.
   * **Object:** Gallows
     + **Initial Appearance:** The crowd is surging around some sort of wooden structure erected in the center of the square.
     + **Description [first time]:** It's a raised platform, with some sort of scaffolding built over it, and a rope dangling from…

Suddenly your mouth goes dry. It's a gallows.

* + - **Description [subsequent times]:** The gallows stands stark against the [late morning/afternoon] sky.
    - **Command [do anything to the gallows while the crowd is present]:** There are too many people in your way, and you can’t push through.
    - **Command [do anything to the gallows after the crowd is gone]:** You can't bring yourself to touch it. You don't even want to get near it.
  + **NPC:** Crowd
    - **Description:** You've never seen Lord's Market this packed. You've never seen *any* part of the city this crowded.
    - **Command [talk to the crowd]:** No one is paying any attention to you; all eyes are riveted to the scene in the middle of the square.
    - **Command [do anything to the crowd]:** You can't. There are too many people pressing in on you; you can barely move.
  + **Event [first turn after examining the gallows]:** A man steps up onto the wooden platform. By sqeezing between two spectators and craning your neck, you can just make out that it is Baron Fossville addressing the crowd.

"Citizens of Toresal," he shouts, "as Lord of this City, it is my duty to administer justice within its gates, and punish those who transgress against the Queen's Law. More often than not, this duty is a heavy burden. Though I may wish to be lenient, consideration for the sanctity of the law and the safety of the Queen's subjects must always outweigh my softer instincts. Today, this burden weighs particularly upon me, for today I must administer the most stringent punishment allowed by the law."

Soldiers prod a second man up onto the platform. The black bag covers his face, but you recognize him by the clothes he's wearing – it's Bobby!

* + **NPC:** Baron Fossville [up on the gallows]
    - **Description:** The Baron looks a bit haggard, but he projects an energy into the crowd that makes him seem bigger than he is. This is a performance to him, you realize; and he is playing it for all it is worth.
    - **Command [talking to or doing anything to Fossville while he's on the gallows]:** You can't reach him. There are too many people in the way.
  + **NPC:** Bobby [up on the gallows]
    - **Description:** He's still wearing the mud- and blood-stained clothes he wore last night, when you snuck into Lord's Keep. His hands are bound behind his back, and a black cloth bag is pulled down over his head.
    - **Command [talking to or doing anything to Bobby while he's on the gallows]:** You can't reach him. There are too many people in the way.
  + **Event [second turn after examining the gallows]:** "This man before you stands accused of plotting high treason against the city of Toresal," shouts the Baron. "The evidence against him has been weighed, and he has been found guilty by the Honorable Magistrate Hester Rudup."

Fossville gestures to a third man standing on his other side, a gaunt man wearing crimson robes – the man who captured you last night at the fountain.

* + **NPC:** Hester Rudup (on the gallows)
    - **Description:** He looks much the same as he did when you encountered him last night, although now he is wearing his magistrate's chain of office over the red robes. He stares coolly out over the crowd.
    - **Command [talking to or doing anything to Rudup while he's on the gallows]:** You can't reach him. There are too many people in the way.
  + **Event [third turn after examining the gallows]:** "Despite the grief it causes me, the penalty for this most heinous crime is clear." Fossville pauses; the crowd is hanging on his every word. "By the power invested in me and in accordance with the Queen's Law… I hereby sentence this man to hang by the neck until dead."

The Baron turns to one of his soldiers at the platform's base and nods his head.

Later, you cannot remember whether you really heard the *clunk* of the trapdoor falling open, the rope snapping taut, or whether you only imagined it. You remember screaming, clawing at the spectators in front of you, and being pushed back by rough, angry hands. You stumbled and fell onto the cobblestones; you never saw his body drop.

Eventually the crowd disperses. The soldiers have carted off the body, but left the gallows standing in the middle of the empty square.

1. Hallway (in the Maiden House)
   * **Event [entering this location from the north, having witnessed the hanging, after room description]:** Suddenly Fiona is there, enfolding you in a crushing hug. "Oh Jacqueline," she says, "I saw what happened to Bobby. I'm so sorry, child…"

Before you can think of how to respond, someone pounds on the front door. "Open in the name of Baron Fossville!" shouts a voice.

Fiona looks horrified. "It's the Baron!" she whispers. "I didn't think he'd come here so soon… quick, Jacqueline! Get to the laundry!"

* + **Event [every turn after the banging starts, no matter which room inside Maiden House you're in]:** The pounding continues[one of], rattling the door in its frame.[or]. "Open this door, widow, before we break it down!"[or]."Open up!"[or].
  + **Command [talking to Fiona while the banging goes on]:** "No time for questions, just go!"
  + **Command [open/unlock door while the banging goes on]:** Fiona pulls you away from the door. "Are you mad, girl? Get to the laundry room!"
  + **Command [open/unlock door after coming out of the closet]:** "Not that way," says Angelina. "They'll be watching the front door for sure. Sneak out the back, through the privy window."
  + **Event [if you are anywhere other than the Secret Closet 10 turns after the knocking starts]:** Suddenly the knocking pauses. Everyone seems to hold their breath for one silent moment.

Then the front door crashes open and the mercenaries rush in. Children scream. Fiona stands in their way, shouting something you cannot hear. Scarred arms shove her brutally aside. Theresa points at you, crowing, *"There she is!"* They don't even look in her direction.

The mercenary captain looms over you. His lip pulls back from chipped, yellow teeth.

"You're beginning to damage my credibility, *boy,"* he growls.

And then his fist crashes into the side of your head, and everything goes black.

1. Laundry Room
   * **Event [entering the Laundry Room for the first time while the banging goes on]:** Shannon is here, looking terrified. As you enter the room, she rushes over and pushes against one of the boards in the northern wall. It moves aside, revealing a narrow, dark opening.

"Quick, Jack," she whispers, "in here!"

* + **Command [leaving the Laundry Room once the secret door is open]:** "Jack!" cries Shannon, "Where are you going?"
  + **Initial Appearance of Shannon, while secret door is open]:** Shannon stands next to the secret door, frantically beckoning you in.
  + **Object:** Secret Door
    - **Initial Appearance:** A gap between boards in the northern wall leads into a tiny, dark closet.
    - **Command [entering the secret door, before printing room description]:** You squeeze in, and Shannon pulls the board back into place, shutting you into darkness.

1. Secret Closet
   * **Description:** It is pitch black. The walls press close to either side; you can barely breathe.
   * **Command [exiting the room before the following script has ended]:** The Baron's men would catch you the instant you left this hiding place.
   * **Event [one turn after entering closet]:** The pounding, which you can still hear, muffled, through the walls, suddenly stops. Many heavy footsteps tromp into the building, making the floorboards shudder beneath your feet.

"Where is she?" growls a rough voice. It's hard to tell from two rooms away, but it sounds very similar to the mercenary captain you heard yesterday morning, at the Grubber's Market."

* + **Event [two turns after entering the closet]:** "Where is who, sir?" That must be Fiona.

"Don't play games with me, woman," snaps the first voice. "I've had my fill of it. The old Duke isn't here to protect you any more, and if one of my men were to be careless and injure someone, it would rest but lightly on the Baron's conscience, I can promise you that. Now, we know she came here after the hanging. *Where is she?*"

"I can tell you, good sir," says a third voice.

Bitter anger wells up in your throat, even as fear turns your stomach cold. *That was Theresa!*

* + **Event [third turn after entering the closet]:** "This place is full of dark corners and hidey-holes," says Theresa, "but I think if you were to search carefully in the laundry room, you might find what you're looking for."

Though you still can't see a thing, you can feel your cheeks burning. Theresa has always disliked you, but you never thought she would be so treacherous as to turn you over to the Baron's men.

"My thanks, madam," grunts the mercenary captain. "I'll make sure the Baron hears of your cooperation when we—"

*"Jacqueline! Jacqueline, wait!"* Several shouts. Running footsteps. What is going on?

* + **Event [fourth turn after entering the closet]:** You hear heavy footsteps down the hall, running towards the laundry room… closer, closer… but then they suddenly turn *away* from the laundry room, towards… the privy?

"Jacqueline… oh, Goddesses." That's Shannon's voice.

"What is it?" yells the mercenary captain. "Where did the girl go?"

"She… she got away from me, Miss Fiona," wails Shannon. "I was trying to get her into the hiding place we got in the laundry room, like you said, but she slipped past me and wriggled out the privy window. You know how fast she can get through that window, Miss Fiona. She could be anywhere in the city by now. I'm so sorry, Miss Fiona, so sorry."

You can't help but grin. You've always thought of Shannon as being a trifle dim-witted. You'll have to revise your opinion of her.

* + **Event [fifth turn after entering the closet]:** The mercenary captain utters a curse so foul that you actually wince. "Don't just stand there, you bleeding dims," he yells, "get out there and find her! You two, keep an eye on the alley in case she comes back. Go! Go! Find her or I'll have your hides!" The tromping footsteps run back up the hall, growing fainter this time, then vanishing altogether as they cross the threshold and exit Maiden House.

You let out a long, shaky breath.

* + **Event [sixth turn after entering the closet]:** The door opens, and Fiona takes your hand as you stumble out of the stifling darkness.

"That was too close, child," she says, "and it won't be long before the Baron's men come back. You'll need to go quickly, out the privy window again." Although her manner is urgent, Fiona smiles a bit at that. "It's a route you're accustomed to, to be sure."

She presses a large brass key into your hand. "It's time you learned something of your past, Jacqueline. This is yours by right. It opens the way to your history."

[move Fiona and player to the Laundry Room; give Red Gate Estate key to player]

1. Privy
   * **Command [going through the window after leaving the closet]:** You pull yourself through the window and once again clamber up into the alley. You can hear a commotion from the direction of Lord's Market; it looks as though the Baron's mercenaries are still out searching the streets for you, but they'll double back and put a watch on Maiden House soon enough.

There is a scrabbling, grunting commotion behind you, and you turn to see Shannon trying to push her way through the window. Confused but not wanting to just stand there and watch her struggle, you give her a hand up.

"Fiona thought I should maybe come with you," she says, after she's finished smoothing her skirts and catching her breath. "In case you needed any help."

1. Lord's Market
   * **Command [going south from the Lord's Market after escaping from Maiden House]:** You dare not return to Maiden House now. Fossville's men will be watching it, just waiting for you to try to sneak back.

## Chapter X – Red Gate Estate

### Map



### Rundown

### Notes

Dusty, furniture covered with sheets. You find a bath. (Bathroom off the Master Bedroom).

This is you – this is your family.

Bathroom scene – no longer a boy – turning into a princess. Baptism. You've never been really *clean* before.

Detail about father. Discover heritage.

### Design

1. East Commerce Street
   * **Command [unlock Red Gate Estate with key, first time only]:** The lock is rusty and stiff from long disuse, but the key turns… and the door unlocks with a grinding *clunk*.
   * **Command [going north into the Foyer for the first time]:** You pause for one last glance over your shoulder at the streets of Toresal, so familiar from your years of skulking, scrounging, and sometimes even sleeping on them. Then you pass over the threshold, into Red Gate Estate.
   * **Command [after entering East Commerce Street from the north, if you have had a bath, after room description]:** "I suppose we should find this Mrs. Sandler now," Shannon says.
2. Foyer of Red Gate Estate
   * **Description:** The entrance hall is large, high-ceilinged, and empty. Your footsteps echo on the marble floor. A doorway leads north to further rooms, and the street lies south.
   * **Event [first time you enter the Foyer, after the room description]:** The house is eerie in its stillness. The walls are bare; and all the furniture is draped in white sheets.
   * **NPC:** Shannon
     + **Event [whenever you move to another room]:** Shannon follows you/silently/close by.
3. Dining Hall
   * **Description:** The long table in the center of the hall is covered in sheets, as are the rows of chairs to either side. Doorways lead north and south.
   * **Backdrop:** Table/Chairs/Furniture (found in all rooms of Red Gate Estate)
     + **Description:** The furniture shows signs of neglect, but it is finely crafted and obviously very expensive.
     + **Command [sit on/lie down on/enter]:** You'd have to take the sheets off first.
   * **Backdrop:** Sheets (found in every room of Red Gate Estate)
     + **Description:** The sheets are fine linen, smudged gray with dust.
     + **Command [search or look under sheets]:** Nothing underneath but furniture.
     + **Command [take the sheets]:** For some reason you feel reluctant to pull the sheets off. It feels too much like… disturbing the dead.
   * **Event [first time you enter this room with Shannon, after room description]:** "Lord Toresal was known for his hospitality," remarks Shannon. "He entertained guests here at his estate as often as he did at Lord's Keep. It's said he paid for his dinner parties from his own purse, rather than tax the city." She runs her hand along the sheet-draped dining table. "Your father was a good man, Jacqueline, and well loved by his subjects."
4. Kitchen
   * **Description:** Without the usual clutter of pots and pans and utensils, the kitchen seems particularly barren. The firepit in the southwestern corner is cold and dark. The dining room lies south, and a wide staircase in the back of the room leads up to the second floor.
   * **Object:** Firepit
     + **Description:** Nothing but ashes there now.
     + **Command [search firepit]:** [repeat description]
5. Second Floor Landing
   * **Description:** The shadowed stairway leads up and down. A doorway leads south.
6. Office
   * **Description:** A sheet-enshrouded desk sits in the center of the room like a dusty altar. Empty bookshelves surround you on all sides except north, where a doorway leads back to the stairs.
   * **Object:** Bookshelves
     + **Description:** The shelves are all empty, although the markings in the dust indicate that there once were books here.
   * **Command [searching/looking under the desk or the sheet in the Office]:** Half-hidden under the desk is an old wooden box.
   * **Object:** Wooden Box (concealed until the player looks under the desk)
     + **Description:** The box is about twelve inches by ten inches by six, carved of some beautiful, honey-colored wood and polished smooth. On the lid is engraved the crest of Duke Toresal.
     + **Command [opening the box for the first time]:** Nestled in the box's velvet-lined interior are bundles of papers – letters and documents of the old Duke.
     + **Object:** Papers
       - **Description:** Some of them are legal documents indicating the disposition of the old Lord's estate. There are also financial records of the city's Treasury, details of various funds and improvements he planned to implement before he died. There are letters from noblemen and noblewomen from every corner of Miradan, addressing the Duke in terms of the utmost deference and respect.

[first time only]*My father was a great and powerful man,* you realize, skikmming over the letters. *People thought very highly of him.*[/first time only]

At the bottom of the stack are several letters written on small, worn parchment. The penmanship is clumsy, like the way yours looked when Fiona was first teaching you your letters. Each is short, no more than a few scribbled sentences:

*My Lord. I had some time to myself in the garden and thought of you. I hope to see you again soon if your duties will let you get away. You can see I've not put my name to this like you asked but you know who it is. Your Love.*

*Dear Love. When will I see you again? Your duties keep you too long from me. But that is why I love you so, you are a good man who never forsakes a promise. Come see me soon. Your Love.*

*My previous Duke. I pressed Estelle with subtle questions but I am certain she knows nothing. I am discreet and would never give you cause to worry. Our secret is safe. Our love is forever.*

[first time]Your mother's words, you realize. Secret letters that she sent to your father, before you were born. He would have had no pictures of her, of course, nor any papers containing clues to her identity. These pieces of paper are all you will ever have of her. [/first time]

* + **Event [entering this room for the first time with Shannon, after room description]:** Shannon sighs as she looks at the barren shelves. "Your father had a great love of learning," she says, "and was as well-read as any scholar in the kingdom. That was one reason why he was so loved – he was wise, and his subjects knew it. He would be so sad to see all his books lost like this. I can't imagine that they would have been auctioned off with the rest of it… he would have wanted to leave them to you."

1. Third Floor Landing
   * **Description:** The stairs end here at the third floor. A doorway leads south.
2. Master Bedroom
   * **Description:** Most of the furniture from this room has been carted off. Only the bed remains, just a bare mattress covered with yet another plain, dusty sheet. Doorways lead north and south.
   * **Object:** Bed
     + **Description:** No one has slept in it since the Duke died, years ago.
     + **Command [search or look under the bed]:** Nothing under there but dust.
3. Bathroom
   * **Description:** The walls of this small room are cold, bare marble. The only exit is to the north.
   * **Object:** Tub
     + **Description:** The tub is carved from a single block of granite, polished smooth as glass. It looks almost big enough to swim in.
   * **Object:** Faucets
     + **Initial Appearance:** A pair of strange-looking devices protrudes from the south wall, hanging over the lip of a huge stone basin.
     + **Description** **[first time the player examines them]:** The device is made of brass and ivory and protruding from carved fittings in the wall, about waist height. It consists of a curved spout flanked by two hand-sized, spoked wheels…

Suddenly you figure it out – these are faucets! Running-water pipes, or "plumbing" as some call it, is a very recent invention and is incredibly rare in Toresal. You've never actually seen faucets up close before.

* + - **Description** **[subsequent times]:** The faucets are made of brass and ivory and protrude from carved fittings in the wall, about waist height. The curved spout is flanked by two wheels: one for cold water, the other (though you can scarcely imagine it) for hot.
    - **Command [turn on faucets]:** A groaning sound reverberates behind the walls, and then a spout of clean, clear water gushes out of the spout and splashes into the tub.
    - **Event [after the first time you examine the faucets]:** "Oh, a bath with water-pipes! What a luxury," exclaims Shannon. "I've never had me a bath that I didn't have to fill meself from a kettle. Back and forth and back and forth – it's either that or take it cold. Kind of takes the relaxation out of it, if you ask me," she sighs ruefully. "The Lord Duke your father was a man of taste and distinction on top of everything else. True nobility, he was."

And it occurs to you, as you look at your distorted reflection in the golden, curving pipes, you've never had a bath with running water, either. In fact, you can't remember the last time you had *any* sort of bath, not even the quick spit-baths in a wooden tub full of tepid, cloudy water that are the norm in Maiden House. You've spent your life coated with the grime of the streets more often than not, reeking of sweat and alleyways, hardly noticing it because the smell is around you constantly, and around everyone you know.

But, you realize for the first time, *that's not really who you are.* You are the Duke's daughter, a child of nobility. By all rights, you should have been sleeping on feather mattresses, smelling of rosewater. This luxury is your heritage… and you've never known a single day of it in your life.

* + - **Command [take bath]:** You plug the drain and begin filling the enormous tub with water.

Shannon nods with approval but says nothing; somehow she seems to know what you were thinking. By the time you've gotten out of your sodden clothes and into the water, she's managed to scare up a cake of soap from somewhere. She smiles as she hands it to you.

The water is scalding hot and exquisite. You rub the soap into your reddening skin, feeling it all wash away. Not just the dirt and the sweat, but everything: the fear and confusion of being hunted for two days straight; the moldy tunnel under Lord's Keep; the prison; the sewers. Even your grief and guilt over Bobby's death – it doesn't go away, not all of it, but it's not so heavy any more, not so sharp.

You dry off with a sheet pulled from the furniture. As you reach for your old clothes, Shannon stops you and holds out a dress.

"Where in the world—?" you ask.

"The Duke's wife was a little lady, just about your size, really," Shannon says. "Not beautiful, but handsome in her way. And good taste in clothes." She puts the dress into your hands.

[move old clothes to Bathroom; remove cloak from player's inventory; move dress to player's inventory]

* + - **Command [take bath subsequent times]:** Once is enough for today.
  + **Object:** Old Clothes
    - **Description:** They're threadbare and crusted with filth.
    - **Command [take or wear]:** Now that you're finally clean, you don't think you could bare to put those filthy things on again.
  + **Object:** Dress
    - **Description:** It's nothing fancy – a simple skirt and blouse of finespun linen, with an embroidered bodice. The sort of day-dress you might see a well-to-do lady wearing to the market. It's finer than anything you've ever worn in your life.
    - **Command [leaving the bathroom without putting on the dress]:** You can't leave here naked!
    - **Command [wear the dress]:** You slip the dress over your head, and Shannon helps you with the laces. The linen feels soft and light on your skin. She was right about the size, too; it's a just a little bit big around your chest; otherwise it fits fine.

Finally, you look in the mirror. A complete stranger looks back at you: fair of skin, with dark eyes and high cheekbones. She wears fine clothes, and the tangles have been brushed out of her hair. She looks, you realize, quite pretty.

*This isn't Jack anymore,* you think to yourself. *This is Jacqueline.*

* + - **Command [remove the dress]:** This isn't really the proper time or place to get undressed.

## Chapter XI – Pieter

### Map



### Rundown

### Notes

At the ball – meet people. You are "presenting" yourself… you now have supporters and enemies. Some time spent with dialogue.

### Design

* + **NPC:** Pieter
    - **Event [whenever you move to a new location with Pieter in tow]:** Pieter [follows/hurries after you/hurries to catch up/sticks close to you], [looking around warily/his hand on his sword hilt/doggedly keeping you in sight].
    - **Event [trying to go east from Merchant Street, east from Grubber's Market, or South from Lord's Road]:** Pieter puts his hand on your arm. "There's no time to go traipsing about the city, [Jack/Jacqueline/Jack—er, Jacqueline]. We need to get to Fossville's ball."
    - **Idle Actions [on the way to the Ball]**
      * Pieter stands close to you protectively.
      * Pieter looks around warily.
      * Pieter fingers his sword hilt[, as though expecting an ambush from any quarter].
      * "Don’t worry," Pieter mutters, as much to himself as to you.[ "I won't let anything happen to you."]
      * Pieter shifts his feet impatiently. "We need to be on our way," he mutters. "The ball starts soon."
      * "Are you sure you know the way?" Pieter mutters.

1. Southern Gate
   * **Description [prior to Chapter 10]:** The Lord's Road ends here at the keep's southern gate. A great, iron portcullis blocks passage through the gatehouse, and sentries stand at attention on both sides.
   * **Description [during Chapter 10]:** The Lord's Road ends here at the keep's southern gate. Tonight, for the ball, the portcullis is raised; however, the guards are on high alert tonight, checking invitations as each guest arrives.
   * **Object:** Gatehouse/portcullis
     + **Description:** The gatehouse consists of a huge tower with an archway through the middle, wide enough to drive a horse-drawn carriage through. A portcullis of thick, iron bars can be dropped down into the archway, sealing the keep; it is currently [raised/lowered].
     + **Command [trying to do anything other than examining the gatehouse/portcullis]:** You can't get near the gatehouse without attracting the attention of the guards.
   * **Command [trying to go north from the Southern Gate]:** The guards won't let you in unless you have [official business/an invitation]. The way things are going lately**,** they might well be looking out for you specifically.
   * **NPC:** Guards
     + **Descripiton:** The guards are wearing polished mail underneath tabards decorated with the Toresal coat of arms, and carrying long spears. They look alert and ready for trouble.
     + **Command [trying to interact with the guards]:** The guards are likely to get suspicious if you try anything. Best to just steer clear of them.
     + **Command [attacking the guards]:** That would probably be the last mistake you'd ever make.
     + **Command [trying to do anything with the guards when Pieter is with you]:** Pieter holds you back. "Don't, Jack," he whispers. "You can't beat them, and you won't gain anything by making a scene."
2. Lower Bailey
   * **Description [during Chapter 10]:** The lower bailey has been cleaned, with gravel spread over the larger mud puddles. Guests to the ball are still trickling in through the gate to the south. The doors to the inner keep stand open to the north, and music and laughter drift out into the evening air.
   * **Command [going up from Lower Bailey during Chapter 10]:** Climbing up to the upper bailey would only attract unwanted attention. The ball is where you need to be.
   * **Command [going south from Lower Bailey]:** You can't get near the gatehouse without attracting the attention of the guards.
3. Foyer
   * **Description:** The entrance hall has been decorated for the occasion, its stark, stone walls hidden behind festive tapestries and garlands. A few guests stand around in groups, chatting, but the main event seems to be in the ballroom, north of here.
   * **Event [first time you enter the Foyer]:** A servant in formal livery bows, then takes your and Pieter's cloaks and deftly spirits them away.
4. Ballroom
   * **Description:** [first time only]You step into a world of light…

[main description]Hundreds of candles spread an unearthly golden glow throughout the hall. From massive chandeliers dripping with crystal, from golden candelabras ensconced in the walls, the multitude of flames flicker like stars. The ballroom is packed with people; all of Toresal's high society seems to be here tonight, and still the enormous hall does not seem full. Servants navigate through the crowds, carrying silver platters loaded with pastries and canapés. Somewhere, a chamber group is playing a lively concerto.

[first time only]It's breathtaking. It's every fantasy of beauty and riches that you ever dreamed of, brought to life.

## Chapter XII – Mercenaries

### Map



### Rundown

### Notes

### Meet and Greet

* Jacob's (the father) and his wife. Gruff merchant, known for taking advantage of everyone.
* The Princess is approachable and very confrontational.
* The Queen is present, but unapproachable. But she sees you and knows you (you think).
* The Duke and Duchess of Inhyron (Seven Lakes). Very formal, very affluent, and also very honorable. Liked Jack's father very much.
* The Baron and Baroness of Amhyron (western Seven Lakes). Less formal, beholden to the Inhyron Duchy.
* The Earl of Bresa (The Kozar Delta). Boastful merchant with a purchased title. Has no power, because he throws money around no matter how people treat him.
* Prince of Gravesal, a set of lands in the northeast. A devastatingly handsome prince of distant royal blood, not obviously interested in crown politics. Very sardonic personality.

### Design

This scene lasts for 30 turns or so, or long enough for the player to interact with at least 3 NPCs, whichever is longer. All of the NPCs are located in the Ballroom, but internally the game keeps track of whom the player is "face to face" with. If you attempt to talk to or interact with someone other than the person you're currently talking to, it breaks off the current conversation, triggering the leavetaking text below.

All characters have a "description from afar" property in addition to their regular description.

* + **Event [if the player tries to leave the Ballroom before the scene is over]:** The press of people is so close, you can't make your way back to the Foyer without rudely pushing your way through at least a dozen conversations. Besides, you can't leave without Pieter. Where did he get off to…?
  + **Command [talk to an NPC with whom you are not currently talking]:** With an awkward curtsey and muttered apologies, you end your conversation with [NPC you're currently talking to] and make your way over to [NPC you're trying to talk to].

[This then triggers the new NPC's greeting text.]

1. **NPC:** Jacobs the Elder
   * **Event [after you have been one turn in the Ballroom]:** "Well now," says a gruff voice behind you. You turn and are startled to see a familiar face – it's Jacobs, your former cellmate from the jailhouse!

Then you realize – no, it's not him. This man has the same heavy brow and hulking build, but he's older, more jowly, and his hair is gray at the temples. This must be Jacobs' father, the wealthy and notorious merchant.

The elder Jacobs leers at you. "You must be the one my boy helped out of prison recently." You remember it the other way around, actually, but before you can say anything he holds up a pudgy, ring-encrusted hand. "Don’t bother denying it, I have informants everywhere. I know exactly who you are…and why you were in a prison cell." Jacobs laughs. "Don't worry, I've no plans to reveal your presence to Fossville. There's nothing in it for me, after all, since he will most certainly find out about it without my help."

[Jacobs is now present in the room and face to face with the player. Pieter is removed from play.]

* + **Event [after you have been two turns in the Ballroom]:** He draws close to you, close enough that you can smell the spiced wine on his breath. "The way I see it, you owe my son quite a favor," he murmurs in your ear. "The way I see it, you'll be owing *many* people favors before you're done. But if you're to start off well, you'll need to know who those people are.

"Over there is the queen," Jacobs says, pointing across the room to a woman you can barely see for all the servants and courtiers pressed around her. "She knows who you are, too. Best to not cross *her* path tonight, though I doubt you'll get close enough even if you try.

"And there's her daughter, working the room," he continues. He points out a beautiful young woman who seems to be deliberately ignoring the fact that you're staring at her. "She's Fossville's quarry tonight, but every warm-blooded male with an ounce of ambition will be trying to woo her anyway."

Slowly, Jacobs turns you full circle, pointing out notable guests as they come into view. "The Duke and Duchess of Inhyron, in the Seven Lakes region. An old family, very influential. Insufferably snobbish, as well, but at least they liked your father. And there's the Baron and Baroness of Amhyron. You'll like them; they're a bit less formal, and less likely to hold your lack of upbringing against you. On the other hand, they're utterly beholden to the Inhyron Duchy. Of course, there's always the Earl of Bresa," Jacobs sighs, "a merchant lord from the Kozar Delta. A foolish man with a purchased title. He has all the money in the world, but no power, because he is utterly indiscriminate in how he spends it."

Jacobs claps you on the back in a most uncourtly fashion. "Well, my dear, that should be enough to get you started, at least." Suddenly you can feel his whiskers against your ear. "And now you owe *me* a favor," he whispers, and then he wanders off to mingle with the other guests, chuckling to himself.

[Jacobs is no longer "face-to-face" with the player, but is still in the room. The Queen, the Princess, the Duke/Duchess of Inhyron, the Baron/Baroness of Amhyron, and the Earl of Bresa are now in the room and can be interacted with.]

* + **Description [from afar]:** Jacobs stands slightly apart, a goblet of spiced wine in one hand, watching the other guests with gruff contempt.
  + **Description:** Jacobs is a large man like his son, though age and indulgence have made him less imposing. He wears an ostentatious velvet cloak with a thick, furred collar, far too heavy for the season, and beads of sweat glitter on his balding scalp. His eyes are bloodshot, heavy-lidded, and cynical.
  + **Greeting:** Jacobs purses his thick lips. "Back for more, hmm?"

1. **NPC:** The Queen
   * **Description [from afar]:** Her Royal Highness is not a tall lady, and most of the time all you can see of her is a flash of golden crown or silver hair glimpsed between the shoulders of her entourage. But every now and then the shoulders part, and you get a good look at her: a pale, angry-looking woman with sharp, shrewish features. Her tiny face is almost lost within the explosion of jewel-encrusted brocade and lace that geysers up from the collar of her gown.

**[first time only]**Then, for just a moment, her gaze meets yours. Her stern expression never changes, but her eyes seem to flash a warning. *I'm watching you,* she seems to say, *do not cross me.*

* + **Command [talk to or interact with the Queen]:** With so many people crowding around trying to get the Queen's attention, you can't even get near her.

1. **NPC:** The Princess
   * **Description [from afar]:** Even from across the room, the Princess commands attention; wherever she mingles, conversations stop, and men's eyes follow her. Strangely, she still seems to be avoiding your gaze, although why she would be discomfited by one person when everyone else is openly staring at her is beyond you.
   * **Description:** The Princess is tall, shapely, and wisp-thin, wearing a long gown of wine-colored silk embroidered with amythests. She is beautiful, but also haughty, and the way she looks down her nose at you with those cold, blue eyes irritates you to no end. After all, she's only a few years older than you are – what (besides her title and her piles of riches) makes her so special?
   * **Greeting [first time]:** The Princess pointedly ignores you for a few moments, then, when it's clear that you're not going to go away, crosses her arms and snaps, "Oh, you must be that ambitious little street urchin Mother told me about. How charming."
   * **Event [after asking her three questions]:** "Um, look," interrupts the Princess, "I understand you're having a lot of fun pretending to be someone important, but I'm really not interested in listening to some dressed-up alley rat chatter at me all night. So if you'll excuse me…" And then she shoulders past you and disappears into the crowd.

[Princess is removed from location.]

1. **NPC:** Duke of Inhyron
   * **Programmer's Note:** [The Duke and Duchess are two characters for the purposes of EXAMINE, but talking to the Duchess always gets redirected to the Duke. In other words, the Duke always answers for his reticent wife.]
   * **Description [Duke, from afar]:** The Duke of Inhyron seems content to stand quietly at one end of the ballroom, occasionally nodding to guests as they pass by. His eyes are everywhere, however, flickering constantly around the room. The Duchess hovers frail and mouselike at his side.
   * **Description [Duchess, from afar]:** The Duchess hovers frail and mouselike at the Duke's side.
   * **Description [Duke]:** The Dukeis a handsome, elderly man, with snow-white hair swept back from a widow's peak and a neatly trimmed beard. His tunic is of an old-fashioned, aristocratic cut, deep purple with golden buttons at the shoulder and braided epaulets to hold his formal cloak in place.
   * **Description [Duchess]:** The Duke's wife is thin and nervous and never speaks. She does, however, occasionally peek out from behind her husband's arm, and stare at you with wide eyes and quivering nostrils.
   * **Greeting [first time]:** Duke Inhyron inclines his head as you approach. "No need for introductions," he says sternly. "I am aware of who you are, and I see no reason to incriminate either of us by announcing it." He looks you up and down with only a slight squint of disapproval. "Your father was a good ruler and a good man," he says, "and though I do not think you have what it takes to fill his shoes, he was a friend, and you are his kin. What would you know of me, girl?"
   * **Greeting [subsequent times]:** Duke Inhyron nods. "Yes, girl? What is it now?"
2. **NPC:** Baron of Amhyron
   * **Description [from afar]:** The Baron of Amhyron is mingling near the banquet table. He looks a little overwhelmed, although he appears to be enjoying himself.
   * **Description:** Baron Amhyron is middle-aged, somewhat stout, with a red face and kind crinkles around his deep, brown eyes. His clothes are not quite as rich or as formal as those of some of the other guests, but he still cuts a respectable figure.
   * **Greeting [first itme]:** Amhyron smiles as you approach. "Good evening, milady," he says, bowing and taking your hand. "I don't believe I've had the pleasure of an introduction. I am Lord Falton, Baron of Amhyron. And you are?"

"Lady Jacqueline," you manage, "of, er… of Toresal."

The Baron's eyebrows are raised in surprise as he straightens up. "Do tell. How…intriguing. How may I be of service to you this evening, Lady Jacqueline?"

* + **Greeting [subsequent times]:** "Hello again, milady," says the Baron with a slight bow. "How are you finding the festivities?"

1. **NPC:** Earl of Bresa
   * **Description [from afar]:** The Earl is easy to spot from anywhere in the room: he's the one roaring with laughter and throwing fistfuls of money at the chamber orchestra, much to the guests' amusement and the musicians' embarassment.
   * **Description:** The Earl of Bresa has a bald head and a huge, curly, red beard. His lavish, colorful clothes are stained with wine and food. He laughs too loudly and has a habit of putting his greasy fingers on other guests – usually a friendly slap on the back for the men, elsewhere for the women. Despite Jacobs' warning, you find your self liking him immediately.
   * **Greeting [first time]:** "What's that?" Earl Bresa roars after you introduce yourself. "An up-and-comer, eh? Well, you seem more appealing than the rest of this stodgy crew!" He seems utterly unconcerned that anyone else might hear him – although it seems like most of the other guests are making an effort to ignore him anyway. "Listen," he says, putting his hand on your arm. "I like you. You need anything, backing, whatever, you just let me know. Now, what was it you wanted to talk about?"
   * **Greeting [subsequent times]:** "Hello again!" yells the Earl, swaying slightly as he waves you over.
2. **NPC:** Prince of Gravesal
   * **Event [30 turns after you enter the Ballroom, or after you have talked to at least 3 NPCs, whichever comes later]:** "Pardon me," someone says in a low, strangely accented voice, and a hand touches your elbow. You turn to see a tall, dark-skinned man leaning close to you. "Please forgive my forwardness," he murmurs. "I have been waiting for the right moment to speak to you for some time now, but I fear if I wait much longer, I will never get the chance."

He nods towards the ballroom entrance – where several of Fossville's mercenaries are standing!

"Allow me to introduce myself," the stranger says, as though nothing at all were amiss. "I am Prince Gravesal."

[mercenaries are now present; Gravesal is now present and face-to-face with player]

* + **Description:** The Prince cuts such a striking figure, you can't imagine why you haven't noticed him until now. Tall and slim, with smooth skin the color of strong tea and long, ink-black hair tied back at the nape of his neck. His clothes, though finely cut, are black as well, devoid of decoration except for a single garnet brooch pinning his cloak at the shoulder. He looks young, perhaps only a few years older than you. And something about his deep, brown eyes makes it difficult for you to concentrate…
  + **Command [if you try to talk to someone else or leave the ballroom]:** "Please stay," the Prince says, his hand still gently holding your elbow. "There's not much time left; grant me the pleasure of your company for just a few moments longer."
  + **Event [5 turns after Prince Gravesal starts talking to you]:** The Prince glances over your shoulder and smiles sardonically. "It would seem that your company is desired by someone with greater powers of persuasion than mine." He looks back at you. "Thank you. I hope I will see you again."

He bows deeply; his lips are cool against the back of your hand. And then he is lost in the crowd, as suddenly as he appeared.

A rough hand falls on your shoulder. "Come with us, girl," growls a familiar voice. "The Baron asked us not to drag you out kicking and screaming, so let's not disappoint him, eh?"

[move player to War Room]

## Chapter XIII – The Baron

### Map



### Rundown

### Notes

### Design

1. War Room
   * **Scene [after Scene XI ends, before room description]:** The mercenaries march you out of the ballroom, through the foyer, and into the inner reaches of the keep. At every doorway you pass a pair of Lord's Guards standing at attention; some of them glare at the ill-kempt and ill-disciplined mercenaries, but no one makes a move to stop them or help you. You are keenly aware of the dagger strapped to your leg under your dress, but there seems to be no opportunity to use it. Not that you'd last very long against a half-dozen armed men anyway.

The last door is not guarded. The mercenaries push you through into a room filled with dim, flickering light.

* + **Description:** A fireplace lights this grim chamber with a hellish, red glow. A huge, round table sits in the center of the room. Hanging opposite the fireplace is a vast map of Miradan, covering nearly the entire wall. An iron-reinforced door leads east.
  + **Object:** Fireplace
    - **Description:** The fire is banked high, flames roaring and popping.
    - **Command [enter or touch fire]:** You'd be burned quite badly.
    - **Event [1 in 10 chance each turn]:** A knothole explodes in the fire, sending a tornado of sparks up the flue.
  + **Object:** Table
    - **Description:** The table is polished blackwood. The reflection of the firelight in its ink-dark surface looks like molten lead.
  + **Object:** Map
    - **Description:** The map depicts the entire kingdom, from the northern reaches to the Seven Lakes. The cities are marked with semi-precious stones embedded in the map's surface. Forinal, the capital, is represented by a ruby the size of your thumb.
  + **NPC:** Pieter
    - **Initial Appearance [while tied up]:** Pieter is lying on the floor in front of the fire place, trussed up and gagged.
    - **Description [while tied up]:** It looks as though they worked him over pretty hard before tying him up. His wrists and ankles are all bound together behind his back, the ropes digging cruelly into his skin.
    - **Idle Behavior [while tied up, 1 in 10 chance]:** Pieter struggles weakly against his bonds.
    - **Command [cut ropes/free Pieter/untie Pieter while Baron is gloating]:** The Baron is between you and Pieter, and two mercenaries are standing right behind you. You'd never get him untied in time.
  + **NPC:** Baron Fossville
    - **Command [talking to anyone while the Baron is gloating, the first time]:** Fossville's black-gloved hand whips out and cracks you across the face. Stars explode in your vision.

"Please be quiet while I am talking," says the Baron. As calmly as though he were asking you to pass the salt at the dinner table.

* + - **Command [talking to anyone while the Baron is gloating, subsequent times]:** Not feeling too keen on getting hit again, you decide to keep your mouth shut.
    - **Command [attack the Baron, or do anything with the dagger]:** The mercenaries are watching your every move. You're sure you couldn't take them all.
    - **Command [leave the room, or do anything other than examine the things in the room, while the Baron is gloating]:** The Baron makes a gesture, and you hear the creak of leather as the mercenaries loosen their blades in their sheathes. "Ah, ah, no funny moves, now," warns the Baron.
    - **Event [first turn in the War Room, after the room description]:** Someone steps out of the shadows and walks over to stand between you and Pieter. The fire throws his shadow across the length of the room, huge and quivering.

"You know, it's funny," says Baron Fossville, "when I first began planning this venture, I always assumed that you would be the *easiest* obstacle to take care of."

* + - **Event [second turn in the War Room]:** "Poisoning your father, now *that* was easy." The baron laughs. "Took a lot of patience. Bit by bit, for weeks and months. So many servants to bribe. But the old fool never suspected a thing. Thought he was only sick until the very end."

He glares at you, eyes glowing in the fire light. "Would that I'd been as patient with you."

* + - **Event [third turn in the War Room]:** Fossville smiles. "But all that's done with now. Once I realized that you were being manipulated into making your *own* play for the throne—" He stops and glances at you. "You *do* realize you're being manipulated, don't you? No one *really* thinks gutter-trash like you has a legitimate claim to the throne, no matter who your father was; your "backers" are just using you as a pawn to further their own political ends. Where was I?" He pauses, scratching his chin. "Ah, yes. Once I realized what you were up to, I knew you would show up here. And now this tiresome little game is nearly over, but for a few loose ends."

He holds out his hand. "The letter, please."

* + - **Event [one turn after he asks for the map, if you don't give it to him]:** "Please let's not draw this out, Jack," sighs the Baron. "Your father's letter, proof of your heritage. I know you have it. Give it to me."
    - **Event [two turns after he asks for the map, if you don't give it to him]:** The Baron rolls his eyes. "Oh, for the love of – hold her, please?"

The mercenaries seize you and pin your arms behind your back, while the Baron subjects you to a rough and undignified search. "You bring this on yourself," he growls, "always insisting on doing things the hard way… ah-*ha!*" He finds the letter hidden in a fold of your gown and yanks it free.

*He didn't find the dagger*, you think. *I still have that.*

* + - **Command** **[give Fossville the letter when he asks for it]:** Bitterly, you hand over the Duke's letter.

"Thank you," says Fossville. "You see how much easier things are when you're cooperative?"

* + - **Event** **[turn after Fossville has the letter]:** Fossville holds the letter up to the light, shaking his head slightly as he reads the old words. "Such a nuisance," he mutters. "Can't imagine why I bothered to keep it all these years. Well, let it be a lesson." And without another word, he walks over to the fireplace and tosses the letter in.

The dry parchment catches instantly, flares up – and it's gone. Your history, your heritage, your one shot at a world beyond the crumbling orphanage and the back alleys of the city – your *life* – gone in a flash and a swirl of ashes up the chimney. The shock of it hits you like a punch in the gut.

Fossville draws his sword and admires its blade, glowing in the firelight. He smiles as he approaches you, raising his weapon. "And now there's just one last – eh?" He stops, looks to the door.

You can hear shouting outside, the sound of metal ringing on metal.

[letter is removed from play; begin Scene XIII]

## Chapter XIV – The War Room

### Map



### Rundown

### Notes

### Design

* + **Event [after Baron burns the letter]:** Suddenly the door bursts open – a mercenary staggers backwards into the room, crashes into the table – men rush in, shouting, swords flashing –

Your breath catches in your throat.

*It's Bobby!*

"Jack! Behind me!" he shouts, slamming his fist into a mercenary's face. He flashes you that devil-may-care grin of his before slashing his way into the room, making a beeline for Baron Fossville.

* + **Description of War Room while fight is going on:** The room has become a chaos of shouting voices and ringing steel.
  + **Command [leaving the room]:** The hallway is filled with men fighting, Bobby's reinforcements against the Baron's mercenaries. Both sides are so intent on hacking each other to pieces, you'd never get through. [if Pieter is still tied] Besides, you can't leave Pieter tied up!
  + **Command [attacking the Baron]:** You try to get close enough to get in a jab with your dagger, but Bobby pushes you back just as the Baron's backswing nearly takes off [your eye/your ear/your hand/your head]. "No, Jack!" he yells, "Leave him to me!"
  + **Command [talk to Bobby]:** So many questions fill your throat that you can't get them out: *What are you doing here? Where have you been? How did you survive?* But there's no time to talk, now – Bobby is fighting for his life!
  + **Every turn until you free Pieter:** Pieter [struggles desperately against his bonds/strains against the ropes holding him/shouts unintelligibly through his gag].
  + **First turn after Bobby bursts in:** Fossville brings his own sword up and parries Bobby's cut with a resounding *clang*. "Goddesses curse it, I thought I was done with you, spy," growls the Baron. "Doesn't anyone stay dead anymore?"

"I'm sure you won't have any trouble," Bobby snaps.

* + **Second turn after Bobby bursts in, if Pieter is not yet free:** Fossville counterattacks, slashing brutally at Bobby's face. Bobby falls back, parrying each blow, until his back hits the edge of the table. "Give it up, Fossville!" pants Bobby. "You are guilty of murdering the Duke! Your bid for the throne is over!"

The Baron roars and brings his sword up for a killing blow, but Bobby jumps up onto the table, rolls over it, and lands on the other side. He's breathing hard – perhaps the Baron is a better swordsman than Bobby had anticipated.

* + **Third turn after Bobby bursts in, if Pieter is not yet free:** The two swords clash and clash again. Fossville pushes Bobby back, back across the room, this time backing him towards the roaring fireplace. Bobby is a skilled fighter, but he's losing ground before the Baron's fury. Flames lick the edge of his cloak as he staggers back against the mantelpiece.

You have to do something!

* + **Fourth turn after Bobby bursts in, if Pieter is not yet free:** The Baron feints, then strikes Bobby across the face with his pommel. Bobby's sword clatters to the floor and he falls to his knees. Pieter slumps helplessly against his bonds, groaning with dismay.

"It's over, spy," snarls the Baron as he steps forward, sword raised.

[trigger final scene]

* + **Command [free/untie Pieter; cut ropes]:** Working quickly, you saw through the ropes holding Pieter. "Thank you," he gasps, rubbing feeling back into his wrists. Then he grabs up the sword of a fallen mercenary and rushes to Bobby's aid.

Bobby and Pieter fight side by side, attacking one after the other so that the Baron has no chance to counter. He falls back before their onslaught, stumbles… and then he turns and runs out the door, calling for his mercenaries to defend him.

With a shout, Pieter gives chase. Bobby turns to you, grinning. "Wait for me here, Jack," he says. "We'll catch that villain quick enough, and then I'll explain everything." And then with a bound, he is gone.

[trigger final scene]

## Chapter X – The Princess

### Map



### Rundown

### Notes

### Design

* + At that moment, there is a sudden *crack* and a rumbling, and a cold draft rushes into the room, tugging at the flames in the fireplace and throwing the room into wildly pitching shadow.

Behind you, the map wall has opened to reveal a dark, cavernous passageway, and *more* men are rushing out – men dressed all in black, with dark hoods and scarves hiding their faces.

"That's her! Get her!" cries a voice. A young woman's voice. A voice you've heard before.

It happens so fast. Hands are on you, lifting you off your feet, wresting the dagger from your grasp, pulling you back into that dark, dark tunnel. The firelight falls away, shrinks down to a flickering, orange rectangle. The rumbling starts again, and the rectangle grows narrower, narrower…

"Don't worry," says the voice. "We're not going to, like, *hurt* you."

And then everything is black.

[end of game]