

• Small chapels to Tyr, Torm, Helm, and Tempus in the Golden Fortress itself. All are overseen by the aged Shield Brother Benitus (NG hm C12–Helm) with the help of various young priests of the respective faiths who have entered the Fortress.

• Shrines, some vacant but attended by itinerant priests, exist here to nearly every other god in the Realms.

**Notable Rogues & Thieves' Guilds:** Few thieves stay long in Eshpurta, given the overwhelming military presence. (Some thieves, however, are employed by the military as scouts, spies, commandos, and saboteurs.) The Shadow Thieves here operate some festhalls, gambling houses, and loan sharks that cater to the soldiers. If any of these businesses gains prominence in reports from his men, the general targets those places for "unfortunate accidents" during siege-weapons drills.

**Equipment Shops:** Full [all items on PHB/DMG lists of 500 gp or less].

#### Adventurers' Quarters:

• House of the Iron Rose. Boarding house: caters exclusively to military officers and rich adventurers. Quality/Price: Excellent/Expensive.

• Three Roldons. Tavern: lavish, quiet, noted for discretion (curtained booths and private rooms). The halfling proprietor allows in only those on the current social register of Eshpurta. Quality/Price: Good/Expensive.

• Knight's Detente. Festhall/inn loud, rowdy place for soldiers

only (or anyone who can arm wrestle Xom, the half-orc bouncer (Str 18/66), for more than five seconds). Quality/Price: Poor/Moderate.

• The Hamstrung Giant. Inn/tavern: warm, friendly atmosphere, great food, and an equal mix of merchants, artists, and soldiers. Quality/Price: Good/Moderate.

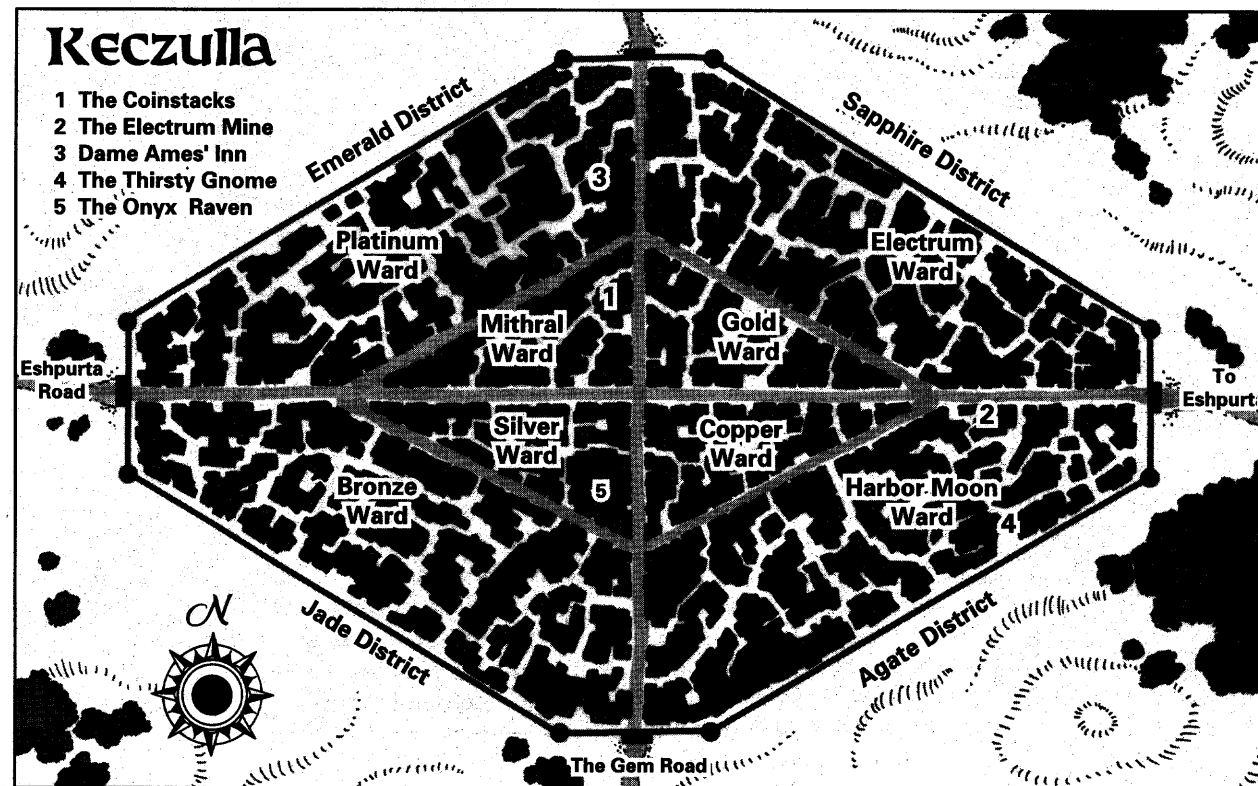
• The Roots of the Earth (a.k.a. "The Roots"). Tavern: This unorthodox shrine to Grumbar on the eastern edge of the town is a rough-and-ready tavern that caters to mine workers. Former miner, tavern owner, and new convert Torgan Minerson (LN hm C1–Grumbar) retells the tale of his visions while trapped in a cave-in. Quality/Price: Poor/Cheap.

**Notable Characters:** The Shield Council consists of:

• Lord Marcos Craumerdaun (NE hm F0), uncle of the General. He is a great judge of horses and trainer of cavalry, but he cannot read people well enough to stay abreast of the cutthroat trade in Amn (and would have lost his seat on the Council but for his nephew).

• Lord Mikaal Dannihr (LE hm F0), aging head of a weak family in honor debt to the Vymmars, who own half the titles to Dannihr lands. Mikaal is the grandson of Rhinnom Dannihr (Amn's Iltarch), whom Mikaal and most other Dannihrs believe is dead.

• Lady Jazzomyn Gheldieg (LN hf F0), youngest niece of Curkon Gheldieg, cousin of Lady Tanislove of Athkatla, and master painter. She is trying to move her faltering but strong family into the art-and-collectibles trade.





- Lord Tanis Keltronn (NG hm C4—Tymora), a lesser cousin of the great Argrim family of Athkatla and a ruthless negotiator among the food and wine trades.

- Lord Jharvex Krimmevol (CE hm T6) has sat on the Shield Council for more than 30 years. He framed his youngest brother, Cahorl, for the murder of a young girl of the Zoar family; Jharvex absorbed his brother's lands while Cahorl fled to Tethyr and went mad. Jharvex is an uncle of Lord Aernos Krimmevol of Crimmor.

- Lord Bhaem Shumokh (CG hm B9), a kind-hearted musician and lute-maker whose small private fortune has bloomed in this unorthodox departure from his father's and family's blacksmithing and armor businesses.

- The Herald's representative in Eshpurta, Swanmantle is Ard Roton (LG hf W2), a respected worker in the academy.

## Keczulla(City)

Keczulla is a "dirt to diamonds" story twice over, a rarity even for Amn. Founded in the Year of the Breaching Bulette after gold and iron strikes along the Ridge were made by the Keczull clan (originally spelled "Kczull" and pronounced "zul"), the city became a ghost town 180 years later when the mines played out. People resettled Keczulla over 100 years ago, but it wasn't until the Year of the Harp (1355 DR), with Pulth Tanislove's newly discovered gem mines, that Keczulla truly came to life again. (Natives pronounce "Keczulla" as "ZUH-lah," sneering at those who call it

"KEK-zuh-lah.") The Gem Road connects it to Esmeltaran and beyond.

In the Year of the Saddle, seven Talontar released a virulent plague in the city of Keczulla that killed many from consumption. The perpetrators, located by an anonymous tip, could not be identified after the mobs were done with them. Some think at least two were members of Athkatlan high society.

**Who Rules:** Tarkas Thallavv the Gemayor (N hm W9), an effective manager, accountant, and public speaker who has kept Keczulla growing (with the Tanisloves' help, of course) for the past 15 years; he was once a family administrator for the Vinson family, but their influence has dwindled while his skills brought him up. He is also secretly a member of the Cowled Wizards, and he has a secret library of magical tomes beneath the Gemansion.

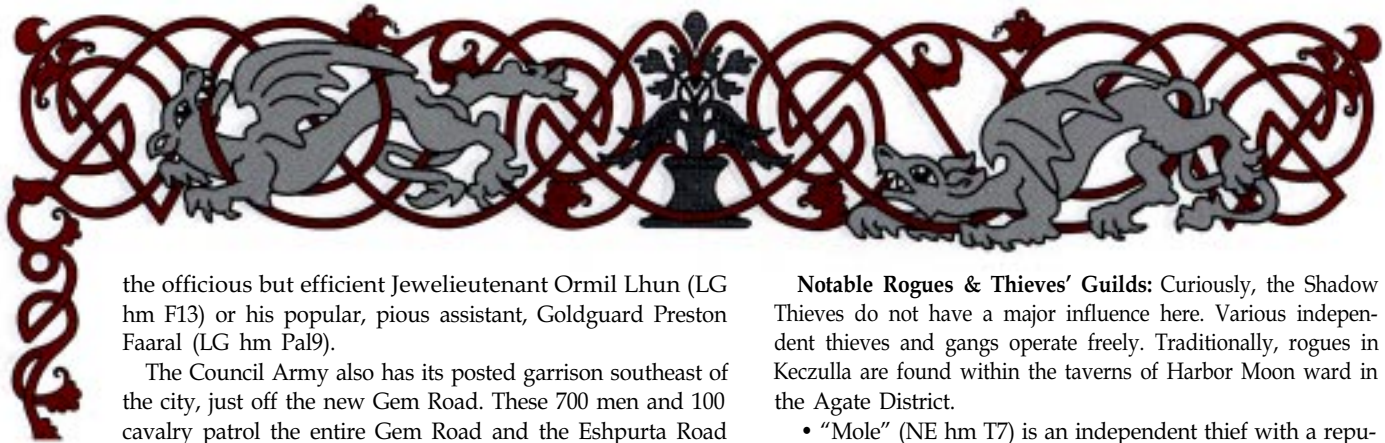
**Who Really Rules:** Lady Lhynvor Tanislove (LG hf R2) holds more sway than the Gemayor, but she politely supports and backs his long-standing rule, as did her father and brother (unlike the bullying Bladesmiles).

**Population:** 38,000 natives in city, with army garrison north of city (2,000 troops) and outlying farms and estates (4,000) for total of 45,000 (99% human).

**Major Products:** Gems (cut and raw), jewelry, precious metal ores, armor (for decoration, not defense).

**Armed Forces:** The Gem Guard, which polices the inner city and its immediate environs, stands 500 strong. Mercenaries and army help are available if deemed necessary by





the officious but efficient Jewelieutenant Ormil Lhun (LG hm F13) or his popular, pious assistant, Goldguard Preston Faaral (LG hm Pa19).

The Council Army also has its posted garrison southeast of the city, just off the new Gem Road. These 700 men and 100 cavalry patrol the entire Gem Road and the Eshpurta Road from Amnwater to the Axe Bridge. Luckily, the garrison commander is one of the army's best officers: Colonel Gladdos Wintosnip (LG hm F12), trained personally by General Labak Craumerdaun. The colonel refuses to entertain the whims of merchants at Esmeltaran, providing them with only a simple escort and guard to that city. This causes consternation among his men and political problems. Still, he is in charge of crack troops and the best cavalry in Amn, and this posting is almost as desired as Citadel Rashturl.

**Notable Mages:** With the Gemayor as its head, there is a small, secret cabal of mages within Keczulla who share a love of magic that is not appreciated by other Amnians. They meet north of the city in a small cave in the woods each month to share information, gossip, or new magic. These wizards are:

- Grammar Kelsidor (LN hm W9), a contemplative, quiet man from Silverymoon who was Pulth Tanislove's partner in a book shop, which he now maintains alone after his partner struck it rich in a gem mine;
- Sendak Whitebrow (LG hm Conj7), a fat, friendly baker from Silver Ward with a loud laugh (who learned magic from his mother, a recently deceased boarding house operator and senior Cowled Wizard);
- Eddricles (LE hm W5), an aloof moneychanger of Silver Ward whose eyesight is so keen he can appraise gems and detect microscopic flaws without a glass;
- Alil Xuvaq (N hm Div8), a master cartographer whose precise and careful map work and attention to details has made him rich—and whose bachelor status draws many young women who hope to help him found a family; and
- Kankin Asvessa (NG hem W2), the son of Cuvorkan Jilnhim [see "Notable Rogues & Thieves Guilds" below] and Branxa Asvessa (a barmaid at the Onyx Raven). Kankin is far more studious than both parents combined. He works in the Pearl Books booksellers under Grammar Kelsidor.

**Notable Clergy & Churches:** The majority of worship sites in Keczulla are small shrines to an assortment of human gods, and an equally small number of clerics and specialty priests in the city as well. Keczulla is one of the least religious communities in Amn, being too busy restoring its status and wealth to devote attention to "higher things." Only one major temple is in town:

- The Coinstacks, a temple to Tymora with three gold-shod towers in the Mithral Ward of Emerald District. Revered Luckmaster Tonnos (N hm P12—Tymora), an unassuming priest, is thankful for those who continue to revere the Luckgoddess through Keczulla's wild changes in fortune. One priest, Uvvana Tarsill (CG hf C3—Tymora), manages a gaming hall in the temple once each tenday.

**Notable Rogues & Thieves' Guilds:** Curiously, the Shadow Thieves do not have a major influence here. Various independent thieves and gangs operate freely. Traditionally, rogues in Keczulla are found within the taverns of Harbor Moon ward in the Agate District.

- "Mole" (NE hm T7) is an independent thief with a reputation for acquiring and trading or selling information.
- Cuvorkan Jilnhim is a well-known gemcutter and one of the few elves in Keczulla and environs. Few know he is also "Darkhawk" (LE em T12), a thief known for wire-walking, second-story work, and a taste for star rubies.
- The Kings' Tears is a rising organization of smugglers, fences, corrupt moneychangers, and pickpockets (all T1—7) secretly led by the Gem Guard's dispatcher, the fawning Cantos Riverhorn (NE hm T8), a cunning actor who took years establishing this cover and now diverts guard attachments when he can to keep his men from capture.

**Equipment Shops:** Full [all items on PHB/DMG lists of 500 gp or less].

**Adventurers' Quarters:**

- The Electrum Mine. Tavern: pleasant, noisy, but safe (rowdies are ejected by half-orc bouncers). This tavern is named for the so-called "electrum mines" outside town, which are actually closely pressed veins of gold and silver. Quality/Price: Good/Expensive.
- Dame Ames'. Inn: clean, old but solidly built, service and available food and drink exceptional. Quality/Price: Excellent/Expensive.
- The Thirsty Gnome. Tavern: rowdy, unkempt place with once-rich surroundings, noted place to meet thieves and smugglers. Quality/Price: Poor/Cheap.

**Notable Characters:**

- Lord Rhor Bladesmile (CE horn F8) is a bitter and angry soul, since the Tanisloves supplanted his family as the richest and most influential family in Keczulla.
- Lord Jonno Bladesmile (NG hm R6) understands but does not share his half-brother's hostility toward the Tanisloves. He buries himself in his work as a guide, tracker, and caravan guard, going often to Amnwater.
- Lady Lhynvor Tanislove (LG hf R2) reigns as the richest, most acclaimed person in town. (Her brother, Lord Pehllus Tanislove, has moved to Athkatla to manage his and his wife's holdings.) The nature-loving Lhynvor sponsors parties every few days to meet eligible men, but she has spumed them all.

**Important Features:** The four districts and their eight wards are: Emerald—Mithral & Platinum; Sapphire—Gold & Electrum; Jade—Silver & Bronze; Agate—Copper & Harbor Moon (a deliberate slam against Waterdeep). The lesser in value the gem or coin named, the lower the status of the address. Boundaries are marked with stone arches whose key stones have inset gems or trade bars (donated by the Tanislove mines) above their carved names. Anyone who removes a gem or bar from an arch is immediately executed, often by the observing party as Keczullans guard their new status jealously.



The Jewelers' Quarter of Keczulla (Emerald District, Platinum Ward) has the largest concentration of gems per square yard outside of any mine in the Realms, as they are cut, polished, and made into jewelry here. The main garrison of the city's Gem Guard is in a four-story tower at the center of this area.

## Other Sites

**The Axe and Star Bridges:** Given the rarity of dwarves in Amn, few humans or halflings recognize the stonework in the great bridges over the Vudlur and the Splendarrilur as dwarven. These two identical, massive bridges span those rivers at the highest flood stages. They were in use long before the Shoon Empire appeared, and only the barest hint of wear (primarily from wagon wheels over the past few centuries) can be found on their stones.

The two are known as the Star Bridge (western bridge) and the Axe Bridge (eastern bridge), named for the runes each shows on its rail stones facing the road. Dwarves and scholars who translated the barely visible runes on the bridges found that both date to the height of Shanatar. The Star Bridge was originally named the Karlyn Bridge for its clan's hero-king. (Few aside from Elminster or some scholars know the connection between the Wailing Dwarf and this lonely bridge.) The Axe Bridge has two names stamped on it, known either as the Clan Bridge or (after its clan) the Kuldelves Bridge. Both were built before the Fall of Karlyn's Vale and are nearly 7,000 years old.

**The Gem Road:** With the recent reversals of fortune in Keczulla, the Council of Six and Lord Pulth Tanislove negotiated to pay for a road from Esmeltaran to the now-prosperous city of Keczulla. Though Lord Pulth died only two years into the project, his son honored the contract, and the Gem Road has been open for four years to excellent traffic and increased prosperity for the two cities.

**Trollford:** Here, the South Road crosses the Amstel River outside Eshpurta. Given the strength and depth of the river and the steep Qadim hills, this is the only safe, shallow, flatland ford in the southern hills by which caravans can reach Eshpurta, rather than going 75 miles west or still farther east and north. This is the alleged location of the trolls' civilization before they were driven into the mountains; as evidence, people point to the preponderance of trolls reappearing every year or so in this area (ignoring the possibility that the trolls use the ford for the same reason the humans do). Every few years, prospectors and explorers search Trollford and the hills around it for buried magic or other treasures of the lost troll kingdom—to no avail.

**Troll Way:** Like all major trade roads, the South Road is known to local folk by different names along its length. The segment of the South Road from Eshpurta to Trollford is the Troll Way. Nearly every caravan or traveling group is escorted to the ford or beyond by troops in Eshpurta (for a small fee, of course).

## The Forest of Shadows

For thousands of years, Shilmista, the Forest of Shadows, sheltered the western slopes of the Snowflake Mountains, hiding the secrets of both trees and peaks. The bulk of the trees are oaks and tall elms, though a smattering of dusktops and pines are seen in the high forest on the mountainside. Amnians know that the forest forms the eastern boundary of the country and elves live in it, but little else. Attempts were made in the past, notably by Shoonite troops, to scout the region for gems or valuable minerals; these attempts were repelled by the elves and other forest denizens. Amnians today have no wish to disturb the elves, for they know what happens in response. "Unprofitable," they mutter, collecting wood elsewhere.

## Rivers

**River Valashar:** This river starts in the lower Snowflakes, inside the tree line of Shilmista. The headwaters plunge down the cliffs over three different falls and collect into a deep forest pool (rumored to have nereids in it) that then flows westward. The river Valashar is shallow and placid within 20 miles of Shilmista, but the wide, lazy river soon deepens from spring water along its route and picks up speed within 40 miles of Trollford, where it becomes the impassable Amstel River, which remains dangerous until 75 miles past Trollford.

## Shilmista

Amn knows little and cares less about the history and details of the elven forest of Shilmista. While the elves now trust outsiders a bit more, King Elbereth is not forthcoming with the lore of his people. Still, some basics are known about the region.

Like all forests, the Shilmista was once much larger, but many of its boughs have fallen before the axes, plows, and roads of humans. No longer, say the elves. With the incursions of Castle Trinity's forces in the Year of Maidens, the Shilmista elves declared no more trees or elves of the forest would die. Though not actively hunting humans and other non-elves, like the Eldreth Veluuthara to the south in the Forest of Mir, the Shilmista's elves hold the forest's boundaries sacred. The elves' numbers have dwindled over the centuries, and only a very small tribe remains.

Tethyr's new monarch has, through the High Scrivener at Soaring Spirit, made contact with the Shilmista elves, and more information on the forest and its denizens may be forthcoming. All that is known are the following notes, culled from reports of the Castle Trinity conflict.

**Bowgentle's Grove:** A surprising and recent discovery was made by High Scrivener Cadderly: The much-storied and loved Bowgentle the mage lies buried in a peaceful glade in the southern quadrant of the forest. One of the few outsiders to make friends with the elves, Bowgentle lived out the last