



Cormyr Royale: The Royal Court of the Forest Kingdom

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For fourteen and a half centuries, the Forest Kingdom of Cormyr has stood as the most shining example of human civilization in the Heartlands of Faerûn. This fertile, flourishing land is full of adventurous souls, great cities, and wondrous landscapes. Across the realm, however, squabbling nobles, scheming merchants, and power-mad wizards all vie for power. Only the strength of the Crown, its loyal agents, and the careful balance of power at the Royal Court has kept the Obarskys strong upon the Dragon Throne for so long.

The Royal Court of Cormyr is a nexus of power, intrigue, and status. Here, nobles advance their causes before the Crown, attempting to prove their loyalty and usefulness to the king. Yet at the same time, many secretly plot to depose the ruling Obarskys in favor of their own offspring or a council of ruling nobles. Despite these ongoing threats, the crowned heads of Cormyr—along with their able Royal Magicians—have maintained their power by the careful selection of officers and advisors who have the best interests of the kingdom at heart.

Presented here are two distinct incarnations of the Royal Court: that of the Steel Regent, Alusair Nacacia Obarskys, as it was on Midwinter in the Year of the Lost Keep (1379 DR); and that of Alusair's grand-nephew, King Foril Obarskys, exactly one hundred years later in the Year of the Ageless One (1479 DR).

COURT OF THE STEEL REGENT

The Steel Regent, Alusair Nacacia, rules in the name of her nephew, King Azoun V. The young king assumed the throne when his mother, Crown Princess Tanalasta, died in childbirth. His grandfather, King Azoun IV, had been killed only months before, defending Cormyr from a deadly invasion of orcs and goblins. Through the initial years of her regency, Alusair has grown into an able ruler, more trusted by the people to guide the realm than she once was.

REWRITING HISTORY

Although the events between the regency of Princess Alusair and the reign of King Foril are established in broad strokes in the timeline on page 17, feel free to alter or ignore events if you choose to play in this era or during the reign of Azoun V. Your campaign can deviate from the official events of the campaign setting to whatever extent is necessary to make the game fun and engaging. If something doesn't work for you and your players, change it!

Persons of the Royal Court

The Royal Court in the Cormyr capital of Suzail is a confusing and ever-changing array of nobles, courtiers, military officers, petitioners, and citizens who jockey for power, influence, or mere survival. Despite the uncertainty of their continued station, certain royals and courtiers are among those that any visitor to the Steel Regent's court knows—or should know—by reputation if not by sight.

Steel Regent Alusair Nacacia

Alusair Nacacia Obarskyr has served as the regent for her nephew, King Azoun V, since his birth. In those years, she has softened from a battle-hardened veteran of Cormyr's wars with the Tuigan Horde and the Devil Dragon into a different kind of soldier. Now, she spars verbally with nobles and emissaries from Sembia and Netheril, committed to protecting the Forest Kingdom and the Dragon Throne until Azoun is old enough to rule it in his own name.

Although she spends much of her time at court, Alusair maintains a cadre of warriors known as the Blades—a group of young nobles that rode with her during her father's reign. The Blades hunt together, rooting out threats to the kingdom. When these nobles inherit their family titles or rise to prominence in other fields, Alusair replaces them with loyal adventurers committed to Cormyr's defense.

The Steel Regent respects those who state their intentions openly, are loyal to Cormyr, and do not seek status or recognition for their acts. Loyalty and duty are virtues to be honored, and although ambition can be as keen a motivation as gold or title, Alusair prefers to deal with adventurers willing to serve Cormyr for its own sake.

Filfaeril Selazair, the Dowager Dragon Queen

The widow of Azoun IV has survived the death of her husband, her infant son, and her eldest daughter, only to see her sole remaining child rule in the name of her grandson. Filfaeril endured much in her years as Queen of Cormyr, but carries herself now with grace as the nation's Dowager Dragon Queen.

As intelligent and observant as she is beautiful, Filfaeril retains all the influence she wielded during her husband's reign, maintaining a tight hold on those nobles who remain skeptical that Alusair can properly guide the realm. The Dowager Dragon Queen also maintains strong ties with the Harpers,

and has fostered a small coterie of loyal agents (see “Eye on the Realms: Queen Filfaeril's Blades” in *Dungeon* 187).

At court, Filfaeril divides her time between hearing the complaints of courtiers and nobles who do not believe Alusair will address their concerns, quietly and firmly supporting her daughter, or fending off suggestion that either she or Alusair should marry. Whenever possible, she publicly declares that the Steel Regent, the Royal Magician Caladnei, or the War Wizard Laspeera are better suited to hear the voices of the people than an aging matron focused on raising a grandson to be a worthy king of Cormyr. Despite such attempts to disengage, the realm knows that Filfaeril's commands are to be obeyed without question. When the Dowager Queen speaks, she does so for the Crown.

King Azoun V

The King of Cormyr is a handsome, intelligent, and increasingly foolhardy seven-year-old boy who questions all authority and thinks himself the master of all he surveys. As it happens, the boy-king is half correct, although it will be years before anyone will respect him enough to obey him as anything more than a spoiled and entitled royal.

Azoun spends his days receiving tutoring in history from Alaphondar, Cormyr's Sage Royal, and in etiquette by Laspeera. His favorite hours are spent in combat training with his aunt Alusair, who intersperses his lessons with tales of famous battles, military tactics, and Cormyr's kings.

The Steel Regent, the Royal Magician, and the Dowager Dragon Queen work tirelessly to ensure that no one whose loyalty and intentions they have not thoroughly tested is permitted access to the young king. Any attempt to speak to him alone is treated as a possible threat to the Dragon Throne and Azoun's life.

Caladnei, Royal Magician

Since the retirement of her predecessor, the legendary Vangerdahast, Caladnei has slowly shed her reputation as an upstart, outlander mage. The daughter of Thabrant Swordsilver, a Cormyrian woodcarver who made his home and life in distant Turmish, Caladnei has long had to dodge rumors that she is the former lover, or the illegitimate daughter, or the magic construct of Vangerdahast. Despite such distractions, she has earned the respect of the War Wizards who serve under her and the nobles who owe fealty to the Dragon Throne.

Like Filfaeril, Caladnei works closely with the Harpers to seek out and unveil enemies of the Crown and threats to Cormyr. With little interest in matters at court, she has even less patience for diplomacy and protocol than the Steel Regent does. As a former adventurer, the Royal Magician sees the value of chartered, Crown-licensed heroes roaming the realm. Such characters are given free reign to explore Cormyr's wilds and ruins, driving out threats that would otherwise distract the Purple Dragons and the War Wizards from their more important tasks.

Laspeera Naerinth, Lady Eveningspire

Laspeera is variably known as Lady Naerinth, Lady Inthré (the family name of her husband, Wizard of War Aundable Inthré), or Lady Eveningspire (after the lands granted her by Azoun IV). The owner of the prestigious girls' school known as the House of Grace, she is a powerful spellcaster and the second-in-command of the War Wizards, answering only to Caladnei, Filfaeril, and the Steel Regent. All other officers of the realm—as well as most nobles, wise courtiers, and all but the most foolhardy of commoners—obey her orders.

Given the Royal Magician's discomfort with official matters, Laspeera has assumed most of the duties associated with Caladnei's role as Court Wizard. She

holds the first chair at gatherings of the Council of Mages, addresses magical issues of concern to the Steel Regent, maintains the rolls of the kingdom's registered mages, and suggests ways in which the Crown's magical pursuits might better serve the realm. Unofficially, Laspeera guides adventurers who find their way to court, easing the paths of those she sees as a potential benefit to Cormyr. She likewise finds ways to stymie the efforts of the greedy, the grasping, or the ineffectual.

Lady Eveningspire recently shocked the last gathering of the Council of Mages when she unexpectedly went into labor, delivering her first child—a daughter, Alazne. Using magic, Laspeera had managed to conceal her pregnancy, catching the court entirely by surprise.

Alaphondar, Sage Royal

With more than four decades of service, Alaphondar is perhaps the longest tenured courtier in Suzail. Certainly, he is the most trusted servant of the Crown among both the nobility and the royal family. Although he possesses a rudimentary magical knowledge, Alaphondar is one of the few members of Alusair's inner circle with no experience either as a soldier or a War Wizard. The Sage Royal's opinion is thus grounded in the lessons of history and long years of study. Kind, intelligent, and tactfully honest, Alaphondar is capable of bringing insight into most matters. Unburdened by worry for his position, the Sage Royal can coolly assess any situation, navigating the most difficult challenges analytically rather than passionately.

Unknown to most—although whispered by many—Alaphondar has become the lover of Dowager Queen Filfaeril in the years following her husband's death. Their affection is borne of a sense of duty and mutual fondness, and though he has loved Filfaeril for years, Alaphondar accepts that the late king remains foremost in her heart.

Alaphondar can be trusted to give frank, direct advice to newcomers at court regarding how to behave and the proper protocol for any particular situation. Failure to heed his advice prompts the Sage Royal to cease offering it.

Myrmeen Lhal, Lady of Arabel

The long-serving master of the city of Arabel is a veteran warrior and ranger, and a worshiper of Tymora. After thirty years, Myrmeen is growing tired of her position, and is slowly transitioning her life to Suzail. Though she prefers the remote country closer to Arabel and the Stonelands, recent events have changed her outlook and goals. The birth of her son, Ganrion; the marriage of her adopted daughter Krystin to Warden Dauneth Marliir; and the birth of Krystin and Dauneth's daughter, Nalara, have all convinced Myrmeen that her proper place is closer to the capital, to her family, and to her dear friend and favored sparring partner, Alusair.

To this end, Myrmeen has petitioned the Crown to find a replacement for her as Lord of Arabel (her official title). Although she still awaits the blessing of the Dragon Throne to retire from her position, Myrmeen has already begun moving her household to Suzail, and has vested more authority in her herald, Westar.

At court, Myrmeen remains quiet regarding most matters, preferring to give the Steel Regent the enjoyable task of putting nobles and adventurers in their place.

Dauneth Marliir, High Warden of the Eastern Marches

A capable strategist, even if a less than formidable soldier, Dauneth Marliir has risen sharply in the estimation of the Crown in recent years. Formerly a bumbling, well-meaning courtier and younger son of House Marliir, the Warden of the Eastern Marches has thoroughly impressed the important figures at

court with his acumen. Some now whisper that he will soon be appointed High Marshal of the kingdom. Alusair in particular is impressed with Dauneth's ability to shut up, listen to his sword captains, and make the best decisions for the realm.

Dauneth continually seeks skilled adventurers willing to brave the northeast frontier of Cormyr, beyond the easy reach of the Purple Dragons. He believes that small, experienced groups of such characters can be more useful than whole companies of inexperienced soldiers trained for battle but not for exploration.

Formerly a suitor for the affections of Crown Princess Tanalasta, Dauneth recently married the daughter of the Lady of Arabel. The couple have a

daughter, Nalara. Although the seat of the Marliirs' power is in Arabel, Dauneth has decided to make his family's home in Suzail, to better serve the realm.

Sthavar, Lord Magister of Suzail

Always keeping a respectful distance from the royal family, Sthavar is content to perform his duty to the Crown on a purely professional level. Sthavar has served as Suzail's Lord Magister for decades, keeping order in a city rife with grasping nobles, greedy merchants, and disruptive adventurers.

An efficient, capable administrator, Sthavar happily antagonizes the merchants of Suzail, resisting calls to raze homes in the poorer districts so as to expand the city's docking warehouses. Despite his

role in ruling Suzail in the name of the Dragon Throne, Sthavar has no official duties at court, and he prefers to keep it that way. Unlike other local lords, he has no responsibility for chartering adventurers, and cheerily refers characters seeking such sanction to the High Warden.

Smiling Traitors

Cormyr's long history is littered with enemies and traitors—spurned nobles, turncoat soldiers, ambitious War Wizards, and worse. The Steel Regency is no exception.

Ingo Siegur

Most Purple Dragons consider only two acceptable ends to their careers—to die in defense of the kingdom, or to retire to home, farm, and family in the backwoods of Cormyr. Not so for the scout Ingo Siegur. Despite his love of falconry, hunting, and tracking in the wild places of Cormyr, the Suzail-raised warrior has always preferred the safe enclosure of the city's walls to the cold blanket of the night sky.

Long into his retirement, Ingo has finally found love in the guise of a young lass named Fadlimi. Slender and darkly beautiful, she constantly begs Ingo for stories of his service, which he patiently relates. Tactics, formations, secret passwords, the locations of supply caches and serviceable weapons, and other bits of trivia have all been shared.

Siegur has no idea that Fadlimi is not an innocent admirer, but is gathering information for the Sons of Gondegal (see below). She plans to use this information for an eventual infiltration of the King's Forest, from which the Sons of Gondegal plan to conquer Arabel. If presented with this fact without proof, Ingo (a human knife fighter from *Monster Manual 2*) will defend Fadlimi (a doppelganger assassin from the *Monster Manual*) to the death, unable to believe that she would betray him.

THE ROYAL CHILDREN

For the first time in years, a number of children wander the court of Suzail, protected by the most capable War Wizards, Purple Dragons, and Highknights in the kingdom. King Azoun, who is approaching his eighth birthday, is described on page 2. Other important children at court include the following.

Alazne Inthré: The daughter of Laspeera Naerinth and Aundable Inthré is less than a year old, but stares about the Council of Mages with intense blue eyes that show off the intelligence of a child much older. As the offspring of a pair of middle-aged wizards—one the second in command of the War Wizards and the most respected mage in the kingdom, the other a powerful spellcaster in his own right—Alazne is watched carefully by courtiers.

Ganrahast: Known throughout the kingdom as Ganrion, the son of Lady Myrmeen is a quiet boy of

five with crimson hair and soft brown eyes. Unknown to most, the boy's father is former Royal Magician Vangerdahast. Myrmeen has chosen (on the advice of Laspeera) to conceal Ganrahast's heritage until his aptitude for magic is known. Given the attention focused on the young Alazne Inthré, this caution seems more than justified.

Nalara Marliir: The future of the five-year-old Nalara Marliir is more fiercely debated than that of any other child at court except Azoun. The daughter of the High Warden of the Eastern Marches spends much of her time at court clinging to the skirts of her grandmother, Myrmeen Lhal. Nalara watches with night-black eyes as nobles debate which of their own heirs will marry her when she comes of age, raising that husband's family higher in the estimation of the Dragon Throne.

Nuad Culbran

A powerful wizard of unknown age, Nuad Culbran is a respected alarphon (a spellcaster dedicated to internal security) among the War Wizards. He is also

a Zhentarim mage named Estev, who slaughtered the true Culbran months ago and has assumed his position. One of the few Zhents to have found a way of thwarting the powerful mind-reading magic wielded

by Laspeera and Caladnei, Estev has already caused the deaths of two other War Wizards, each of whom he convinced to accuse the other of treason against the Crown.

“Nuad” prefers to avoid direct confrontation, instead coercing other characters to confront one another. If necessary, he dominates lesser minds to lead loyal Cormyrians astray. He has successfully allowed other Zhents to infiltrate the Royal Court, though he does not protect them if they fail in their espionage. He anxiously awaits the day when he can stand over the shattered bodies of the royal family, the flag of the Black Network flying over the palace.

Though Estev does not particularly enjoy combat, he is a formidable foe (use the human mind adept from the *DARK SUN*® *Creature Catalog* or the *D&D Insider Compendium*), capable of turning the most experienced characters against themselves.

THE COUNCIL OF MAGES

This group of wizards advises on the use of magic in the name of the Dragon Throne, shaping the laws that control magical wrongdoing in the Forest Kingdom. Laspeera chairs these monthly meetings in Caladnei's name (Caladnei, as Court Wizard, is the official head of the council but is often absent). The council hears the concerns of the arcane casters of the realm, in addition to considering applicants hoping to join the War Wizards. Some of the other noteworthy mage-councilors of Cormyr include the following.

Tsharlura of Blackthorne: This aging wizard dwells in a tower west of Eveningstar and specializes in practical applications of magic. A firm believer in correct and deliberative spellcasting, Tsharlura is shown great respect by the Crown. When Vangerdahast was faced with hot-tempered young mages inadvertently threatening to destroy half of the King's Forest testing new magic, Tsharlura is the one to whom the Royal Magician pointed and said, “You see how the wisdom of ages cools the temper and slows eagerness? That is the kind of mage Cormyr needs.”

Aundable Inthré: The husband of Laspeera is a powerful mage in his own right. Aundable is one of many council mages who analyze Cormyr's defenses and weaknesses, strengthening the former and mitigating the latter. Although he does not often speak at council meetings, Aundable makes it a point to attend them all, even if he sometimes magically records the proceedings while his thoughts wander to new spells and other distractions.

Argûl Marammas: Resident of Suzail, planar explorer, crafter of magic scrolls, and lover of fine seafood, Argûl uses his magical power to support his expensive travels and diet. He believes that magic is best used as a tool for collecting knowledge, not as a power to be used for gathering more power, to dominate others, or to slay one's enemies. He uses the Council of Mages as an avenue for finding others of like mind, for hearing of the planar travels and magical discoveries of others, and for briefing the Crown on potential extraplanar threats.

Filani of Tantras and Tilverton: An expert on Moon-sea history and the politics of the Dragon Reach, Filani lived in Tilverton until that city's destruction. She now attends meetings of the council as a means to find new clients for her knowledge and expertise, and to learn of new mages who have recently arrived in Suzail.

Maxer Hlar, Defender of Suzail: A powerful evoker who once defeated four dragons simultaneously attacking Suzail, Maxer is a baron extraordinary of the realm and can command any Purple Dragon as though possessing an officer's rank. He is silent during most council meetings, but when he speaks, his experience and wisdom afford him the attention of all in attendance. His voice during the official business of a meeting often heralds warnings of grave danger to the realm, and has twice led to tense moments when Maxer was simply clearing his throat.

Court Intrigues

Numerous intrigues swirl around the Dragon Throne at all times, plaguing the Royal Court with gossip and innuendo. Such rumors and whispered accusations should be carefully assessed by characters at court.

Churches Royal

Before her death, Crown Princess Tanalasta adopted the worship of Chauntea, declaring the faith of the Earthmother to be a Church Royal (a title designating its institutional support by a member of the monarch's immediate family). Since Tanalasta's death, the church of Chauntea has struggled to maintain its status. Its worshipers must contend with the faiths of Tempus and Tyr (both worshiped by the late Azoun IV), in addition to three faiths—of Sune, Siamorphe, and Tymora—whose followers seek the patronage of the Dowager Queen.

No living member of the royal family has declared any new Church Royal in the aftermath of the uproar



created by Tanalasta's declaration. However, this does not prevent a church's powerful followers from openly soliciting noble and royal support.

A Young Court

Most members of the court look on all political or personal developments as either obstacles or opportunities. Whether in the name of wealth, influence, or title, observant courtiers and nobles are constantly on the lookout for any advantage. This is particularly true of the presence of so many young nobles at court.

Older nobles see these influential younglings as possible pawns and targets for strategic marriage. Courtiers view them as potential patrons and supporters, ready to keep them comfortably employed long into old age. Nobles with less honorable intentions attempt to sow seeds of dissent in young minds, hoping to use this dissent to one day tear the kingdom asunder.

A Marriageable Princess

Throughout her life, Alusair has faced attempts to make her a more suitable princess, whether by forcing her to dress as a proper noble, by discouraging activities such as riding and swordplay, or by marrying her off to a respectable noble in order that she might produce Obarskyr heirs and settle her wild ways. Such attempts have always failed, but this has not stopped the senior families of the realm, veteran courtiers, and even Caladnei and Filfaeril from seeking out men who the Steel Regent might accept as a suitor. Quiet rumors around court whisper that Alusair is barren, and thus incapable of creating the heirs that Cormyr needs. However, this has merely narrowed the field of suitors to those less interested in Alusair's offspring than they are in the rumors of her more bawdy escapades.

The Five Ladies

Since Alusair's regency began, she has worked to gather advisors she can trust, including her mother Filfaeril, the Dowager Queen; the Royal Magician Caladnei; the War Wizard Laspeera; and Myrmeen Lhal, Lady of Arabel. With Myrmeen's inevitable move to Suzail, some courtiers have taken to calling this group the Five Ladies of Cormyr, a formidable gathering of women bound by duty, family, and trust. Such courtiers feel—quite correctly—that the opinions of these women will be paramount in determining both the fate of the kingdom and the future of specific courtiers, nobles, and officers of the Purple Dragons. To raise the ire of any one of these women is to risk the enmity of the most powerful people in the kingdom.

The Silvers Ascendant

After the Obarskyr line, Cormyr has three “royal” families—the Crownsilvers, the Huntsilvers, and the Truesilvers, all descended from the Silver brothers whose offspring married into the Obarskyr clan. Since the death of Azoun IV, the three Silver houses have grown dramatically in influence and wealth, capitalizing on mercantile opportunities and overly public acts of loyalty to the Crown.

Many of the nobles of the realm are jealous of these ascendant stars. Rumors speak of plots that might see at least one of these august houses fall, rapidly and dramatically, in the near future.

Threats

Threats to Alusair's court do not originate only from treacherous nobles or ambitious merchants. Cormyr faces many dangers that must be dealt with before they become too large to manage.

Creeping Red

Nearly a decade after the fact, the Steel Regent remains furious in response to the establishment of a sovereign Thayan enclave in Marsember. The presence of Red Wizards on Cormyrian soil is taken by some as a sign that the Crown is losing its ability to challenge the power of the Spice Lords who control the city.

Flaming Knives of Westgate

Following their exile from Cormyr, the members of House Bleth fled to the city of Westgate. There, they took up with the Fire Knives, reestablishing that band of assassins in the hope of eventually taking vengeance on the Obarskyrs. With the Night Masks thieves' guild exerting greater control over both the Fire Knives and Westgate, the leaders of the Bleth family have turned their sights back on Cormyr. They might not strike immediately, but the Bleths have long memories, and are more than willing to wait to take down the royal family and install one of their own on the Dragon Throne.

Sons of Gondegal

Some thirty years ago, a war chief known as Gondegal rode into the northeastern reaches of Cormyr, conquering both Tilverton and Arabel. Although he held these lands for less than a tenday, he cemented himself both in Cormyr's history and the imagination of its people.

A group of brigands has recently taken up Gondegal's standard (a gray wolf's head with red eyes) and is menacing farms and caravans between Arabel and the Shadow Gap. Warden Marliir has yet to capture

these Sons of Gondegal, but he has assured Alusair that their heads will decorate her parlor in time.

Unknowing Rebel

Despite her years of service, Caladnei is still seen as a foreign threat by some, who have asked, demanded, or begged Alusair to reconsider her appointment as Royal Magician. The Steel Regent has steadfastly refused, but some mages and former War Wizards continue to plot against Caladnei. These agents are plotting to force her into magical combat, hoping to slay and replace her with the native-born Laspeera. Lady Eveningspire has no knowledge of this plot, however, and the conspirators work hard to keep it that way, wanting her to be able to deny any involvement if they are revealed.

The Zhentarim Threat

The Zhentarim have finally obtained what they have long wished for—capable agents successfully ensconced in Cormyr's Royal Court. They dare not strike by the favored, time-tested means of poison or murder, knowing that the War Wizards have far too many means of protecting against such threats. Thus, these agents bide their time, fanning the flames of rebellion and noble unrest, and learning what they can as they wait for a time to strike.

Adventure Hooks

Not every adventure involves slogging through dungeons and facing down savage threats. The plots and intrigues of Suzail's court and palace can be just as dangerous as the threats found in any ancient ruin.

A Dissembling Wizard

The characters are approached by one of Cormyr's War Wizards, who hopes to root out a traitor within the court. As they investigate, the characters discover that the traitor they seek is, in fact, a loyal courtier. The real enemy is the War Wizard, who wants to discredit those who support Caladnei as Royal Magician. The heroes must tread carefully as they try to expose the well-connected wizard, exonerate the accused courtier, and discover who else at court the traitorous War Wizard has turned to his cause.

Murder at Court

The characters are called on to investigate a murder within the palace. However, they must do so using only their wits and experience, since weapons and magic are prohibited on palace grounds. An extended skill challenge or other type of roleplaying encounter allows the characters to flush out the killer. Complicating their efforts are nobles who want the characters to use their unfettered access in the palace to deliver messages to certain people, gather information, or distract important courtiers from their assigned tasks.

Portals Away

After discovering a strange relic of Cormyr's past, the heroes are invited to the palace. As they wander its halls, they find themselves stepping through a keyed portal that flares suddenly to life around them. The relic they carry is the secret key to the forgotten portal, which leads them to an ancient extradimensional space constructed by the legendary Sword Heralds—fanatical warriors sworn to guard the Obarskyr line.

KING FORIL'S COURT

In the Year of the Ageless One, the court of King Foril Obarskyr is a stable, bustling place. Thirty years into his reign, Foril rules over a peaceful kingdom. Cormyr's influence has expanded west and south around the Dragonmere, and Foril's courtiers are dedicated to increasing the prosperity of both the realm and its dependent territories.

THE FUTURE OF THE COURT

The information in this section establishes the Royal Court around Midwinter in the Year of the Ageless One (1479 DR), the period of the *FORGOTTEN REALMS® Campaign Guide*. Further insights regarding the court and its people during the reign of Foril Obarskyr can be found in the Ed Greenwood novels *Elminster Must Die* and *Bury Elminster Deep*.

Persons of the Royal Court

King Foril attempts to keep the most capable and trustworthy advisors close at hand, resulting in the frequent reassignment of officers and courtiers as he deems them better suited for other tasks. However, the important figures in his court remain more or less constant.

King Foril

His Royal Majesty King Foril Rhigaerd Dhalmass Obarskyr has ruled Cormyr since the death of his father thirty years ago. As a second son, Foril's youth was spent in scholarly pursuits, including a basic study of magic. Learning the structures and traditions of the Purple Dragons has shaped his opinion of Cormyr's military. The death of his brother and wife in

the years preceding the wars with Sembia made Foril a deliberate, cautious ruler. Every action and decision must be made against the possibility that it might foment a war that Cormyr is not yet ready to fight.

Foril has actively molded the War Wizards into a more militant force than they were in generations past. His hope is that when war inevitably returns to Cormyr, the War Wizards will march side by side with the Purple Dragons as magic artillery, in addition to their accepted role as spies and agents fighting internal threats to the realm.

Approaching the end of his reign at age seventy, Foril nonetheless ignores numerous entreaties for him to abdicate in favor of his son, Irvel. Though the people see the crown prince as a heroic figure, Foril knows that the nobility view Irvel as naive and easily manipulated.

King Foril is patient with servants of the Crown whose loyalty is clear. However, that tolerance wanes when dealing with those who overstep their authority or presume to speak in his name. He is less generous with titles and praise than his father was, preferring instead to reward faithful nobles and courtiers with greater opportunities to serve the realm.

Crown Prince Irvel

Irvel Duar Palaghard Obarskyr is the son of King Foril and the late Princess Jemra, and the Crown Prince of the Forest Kingdom. A tall, bearded man who favors both the look and the boldness of the kings of old, Irvel is beloved of his people for his courage, his approachability, and his promise to build a brighter future for Cormyr.

Crown Prince Irvel is the high commander of Cormyr's military forces, though he does not hold the title of High Marshal. He loves—and is loved by—his wife, his children, his soldiers, and his nation. Some believe he will take the name of one of the former kings of Cormyr at his eventual coronation, hoping to reflect the devotion that the first Duar or Palaghard inspired in the inhabitants of the Forest Kingdom.



A kind, boisterous man, Irvel loves strong drink (though he is not prone to drunkenness) and the company of beautiful women. He has sworn that he will never break his vows of marriage to his wife of three decades. However, some whisper that Prince Irvel interprets the finer points of those vows more loosely than his father or grandfather.

The Princess Ospra

The Crown Prince's wife is the radiantly beautiful Ospra Goldfeather, daughter of a house that rises and falls in the Crown's favor every century or two. Though a skilled politician, the princess Ospra has little ability to manipulate her husband. However, she has become the darling of King Foril, who listens to her counsel nearly as readily as he does his own son's.

Princess Ospra is of the last branch of the Goldfeather house. Her father, Ordmann Goldfeather (called "Old Man Goldfeather" by most), his sister Adenia, and Adenia's children Maranth and Varauna are the last blood members of that august family of servants and traitors to the Crown.

Ospra remains largely quiet at court, even as her cold blue eyes watch everyone and everything. Many make the mistake of considering Ospra nothing more than a pretty plaything for her powerful husband, but she is as good an agent in the observation of noble treachery as any Highknight.

Like Queen Filfaeril of old, Ospra has managed to gather to her side loyal warriors and agents willing to serve Cormyr without expectation of recognition or reward. The princess is always seeking new recruits to her cause, and she expects that when her father-in-law finally meets his end, the number of those loyal to her will grow substantially.

Prince Baerovus

Only twenty-five years of age, Baerovus Azoun Obarskyr is the son of Crown Prince Irvel and Princess Ospra, and is second in the line of succession. A slim,

meek young man, Baerovus hides his features behind his long hair whenever he is not making a public appearance with the royal family.

Baerovus enjoys his large stable of light horses (the Calimite is by far his favorite breed), and he is known to care for wounded animals he finds during royal hunts. The prince has no love for magic or for the battlefield. He is nearly useless with any blade longer than a hunting knife, though his skill with a bow is said to exceed that of anyone else in the royal family.

Baerovus does not relish the idea of ruling Cormyr. Though he will not abdicate if the crown falls to him, he secretly hopes that his father lives a long, healthy life, or that his or his sister's children become Irvel's heir, just as the fifth Azoun succeeded the fourth.

Princess Raedra

Not yet twenty, Princess Raedra Obarskyr is a figure of great interest to noble houses across Cormyr. The second child of Crown Prince Irvel and Princess Ospra, she is the first daughter born to House Obarskyr in more than a century. A woman of great beauty, she is said to possess the intellect of Tanalasta, the charm of Filfaeril, the strategy of Alusair, the temper of Gantharla, first Queen of Cormyr, and the sword-arm of Enchara the warrior queen. (The last is not strictly true, since Raedra prefers the rapier to heavier blades when training.)

The princess has already refused more than a dozen proposals of marriage or betrothal from courtiers both Cormyrian and foreign, most rejected with only a moment's thought. When pressed, she responds that she is not a prize for some noble or adventurer to win. She is a princess of Cormyr, in whom the royal lines of Esparin, Tethyr, and ancient Athalantar are joined. As such, she vows to wed only a husband worthy of her station, if not of her genuine love.

Solatha Boldtree, Countess of Dhedluk

Daughter of a traveling merchant known only as Boldtree (he shared his given name with no one, not even his daughter), Solatha is a stern-faced woman whose appearance has not improved with age. She looks less like a countess than a broad-shouldered tavernkeeper, though her green eyes shine with a kindness most miss on first glance.

If not for a fateful night in 1437, Solatha would be of no importance to the history of Cormyr. While leading a military expedition to the Vast Swamp, Foril's older brother Prince Emvar came across Solatha and her father's camp. The dashing prince and the merchant's daughter enjoyed one another's company before the Purple Dragons struck out again. It was not until months later, long after Emvar was slain in ambush, that Solatha realized she was carrying a royal child.

When her son Erzoured was born, Solatha brought him to the royal palace. There, after repeated confirmation through spell and prayer, the boy's paternity was confirmed. Azoun V invested Solatha as Countess of Dhedluk, after her birthplace.

Solatha still lives at court, but her relations with her son have become strained. Erzoured's secretive dealings have led his mother to believe that he will bring shame both to her and to his father's name.

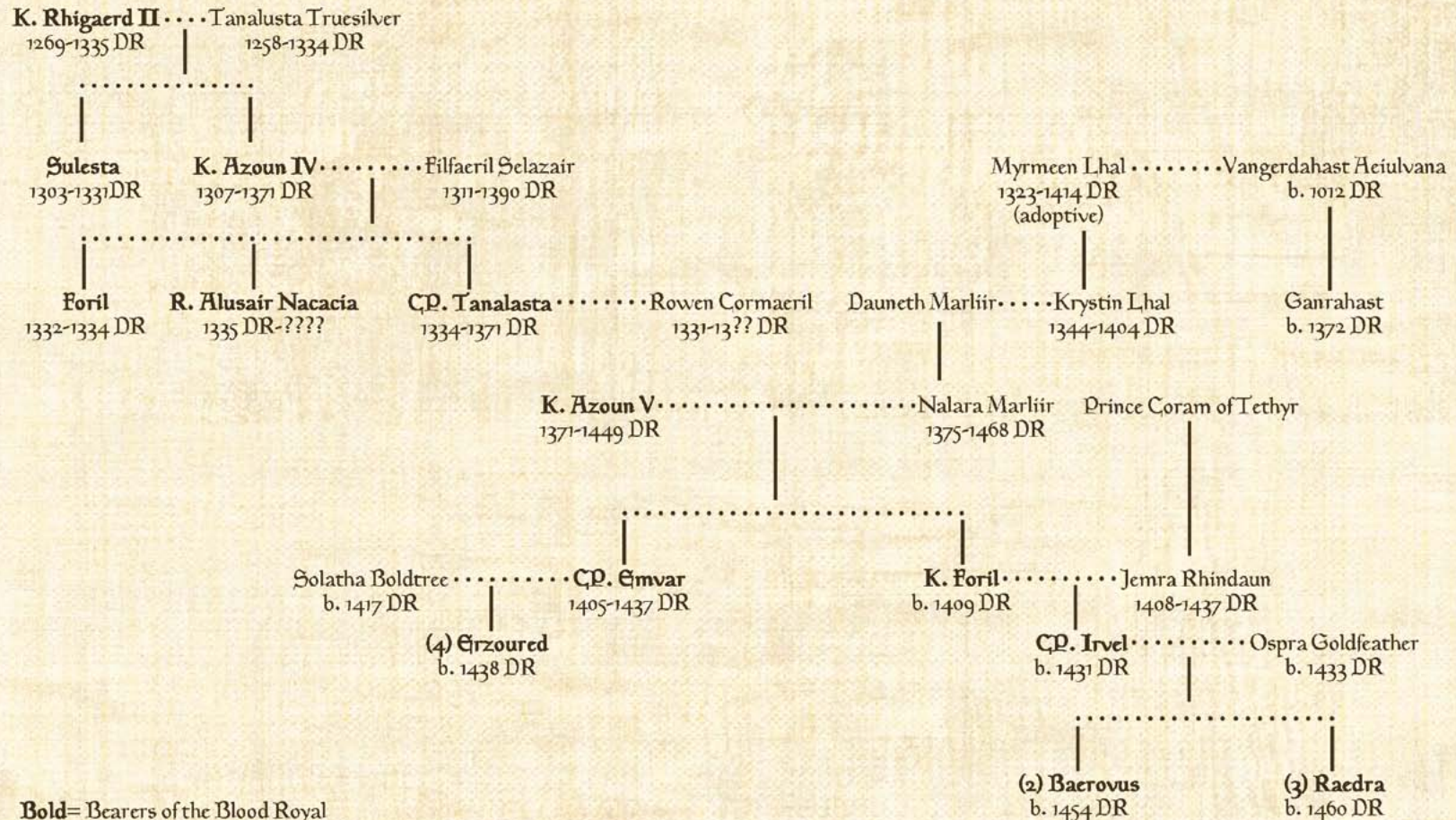
Lord Erzoured Obarskyr, Baron Boldtree

The son of the late Prince Emvar, Erzoured spent his early life in the royal palace, raised near his cousin Irvel but titled "lord" rather than "prince." Despite the confirmation of his birth, Erzoured was not officially recognized as Emvar's son until 1450 DR—after Foril had ascended the throne and ensured his own legacy.

Despite his luxurious upbringing, Erzoured is resentful of House Obarskyr. He styles himself Baron Boldtree to dissociate himself from the king,

The Royal Succession of Cormyr

as counted from the Year of the Hooded Falcon to the Year of the Ageless One



Bold= Bearers of the Blood Royal

K= Reigning king

R= Regent

C.P.= Crown Prince(ss), has not/never reigned

(#)= Number indicates current place in the royal succession (#1 is the current Crown Prince, Irvel)

seeing himself as the rightful heir to the Dragon Throne rather than fourth in line. The fact that Lord Erzoured is a traitor in waiting is known to the court, most of whose members suspect that he will strike at his uncle and seize the crown at the first opportunity.

Erzoured feigns affectation for his cousin Irvel, even as he secretly seeks useful allies in Sembia, Netheril, and Thay. However, he rebuffs advances from the leaders of those lands, wanting to rule Cormyr on his own terms rather than as a puppet king. Only his mother Solatha draws any true affection from Erzoured, but he has begun to suspect treachery even from her.

Ganrahast Aeiulvana, Royal Magician

The reigning Royal Magician of Cormyr has lived for over a century, though his red hair is only now beginning to edge with silver. Ganrahast has little of the presence of either of his parents, Vangerdahast Aeiulvana and Myrmeen Lhal. However, his ability to blend in allows him to learn more of the intentions of those around him than they are willing to reveal.

Ganrahast is a product of his upbringing in the time of the kingdom's Five Ladies, when Cormyr remembered that women could fight, hurl spells, and rule as capably as any man. Feeling unworthy of his title, Ganrahast constantly wonders if it is his lack of magical ability or the ghosts of those great women that haunt his failures.

Publicly, the Royal Magician is a different figure, confidently giving orders and directing the War Wizards as they defend Foril and his throne. His intellect is sharp and often morbid, letting him see threats most sane folk would not bother to consider. Thus far, his instincts have kept the realm secure. However, Ganrahast blames himself for the death of Princess Jemra, believing that one of his wards failed to protect her when an assassin's blade came seeking King Azoun V. He shares this guilt with no one, not even the Lord Warder.

Vainrence, Lord Warder

Ganrahast's second-in-command, closest friend, and the true leader of the War Wizards is the Lord Warder. Vainrence is a direct, honest man. He believes in serving Cormyr to the best of his abilities, not in soothing the egos of childish nobles or his War Wizard charges. A veteran of the wars with Sembia, he distinguished himself through the careful application of battle magic, his willingness to pick up a sword when necessary, and his understanding of tactics beyond the level of most War Wizards. King Foril took notice of those tactical abilities, which increased his standing until he was finally elevated to his current position by Ganrahast.

In his tenure at court, Vainrence has pushed King Foril to allow the War Wizards to live up to their name and take a more direct role in combat. Ganrahast remains unsure of this new direction, but the influence of the late Caladnei (who sought to increase the utility of the War Wizards to the Crown) has thus far kept him from reining Vainrence in.

Ossani Eveningspire, Sage Royal

Few would guess that the quiet, dark-haired woman of forty who serves as the Sage Royal is the great-granddaughter of Laspeera Naerinth. Although she possesses none of her ancestor's beauty or presence—and little of her magical talent—Ossani Eveningspire is a brilliant thinker with an incisive wit and a sharp tongue. Perhaps more than even the Royal Magician, Lady Eveningspire understands the importance of magic to the history of Cormyr, and the sacrifices that the realm's magical defenders have made for the kingdom.

The Sage Royal does her best to avoid matters of politics, leaving those to her sisters Aceeta Naerinth, Earilde Inthré, and Icaura Thralos. (Each sister chose a different family name from among those they inherited.) An exception to this rule is made for rumors regarding magic treasures of great age and unknown power, which prompt Ossani's undivided interest and attention.

OTHER COURTLY FACES

Many important courtiers do their best to stay out of the public eye, including a number of key advisors to King Foril.

Wizard of War Glathra Barcantle: A hardened senior War Wizard, Glathra's role as leader of that group sees her tolerate little back talk and even less equivocating to the authority of the Crown. She takes orders from no one short of Ganrahast, Lord Vainrence, or a blood Obarskyr, eagerly seeking any opportunity to prove herself in the eyes of King Foril.

King's Lord Lothan Durncaskyn of Immerford: A stern veteran of the Purple Dragons who has proved his loyalty and ability time and again, Durncaskyn is the lord of the crossing of the East Way over the Immerflow. He oversaw the building of Immerkeep, and dispenses justice in the king's name within its environs. One of the few people of the realm willing to speak frankly to the Crown and expect to be heard, he enjoys the absolute trust of King Foril and Crown Prince Irvel.

Peraps the Runner: A long, lean man in his late twenties, Peraps is neither a noble nor a courtier, but merely a messenger. He is trusted by the court to reliably and swiftly deliver messages and parcels anywhere in the realm, without the use of magic, portals, or other potentially corruptible methods. He does not work with known or suspected traitors to the kingdom, and he informs the Crown of any deliveries he has made that he suspects might be against Cormyr's interests.

Snarling Wolves Amid the Sheep

The court of King Foril is a more open place than the courts of previous monarchs. As a result, undesirable elements have made themselves comfortable among the nobles and courtiers of Suzail.

Ortwin Kolmar

This textiles merchant has grown wealthy selling his wares to the people of Akanûl, the Sword Coast, and the Moonsea. However, he stands to make himself even wealthier by reinvesting those mercantile profits in the true coin of the court: information. Kolmar holds secrets pertaining to nearly every field of trade or endeavor, and he is happy to arrange spying work for any capable characters willing to get their hands dirty. Though some people swear by Ortwin's usefulness, others avoid him for the disrepute that clings to him. Whatever business Ortwin Kolmar is involved in, chances are good that it breaks the law or borders on the treasonous.

For his own part, Kolmar sees himself not as a traitor to the realm but as a true entrepreneur, brokering deals among nobles and courtiers at a modest price. An inveterate coward with little stomach for battle, Kolmar faints at the sight of his own blood (use the human lackey from the *Monster Manual* for his statistics). When not at court with the Purple Dragons to guard him, he maintains a small army of mercenaries to defend against attack.

Saha Tovan

A towering figure in close-fitting chainmail with a massive sword strapped to her back, Saha Tovan is a tall, imposing woman with two related vocations. She hurts people she is paid to hurt, even as she makes others believe that they are next to be hurt if they fail to act appropriately. She enjoys the first job nearly as much as the second, and will gladly hire herself out to

any noble, merchant, or caravan master willing to pay her exorbitant fee. Her only condition is that she not be asked to leave Cormyr under any circumstances.

Saha has spent the last few seasons in the employ of various noble houses, working one month for a given house, then the next for one of its rivals. Her goal is to threaten without actually making threats, and her menacing demeanor does the job well. Although she grows increasingly bored with politics, Tovan has never attacked any of her effete employers, who remind her that to draw her flaming blade against a noble would result in imprisonment or worse. However, it is likely only a matter of time before Saha is pushed beyond her limits and forced to pay the price.

Saha Tovan	Level 12 Elite Brute
Medium natural humanoid, human	XP 1,400
HP 300; Bloodied 150	Initiative +10
AC 24; Fortitude 26; Reflex 24; Will 25	Perception +14
Speed 6	
Saving Throws +2; Action Points 1	
TRAITS	
Whirlwind Charge	
When Saha charges a target, she can also use <i>flaming greatsword</i> against one other enemy adjacent to her as a free action after the charge.	
Triumphant Surge	
Saha gains 10 temporary hit points each time she bloodies an enemy or reduces an enemy to 0 or fewer hit points.	
STANDARD ACTIONS	
⚔ Flaming Greatsword (fire, weapon) ♦ At-Will	
Attack: Melee 1 (one creature); +17 vs. AC	
Hit: 2d8 + 6 damage, and ongoing 10 fire damage (save ends).	
⚔ Double Attack ♦ At-Will	
Effect: Saha Tovan uses <i>flaming greatsword</i> twice.	
Skills Endurance +16, Intimidate +15	
Str 22 (+12)	Dex 18 (+10)
Con 20 (+11)	Int 12 (+7)
	Wis 16 (+9)
	Cha 19 (+10)
Alignment evil	Languages Chondathan, Common
Equipment chainmail, greatsword	

Court Intrigues

As has been the case with every ruler of Cormyr, King Foril faces constant plotting from the nobles and courtiers who surround his throne.

Advocates For Wheloon

Since their city was turned into a prison as punishment for their secret worship of Shar, the people of Wheloon have had few advocates fighting for their liberty. Recently, a small group of nobles, courtiers, and (most surprisingly) Chauntean and Lliiran priests have begun to petition the Crown to open the city. Not only were the Purple Dragons unable to prove that all the prisoners of Wheloon were Shar worshippers, a new generation of children born since that dark time might have a chance to escape the evil their parents embraced. For the city's advocates, it is better to free the innocent and expel the traitors than to allow the darkness of Wheloon to fester.

Falling Silver

In the last half-century, the fortunes of the three Silver families have shifted. Although the Crownsilvers and the Truesilvers maintain great wealth and influence, they are no longer ascendant stars among Cormyr's nobility. The Huntsilvers have fared worse, first losing their sons in the Sembian wars, then seeing their last two daughters married into Houses Crownsilver and Truesilver. They hope to restore the family name by the production of heirs. However, neither daughter has yet borne a child, and time is running out.

Parceling Out the Stonelands

King Azoun IV maintained a promise to grant the title of Baron of the Stonelands to any prospective noble able to pacify and hold that region for more than a year. For over a century, this claim has gone untested. As such, a number of lesser noble families, unable to purchase lands in the heart of Cormyr, have begun to press the Crown for permission and funds to

construct castles in the Stonelands. What better way to defend and expand the realm, they argue, than by turning that rock-strewn wasteland into verdant fields in the name of the Dragon Throne?

Rage Over Irlingstar

Following the rise of Gondegal, the defeat of the Tuigan Horde, and the perfidy of Houses Bleth and Cormaeril, Royal Magician Vangerdahast secretly ordered the construction of a fortified prison in the most remote corner of the Thunder Peaks. Known as Irlingstar, this prison has been home to some of the most dangerous noble traitors in Cormyr, who are held in permanent exile for fear of their return. Azoun V used the prison only rarely, though Foril made extensive use of it during his early reign.

Named for the Waterdhavian noble family that initially intended it as a stopover for Sembian trade, House Irlingstar divested themselves of the castle because of its remote site, demanding that the Crown of Cormyr keep the name as a condition of its low sale price. Ironically, Irlingstar was also the name of the first resident of the prison, a malaugrym that had masqueraded as the wife of Lord Irlingstar. She fled Waterdeep on the discovery of her treachery and was captured, briefly, by the War Wizards. Being ageless, “Lady Irlingstar” plotted for decades, and eventually escaped from her jailers.

Word has slowly crept out (aided by the whispers of the former Lady Irlingstar) of the “special jail” for nobles maintained by the Crown, protected by no fewer than five dozen war wizards. Whether this is rumor or not is unproven, but the fury expressed by nobles who hear of the prison is in every way genuine.

Word has slowly leaked out of the existence of Irlingstar, the nobles imprisoned there, and the powerful magic wards and War Wizards that protect the prison. Most people treat Irlingstar as legend, but the fury of the nobles who have heard of it—and their anger toward Foril for his complicity in its operation—is in every way genuine.

Wizardly Whispers

A growing rumor spreads among the workers and functionaries of the palace and court, stating that an impossibly ancient wizard (variably human, elf, or undead) lurks within the halls of the palace disguised as a member of the court. After using magic to feign age, then infirmity, this supposed wizard “dies.” He or she then takes on the guise of the child, cousin, or other false relative who purports to claim the body, and who subsequently takes up the dead wizard’s place at court. At least three different families are rumored to be the source of this dark tale, some of whose members have begun gathering evidence of the others’ guilt.

Threats

Cormyr has endured the Spellplague and its aftermath, including the changes to Toril. The threats to the kingdom have changed as well, and might yet succeed in shattering the peace of Foril’s court.

Acquiescing to the Shadow

In every generation, nobles arise who are swayed more by coin than sense. In the most recent generation, a number of nobles—even after two wars and continued threats—believe that Cormyr should take in more Sembian gold and allow for greater trade and cooperation with Netheril. The Crown is thankful that these cries have not yet come from the heads of any prominent families. However, it is only a matter of time before the corruption that comes with Sembian gold once again darkens the discourse of the Royal Court.

Banker of Rumors

Despite the best efforts of the War Wizards and the Highknights at court, a rumor broker has infiltrated the highest circles of society. This unknown agent has begun to sell the secrets of the Silver families, other noble houses, and powerful merchants to the highest

bidder. When such secrets do not exist, this shadowy figure is happy to manufacture them, leading to more than one incident of drawn blades at a noble revel. These lies will soon lead to bloodshed, and Ganrahas wants the culprit found and stopped.

Baron Boldtree

Rumors persist that the king’s nephew plots open rebellion at every turn. Though Lord Erzoured is thankfully patient in his treachery, these rumors have begun to foment dissent across the realm. Second and third noble heirs, forcibly retired Purple Dragons, and merchants whose petitions for nobility have been refused are becoming more brazen in their defiance of the Dragon Throne. Determined, motivated, and dangerously influential, these individual factions have yet to coalesce into a unified whole. However, a lack of leadership makes their actions even more unpredictable.

Lingering Plague

The sheer number of wards, protective spells, and other magic imbued into the halls of the palace and the royal court makes walking certain little-used corridors a dangerous proposition. Though the Royal Magician has tamed the lingering effects of the Spellplague, this does not stop members of the noble families from hurling accusations at rival houses every time stray magic is unleashed.

Magical Tutoring

In violation of Ganrahas’s express command, two noble houses—Dracohorn and Huntcrown—have imported wizardly tutors to instruct their children in the use of magic. Though it is not unheard of for a noble house to privately train a child with magical talent, the Royal Magician fears that these foreign mages (one from Calimshan; the other from Thay) will corrupt the children, steal the secrets of the houses, or otherwise jeopardize the realm. Ganrahas has yet to

decide on a formal response, but he and his servants are on a course of confrontation that might embroil these noble houses in conflict with the Crown.

Adventure Hooks

King Foril's Cormyr is little different from the realms of previous kings. Nobles plot treason, merchants plot ascension to noble rank, and loyal servants strive to protect the kingdom from threats both real and imagined.

Beneath the Palace

A missing courtier is in possession of a document the heroes need to convince the War Wizards of a merchant's criminal behavior. The characters must brave the complex, winding tunnels connecting the Royal Court with the palace. While exploring the tunnels, they must eliminate a host of plaguechanged creatures whose presence is disrupting the ancient wards protecting the palace.

Prison Escort

The characters are tasked by the court with escorting a noble prisoner to Irlingstar, only to be ambushed along the way by mercenaries in the noble's employ. The warriors only want to parley, however, and produce evidence of the noble's innocence. The heroes must decide whether to continue with their mission or to free the noble, and how to present this evidence to the appropriate authorities.

Revelry Interrupted

Invited to a noble banquet and revel at the palace in honor of their service to the Crown, the characters are in the right place at the right time to prevent an attack on the guests. By means of a series of social skill challenges, they must then root out the villains responsible for the attack without alerting the guilty party to their investigation.

THE PALACE AND THE COURT

On the rising north slopes of Suzail stands the sprawling complex that is the Royal Court, with the palace above it. Within these two massive, interconnected structures, much of the wealth and influence of the Forest Kingdom resides. On any day of the year, some of the most influential people in Faerûn can be found here, discussing the future of the realm.

Information on the city of Suzail, its current leadership, and citywide events can be found in "Backdrop: Suzail" in this issue of *Dungeon*.

The Royal Palace of Suzail

Castle Obarskyr, also known as the Palace of the Purple Dragon, Faerlthann's Keep, or most often "the palace," overlooks the city of Suzail. What was once the manor of Ondeth Obarskyr—founder of the realm and father of Faerlthann "First King"—was expanded into a fortified keep during his son's reign. Ondeth's grandson, Rhiiman "the Glorious," completed the keep's transformation into a proper castle.

The palace's buildings and stone towers now form a grand, expansive complex that is home to the most important treasures and people in Cormyr. With more than a hundred halls, rooms, and chambers (to say nothing of corridors, secret passages, armories, vaults, and kitchens), the palace is one of the largest and most complex structures in the kingdom. In addition to being the permanent residence of House Obarskyr, the palace contains apartments for the royal Silver families, key staff, and guard barracks for the Purple Dragons permanently stationed here.

Most people see the palace only from the outside. Admittance is by invitation only, except for knights and nobles of the realm, senior officers of the Purple Dragons, and courtiers on official business. Even then, an invited character's escorts and companions

are subject to scrutiny, search, and possible detention by the guards and War Wizards on duty.

King Azoun V ordered the filling in and covering of portions of Lake Azoun (which still drains into the Lake of Dragons by means of underground culverts). Foril has expanded the palace westward, absorbing the older buildings there and raising new structures to supplement the complex.

In the last century, the older sections of the palace have become known for the failure of their ancient magical wards. The site of hauntings, disappearances, and other strange events, the buildings east of Faerlthann's Keep have been dubbed "the haunted wing."

The Royal Court

As closed off as the palace is, the Royal Court—or at least its outer chambers—are open to all citizens and visitors to the realm. The court is where the main business of the kingdom is conducted. Here, adventuring charters are granted, business and trade licenses requested, nobles raised or divested, oaths sworn before the Crown, state funerals held, and the public business of Cormyr conducted and witnessed.

The Royal Court is a busy, bustling place full of courtiers of every rank, visiting nobles, embassies from other nations, and common citizens. All rub elbows in the hope of getting closer to the throne and the influence it represents. The Royal Court is where the kingdom's laws are pronounced, policies shaped, and edicts proclaimed. With the exception of certain secret or violent deeds, the most important events in Cormyr happen here.

Centered around the Chamber of the Purple Dragon, the Royal Court stands off the promenade and fills the space between the gates and the palace. Like the palace, the court features many chambers with myriad functions, including its own kitchens, armory, and duty barracks. Craft workshops of various kinds are also found here, as are the laboratories

in which the War Wizards conduct experiments that Ganrahas has forbidden within the palace proper.

The court is connected to the palace by means of tunnels beneath the two complexes, a trio of flying bridges between the newest buildings, and a single ground-level wing at the eastern end of the court. Official records of the realm are stored at the court, in duplicate at two separate locations. Additional copies of the most important documents are secured in a third, underground vault.

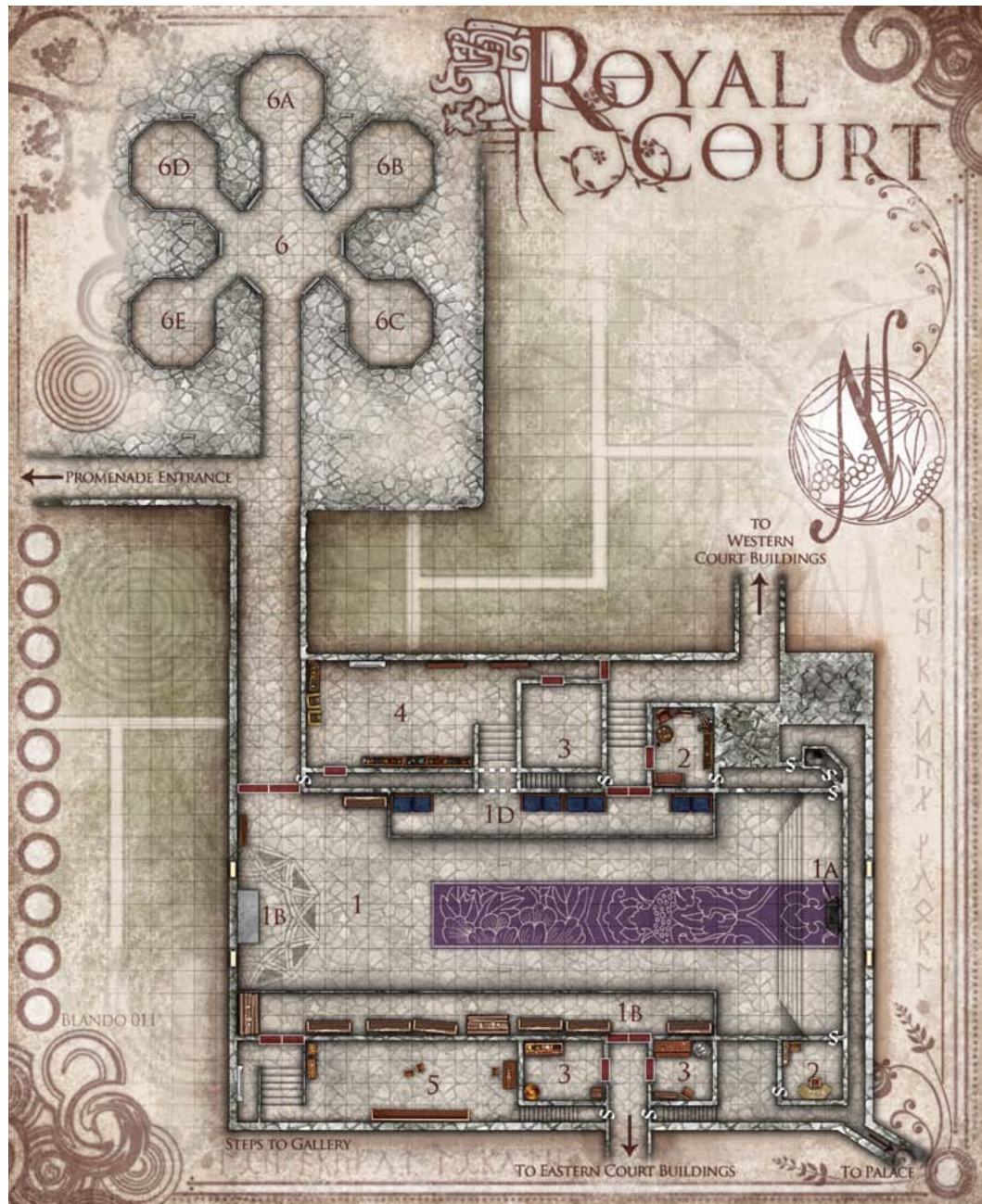
The Chamber and the Shrine

In the center of the court off the promenade stands the Chamber of the Purple Dragon. Built as a grand meeting hall by Ondeth before Cormyr was a nation, the chamber was converted by King Faerlthann into his throne room. When the Dragon Throne was completed, it was placed on a raised dais on the northern wall of the hall, where it has remained for more than a millennium.

1. Chamber of the Purple Dragon: The Chamber of the Purple Dragon is one of the oldest human-built sites in Cormyr. The throne room of the realm, it is the location for ceremonies of investiture, royal proclamations, weddings, and funerals. Thick curtains along the walls hide secret doors that royals can use to escape danger. War Wizards and Highknights frequently use these doors to sneak into the throne room and watch for potential threats.

1A. Throne of the Purple Dragon: Standing taller than any knight, the Dragon Throne is a dark, imposing seat carved in the likeness of a great wyrm. No one but the king can sit in this seat, and even the most powerful nobles approach its dais with reverence.

1B. Tomb of Baerauble: Beneath two tall, slender windows rests the simple stone tomb of Baerauble, the first Royal Magician of Cormyr. Guarded at all times by two Purple Dragons of rank and



distinction, the tomb has been worn smooth by the hands of people coming to pray for guidance from the old wizard. A saying attributed to Baerauble is magically inscribed along the lip of the tomb, neither fading nor wearing away despite the long years: “The gods do not grant to us all the shining mantle of hero. Do what you can, and it will be enough.”

1C. Eastern Gallery: Reserved for nobles viewing events in the Chamber of the Purple Dragon, this gallery is appointed with comfortable couches that stand pointedly unused—since no noble is foolish enough to sit in the presence of the Dragon Throne. Weapons and magic items of any kind are stripped from their bearers when they pass through the side chamber (area 5). Such belongings are given back when a noble returns to the main chamber.

1D. Western Gallery: People other than nobles can view events in the Chamber of the Purple Dragon from the western gallery. Space is limited, however, and most viewers are relegated to the floor of the throne room.

2. Robing Rooms: Only members of the royal family, their attendants, and their invited guests can enter these chambers, which are guarded by Purple Dragons and War Wizards. Both of these rooms have secret doors connecting them to the Chamber of the Purple Dragon, as well as exits to a passage leading back to the palace.

3. Retiring Rooms: These small, comfortable lounges are appointed with lushly upholstered furniture and fine paintings. They are used by the Crown to separate feuding factions and prevent them from distracting the court from its business. Fuming nobles recognize the insult of being placed in one of these rooms. The worst offenders are often further inconvenienced by the presence

of spare furniture, cloying lesser nobles, or creditors invited by the Crown.

4. Side Chamber (Common): People without rank arriving early for a court function wait in this chamber until guests are permitted upstairs to the western gallery (area 1D). Such characters will have had weapons and magic confiscated on initially entering the court, so that the Purple Dragons in this chamber are less strident regarding searches.

5. Side Chamber (Noble): Only characters of rank are permitted into this room. It contains no furniture except for a few wall torches, a chest to lock away confiscated weapons or magic items, and a pair of simple benches for nobles who have challenged the guards for any reason and been struck senseless. The stairway in this area leads to the eastern gallery (area 1C).

6. Shrine of the Four Swords: The shrine is home to Cormyr’s four swords of state, the weaponry of the nation’s regalia. Unlike with the throne, crowns, and rods of the realm, people are allowed to approach the weapons of Cormyr openly. However, attempting to remove the crystal domes covering the plinths on which the weapons rest calls forth guards, War Wizards, and an ear-piercing alarm.

Benches line the central chamber of the shrine, allowing visitors to rest in contemplation. When a member of the royal family dies, his or her body lies in state here in accordance with the family’s wishes.

For the history, uses, and magical properties of the weapons housed in the Shrine of the Four Swords, see “Swords of State: Cormyr” in *Dragon* 407.

6A. Guard Station: Four Purple Dragons stand on duty here, ready to prevent anyone from desecrating or stealing from the Shrine. Any swords displaced while bodies lie in state in the shrine rest here on simple stands during the mourning period.

6B. Shrine of Orblyn: The sword Orblyn is known as the Edge of Justice. Its shrine has no decoration except for a pair of torn cloths hanging from each corner: one red, the other black.

6C. Shrine of Rissar: The walls of the shrine of the Wedding Blade are hung with small, seemingly valueless mementoes of royal courtship. Handkerchiefs, feathers, locks of hair, and nearly forty purple scarves each commemorate a different Obarskyr marriage.

6D. Shrine of Ansrivarr: The oldest of the four swords of Cormyr, Ansrivarr lies beneath the heraldic shields of the four royal houses of Obarskyr, Crownsilver, Truesilver, and Huntsilver. The shield of House Huntsilver has been hung askew to indicate the uncertain status of that house. The shield of House Bleth hangs here as well, covered with a black sheet to indicate that family’s treachery and present exile.

6E. Shrine of Symylazarr: The blade called Cormyr’s Fount of Honor rests in a clean, bare room. Unlike the other swords of state, Symylazarr is never found in its sheath, to better show off its finely etched blade. Directly across from the shrine’s entrance, the armorial shield of the last knight or noble house to be raised by the Crown hangs above the plinth on which Symylazarr rests.

A PARTIAL TIMELINE OF CORMYR

It would be impossible to recount every significant event in Cormyr's history. However, a brief examination of happenings between the courts of the Steel Regent and King Foril can provide insight into the Royal Court and its inhabitants.

1371 DR: Year of the Unstrung Harp

Birth of Azoun V of Cormyr. Death of Azoun IV and Crown Princess Tanalasta. Beginning of the Steel Regency of Princess Alusair Nacacia.

1373 DR: Year of Rogue Dragons

Birth of Ganrahas, son of Vangerdahast Aeiulvana and Myrmeen Lhal.

1379 DR: Year of the Lost Keep

Four Day War between Cormyr and the Empire of Netheril.

1384 DR: Year of Three Streams Blooded

At the insistence of several members of court and the young king, Azoun V is crowned King of Cormyr. The Steel Regency ends. Alusair is named High Marshal of Cormyr, but spends most of her time in the Stonelands and the west reaches. Without the political support of his aunt, many of Azoun's early reforms—including attempts to curtail the rights of the nobility—fail.

1385 DR: Year of Blue Fire

The Spellplague begins with the murder of Mystra. Roughly one third of Cormyr's Wizards of War are slain, driven mad, or go missing in the year following Mystra's death.

1390 DR: Year of the Walking Man

Death of the Dowager Dragon Queen Filfaeril. Alusair attends the state funeral, argues briefly and privately with her nephew the king, then disappears from court. Rumors of her riding the frontiers and borderlands are heard in later years, but Alusair is never officially seen again.

1392 DR: Year of the Scroll

The Dragon Coast city of Pros petitions the Crown to become a vassal-state of Cormyr to protect it from the ravages of the Spellplague. By year's end, Pros's sister-town of Ilipur joins the Forest Kingdom as well.

1394 DR: Year of Deaths Unmourned

The worst symptoms of the Spellplague subside. Cormyr emerges relatively unharmed, though not unchanged.

1396 DR: Year of the Secret

Marriage of King Azoun V to Nalara Marliir, the daughter of Lord High Marshal Dauneth Marliir and Krystin Lhal.

1397 DR: Year of the Quill

After years of struggle against the rule of Netheril, the border city of Daerlun is annexed into the Forest Kingdom.

1399 DR: Year of the Fallen Friends

Caladnei, Royal Magician and Court Wizard of Cormyr, succumbs to age and the lingering effects of the Spellplague. Following her death, Laspeera Inthré, one of the few surviving wizards from the days of Vangerdahast, assumes the post of Court Wizard and begins tutoring Ganrahas to adopt the duties of royal Magician.

1400 DR: Year of Lost Ships

The Alliance of Freesailors formally disbands, with the ships of each kingdom (Cormyr, Sembia and

Impiltur) committing themselves to their nations rather than the general opposition of piracy.

1405 DR: Year of the Golden Mask

Birth of Emvar Obarskyr, first son of Azoun V and Queen Nalara.

1407 DR: Year of the Halls Unhaunted

The year opens with rumors of a complete clearing of the fabled Haunted Halls of Eveningstar. A dozen adventuring companies are wiped out in the year that follows, leading to a formal proclamation forbidding entry to the halls without an explicit warrant from the Crown.

1408 DR: Year of the Solitary Cloister

Following the lead of Daerlun a decade earlier, Urm-laspyr offers its allegiance to the Dragon Throne.

1409 DR: Year of True Omens

Birth of Foril Obarskyr, second son of Azoun V and Queen Nalara.

1414 DR: Year of Sea Lions Roaring

Azoun V restores loyal elements of the once-exiled House Cormaeril to the nobility.

1422 DR: Year of the Advancing Shadows

The city of Elversult, feeling increasing pressure from Cormyr's control of its source ports of Pros and Ilipur, becomes a protectorate of the realm.

1428 DR: Year of the Elfqueen's Joy

The city of Teziir, close to collapse after decades of struggle against Cormyrian-controlled rival cities, accepts the rule of the Forest Kingdom. Cormyr now controls all lands and ports surrounding the Dragonmere.

1430 DR: Year of Stalking Horrors

Marriage of Foril Obarskyr to Jemra Rhindaun, of the Royal House of Tethyr.

1431 DR: Year of the Lashing Tail

Birth of Irvel Obarskyr to Prince Foril and Princess Jemra.

1433 DR: Year of the Silent Departure

With their magical defenses failing and their former home restored, the elven clans Alastrarra and Ildacer leave the sea elf kingdom of Naramyr beneath the Dragonmere, returning to Myth Drannor.

1437 DR: Year of the Silent Flute

Years of low-grade conflict between Sembia and Cormyr lead to the death of Crown Prince Emvar in an ambush south of the Vast Swamp. In the same month, Princess Jemra is killed in a failed assassination attempt against Azoun V by Sembian factions. As the people grieve, calls for decisive action against Netheril and Sembia sweep across Cormyr.

1438 DR: Year of Silent Waterfalls

Royal Magician Ganrahast discovers that before Emvar's death, the prince fathered a son, Erzoured, with a merchant's daughter named Solatha. Erzoured and his mother are brought to the palace. Solatha is created Countess of Dhedluk, after her birthplace, to ensure that Erzoured will have a title to inherit despite his illegitimate birth.

1439 DR: Year of the Silent Tear

Years of tension, negotiation, and skirmish between Cormyr and Sembia erupt to all-out war.

1441 DR: Year of Resurrections Rampant

A peace treaty is drafted between Netherese Sembia and Cormyr, Cormanthor, and the Dalelands. The Huntsilver noble family has been all but

exterminated by the end of the conflict, its remaining two daughters marrying into the Houses of Crownsilver and Truesilver. As part of the Treaty of Griffonfang Bridge, the cities of Daerlun and Urm-laspyr are declared independent from both Cormyr and Sembia.

1442 DR: Year of Darkenbeasts Rising

Azoun V restores the Goldfeather family to nobility.

1448 DR: Year of Neomen Swords

Marriage of Prince Irvel to Ospra Goldfeather.

1449 DR: Year of the Godly Invitation

Death of King Azoun V. Coronation of King Foril.

1454 DR: Year of the Emerald Sun

Birth of Baerovus Obarskyr, son of Crown Prince Irvel and his wife, Ospra Goldfeather.

1460 DR: Year of the Malachite Shadows

Birth of Raedra Obarskyr, daughter of Crown Prince Irvel and Princess Ospra.

1469 DR: Year of Splendors Burning

Under the pretense of protecting Proskur from the shadowy hand of Netheril, Cormyr declares the burgeoning city a protectorate of the Dragon Throne.

1473 DR: Year of the Heretic's Rampage

In the face of unprecedented activity by the faithful of Shar in Wheloon, alongside evidence of their alliance with Netheril, King Foril orders the city sealed and turned into a prison colony.

1479 DR: Year of the Ageless One

The present day of the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Guide*.

About the Author

Brian Cortijo is a freelance game designer and fiction author who has been playing in the back roads and underhalls of Cormyr for years, and is thrilled to finally bring some of that work to light. His thanks, as always, go out to Ed Greenwood for the Realms, and for letting him play in the sandbox.

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Backdrop: Suzail

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“The brightest jewel of Cormyr’s crown.”

—Olaurae, sage of Myth Drannor (855 DR)

Behold Suzail, seat of royal power! The armies of the Purple Dragon have turned back hordes, slain dragons, and faced the might of empire. Even now, fourteen centuries after its founding, Cormyr stands as powerful as ever.

Behold Suzail, city of prosperity! The wealth of a nation flows through its streets. Coins pour through the hands of merchants. Fortunes are made here as the nobles spend their treasure freely.

Behold Suzail, cultural heart of Cormyr! It is here that the nobles gather in the Royal Court. Their fashions, galas, and entertainments set the standard for the nation. The arts of Suzail are the vanguard of culture in Cormyr.

Behold Suzail, bastion of arcane might! The War Wizards of Cormyr are renowned throughout the Realms for their loyal service to the Crown. The names Vangerdahast and Caladnei are still synonymous with power and loyalty to Cormyr.

Behold Suzail, and see its greatness!

The capital city of Cormyr is a bustling, prosperous place. It’s always afire with new ideas, new ventures, new goods, and new ways to do things. The presence of the Royal Court, the War Wizards, and the noble

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houses of Cormyr make Suzail an exciting destination. Adventurers can be swept up in the intrigues of the nobles, participate in the many festivals and tournaments, or just enjoy the vast spectrum of entertainment available in a royal city.

CENSUS

According to the official city rosters, 55,000 residents make Suzail their home, but the day-to-day population is certainly higher. The city is overwhelmingly human (approximately 85 percent of the population), with halflings and half-elves (about 10 percent together) making up the next largest populations. Dwarves, elves, eladrin, and gnomes make up the remainder. Races with evil legacies, such as drow, tieflings, and half-orcs, are not attacked on sight but are watched carefully by the Purple Dragons (royal soldiers) and War Wizards who enforce the law. Many times, the authorities use out-of-uniform agents or adventurers to tail members of these races and ensure their good behavior.

Since the Spellplague, many unusual races have appeared in the Realms. In particular, dragonborn are seen as an honorable race and are welcomed into Suzail.

GOVERNMENT

Suzail is the seat of power for His Royal Highness Foril Obarskyr, who rules from the ancestral throne in the Royal Palace. King Foril delegates day-to-day administration to the Lord Magister, who maintains the peace, collects the taxes, administers the city services, and commands the garrison of Purple Dragons. The Lord Magister is assisted by a herald who maintains all the paperwork for Suzail, including tax records, licenses, and property deeds. Together, they handle their governing duties at the Royal Court, and the military aspects of the magister's duties are

centered at the Citadel of the Purple Dragons and the Lockup.

The current Lord Magister is Edwin Morahan, a paladin. He is a middle-aged human and a veteran of the Purple Dragons. He acquitted himself well during the conflict with Sembia and in the years that followed. When he retired from the Dragons, the Crown rewarded him with this post. His loyalty to the throne is beyond reproach, but his military bearing and his desire for efficiency and decisive action chafes the members of the Royal Court. Morahan's primary goal as Lord Magister is to institutionalize the changes to the government of the city that were set forth in the Suzail Writ. Although he considers this merely an act of upholding royal decree, his perceived favoritism for commoners has earned him many political enemies among the nobility who are attempting to force him from his position. His friendship with Vainrence, second in command of the War Wizards, and the constant work of Eleanor Thond, his herald, help keep Morahan's position secure for the immediate future.

Lady Eleanor Thond, a female human bard, is a beautiful and intelligent courtier with an eye for detail. She comes from a merchant family outside Arabel and is intensely ambitious. Through diplomatic skill, unrelenting drive, and more than a little luck (she is a devout follower of Tymora), Thond rose through the ranks of the courtiers and was named Morahan's herald, which gave her a noble's rank. She has the subtle touch that Lord Morahan lacks, and she often follows in his wake, smoothing over matters. Unmarried, she has a soft spot for dashing young men and loves the ideals of courtly romance. Thond hopes to marry into one of the great noble houses in Cormyr one day. She would consider undermining Morahan's hold on his position as Lord Magister in return for joining a noble house. However, she genuinely likes Morahan, and she would not desert him unless the offer was too good to refuse.

Also of great importance in the governance of the city is Ganrahast, the Royal Magician and chairman of the College of War Wizards. His top lieutenant is Vainrence. Through their command of the War Wizards, they wield enormous political power in the city. These two wizards are covered in the article "[Cormyr Royale: The Royal Court of the Forest Kingdom](#)."

MILITARY

As the capital of Cormyr, Suzail is well fortified and heavily garrisoned. An 80-foot-high curtain wall protects the city on all landward fronts. The strategically placed Royal Palace has a commanding view of the entire city, and the extensive Citadel of the Purple Dragons anchors the southeastern corner of Suzail. In addition, the Horngate, the Field Gates, and the Eastgate are minor citadels in their own right and guard the entrances to the city. Spies and criminals rarely sneak into Suzail over the walls. Instead, they rely on disguises to bluff their way through the gates. Each gatehouse keeps a thick logbook of known spies and other persons who are banned from entering the city.

Suzail boasts a garrison of about two thousand Purple Dragons housed in the citadel that bears their name and in auxiliary barracks around the city walls. Approximately one hundred War Wizards supplement these soldiers and provide arcane support. The Purple Dragons and the War Wizards constantly drill in the courtyard of the citadel, keeping themselves and their tactics in top fighting shape. In recent years, the Purple Dragons have begun hiring chartered adventuring parties to test the skills of their patrols, since adventurers are notoriously resourceful and unpredictable. Killing blows are not permitted in these tests, but nearly everything else is allowed. If any adventurers succeed in besting a patrol, the city offers the victors a small reward (and the patrol gets latrine duty, so its members are highly motivated to win).

CITY OF SUZAIL



Since the Spellplague, the Imperial Navy has relocated the bulk of its fleet from Marsember to Suzail. More than a score of ships and their crews (known as Blue Dragons) now call the Royal Docks their home port. Since the lowering of the sea level, the navy has shifted to smaller ships with a shallower draft. These vessels are ideal for fighting the many pirates that roam the Dragonmere. The Blue Dragons offer bounties for information on pirates and sometimes hire

chartered adventurers for extra muscle when hunting a particularly dangerous ship.

The navy takes great pride in its two most famous vessels. *Crown of Cormyr* is a veritable floating palace, used by the royal family to relax away from the eyes of the court or to entertain guests in secret. *Dragon*, Cormyr's largest warship and the fourth to have this name, is well equipped with ballistae and firepot hurlers.

KEY TO MAP LOCATIONS

A high-resolution version of the map on page 3 is available for download from the [D&D website](#).

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| 1. Royal Palace | 23. Truesilver Castle | 43. The Nightgate Inn (inn) |
| 2. Royal Court | 24. Marliir Mansion | 44. Dragoneye Dealing Coster yards |
| 3. Tower of the Royal Magician | 25. Crownsilver Castle | 45. Thousandheads Trading Coster yards |
| 4. Lake Azoun | 26. House of Lord Magister Edwin Morahan | 46. Seven Suns Trading Coster yards |
| 5. The Silent Room (Temple to Oghma) | 27. House of Lady Eleanor Thond | 47. Six Coffers Trading Coster yards |
| 6. Shrine to Tempus | 28. Monument to the Purple Dragon | 48. Shrine to Milil |
| 7. Eastgate | 29. Skatterhawk family house | 49. Shrine to Lliira |
| 8. Shrine to Malar | 30. Delcastle Manor | 50. The Market Hall |
| 9. Rowanmantle Castle | 31. Horngate | 51. Taverant's Tellings |
| 10. Greatgaunt Estate | 32. Wailing Wheel (inn) | 52. The Lockup |
| 11. Cormaeril Compound | 33. Six Candles (inn) | 53. Citadel of the Purple Dragons |
| 12. Dracohorn Mansion | 34. Dragonriders' Club (club) | 54. Royal Docks |
| 13. Huntcrown Estate | 35. Witch-Duke's Bride (tavern) | 55. Harbor Tower |
| 14. College of War Wizards | 36. The Myrmidon (inn) | 56. The Market Yard |
| 15. Emmarsk Mansion | 37. Promenade | 57. Laughing Lass (tavern) |
| 16. Huntsilver House (empty) | 38. Dragon's Jaws (inn) | 58. The Osculatory (club) |
| 17. Alsevir Estate | 39. Bindle's (club) | 59. Ring of Coins (shop) |
| 18. Hawklin House | 40. The Royal Smithy | |
| 19. Goldfeather Estate | 41. Society of Stalwart Adventurers (club) | |
| 20. Dauntinghorn House | 42. Temple of Good Fortune | |
| 21. Illance House | | |
| 22. Royal Gardens | | |

LAW AND JUSTICE

Due to the vigilance of the Purple Dragons, Suzail is one of the safest cities in the Realms. Three hundred royal soldiers patrol the streets at any given time, operating in groups of three. When confronting a significant threat, two Purple Dragons approach while the third retrieves reinforcements. In times of trouble, patrol sizes are doubled or tripled and supplemented with War Wizards. Furthermore, the Purple Dragons enforce a late-night curfew. Anyone on the street after midnight can expect an interrogation. Licenses that allow individuals to break curfew are available, but such licensees get an escort of at least one Purple Dragon patrol.

In Suzail, organized crime is not as much of a threat as it is in other large cities. Like his predecessors, King Foril vigorously puts down attempts to form thieves' guilds and smuggling cabals. Of course, these efforts do not deter all would-be criminals. Suzail is a rich city, and the lack of competition from other unsavory organizations beckons to those with larcenous hearts.

Historically, the War Wizards have magically monitored the thoughts and intentions of Cormyr's citizenry to ensure that laws were upheld and to counter threats to the kingdom. However, the Spellplague, royal sentiment, and the Suzail Writ have conspired to greatly limit their ability to do so. After several attempts at mind-reading resulted in the messy deaths of nobles and the drooling feeble-mindedness of the wizards involved, the Crown banned the use of the practice on any citizen of Cormyr. The War Wizards still try to spy on everyone, but their methods are less invasive—and less effective. This development has not pleased a few War Wizards who are researching new rituals to read minds. Since failure could result in death or madness, the wizards seek third parties to test the ritual on undesirables who won't be missed.

Near the end of his reign, Azoun V signed the Suzail Writ, which gave all free citizens of Cormyr inviolable rights, most notably the right to a trial by a jury of peers. In Cormyr, the law requires the accused to respond to the charges and the accuser to substantiate them, leaving guilt or innocence in question until the trial is concluded. The local lord acts as the judge, and a Purple Dragon stands as the accuser of someone arrested for criminal activities. Due to the

sheer volume of trials in Suzail, an officer of the Royal Court represents Lord Magister Morahan. Under the Suzail Writ, the judge manages the trial through a series of interrogatories, and the jury delivers the verdict. A losing party can appeal to the Crown, which might reject the plea, designate a minister to hear the appeal, or have the king hear the appeal personally. Nobles can demand to be tried either by the king or by a jury of their noble peers.

THE CLACK ON SUZAIL

Characters who make a successful skill check know the following information about Suzail.

History DC 10: Suzail is the capital city of Cormyr and the seat of royal power. The king rules from the Royal Palace, and the nobles and courtiers operate from the Royal Court. The court is renowned as a hotbed of intrigue and gossip.

History DC 15: Lord Magister Edwin Morahan, a paladin and a veteran Purple Dragon, handles the day-to-day governance of the city. His herald is Lady Eleanor Thond, a beautiful and well-connected courtier.

History DC 20: King Foril is very advanced in years. The succession of his son Prince Irvel seems to be guaranteed, but a change in monarch is always a dangerous time in Cormyr. The Obarskyrs have many offshoots, and Cormyr's history is littered with succession struggles.

Religion DC 10: The largest temple in Suzail is the Towers of Good Fortune, which is dedicated to Tymora. The priests of Lady Luck are always willing to help adventurers with spells and rituals.

Religion DC 15: The Silent Room was dedicated to Deneir but is now sanctified to Oghma. The Silent Room is renowned for its library, which contains many rare texts. Although the collection is not as robust as that of Candlekeep, it is not as remote, and visitors can use the library for a small fee.

Religion DC 20: The Silent Room has become the center of the Oghmanyte Church in Exile. This splinter cell seeks to appoint a new grand patriarch of the faith and reform the way in which knowledge is distributed.

Streetwise DC 10: King Foril vigorously puts down all attempts to form thieves' guilds and smuggling groups in Suzail. The streets are heavily patrolled by Purple Dragons, making the city one of the safest in the Heartlands. A curfew keeps the streets clear late at night.

Streetwise DC 15: The War Wizards use magic to spy on anyone of questionable character in the city. They used to mind-read suspects but stopped that practice after the Spellplague caused gruesome results.

Streetwise DC 20: A criminal underworld does exist in Suzail. It is well hidden behind the doors of private clubs and in upstairs rooms of inns and festhalls. Due to the vigilance of the Purple Dragons, anyone looking for criminal contacts must be very careful.

NOBILITY

The noble families of Cormyr are a large, influential, and constant presence in Suzail. Their wealth, fashions, intrigues, and entertainments set the tone of the city. At least one member of each noble family maintains a residence in Suzail. This custom dates back to an age-old practice by the monarchy of taking political hostages to keep the nobility in line, but today, the noble presence in Suzail is based on tradition and cultural pressure rather than edict.

About two dozen major noble families are represented in Suzail, along with a fluctuating number of minor houses. Many houses were severely hurt during the Spellplague and the subsequent chaos and conflict with Netheril; others were wiped out entirely. In the Year of the Dark Daughter (1480 DR), the four great houses prominent in Suzail are Crownsilver, Illance, Rowanmantle, and Truesilver. The second tier of noble houses in the city consists of Alsevir, Cormaeril, Dauntinghorn, Dracohorn, Emmarask, Greatgaunt, Goldfeather, Hawklin, Huntcrown, Marliir, and Wintersun.

Alsevir: This old-blood house was ennobled centuries ago in the Goblin Wars (circa 200 DR). It was thought to have died out, but distant relatives of the family rejoined Cormyrean society around the Year of the Dark Goddess (1420 DR). They have assumed ownership of the Bleth estate, which had been empty since that family's exile in the Year of the Striking Falcon (1359 DR). House Bleth had ties to the Fire Knives, an assassin organization that swore eternal vengeance on House Obarskyr. The Alsevir are still finding hidden passages and rooms laced with traps, requiring the family to hire experts to clear out their own mansion.

Before returning to nobility, the Alsevir were merchants and travelers, building up many contacts and trade routes through the Heartlands and the Sword Coast. They have used their fiscal acumen to buy their way up the social ladder in Suzail, but their

rapid ascent has ruffled feathers among the other houses. The Crownsilvers, in particular, find the Alsevir's blatant purchasing of social standing to be crass and unfitting for nobility.

Cormaeril: This family was once the largest landowner in Cormyr after the Crown. However, when the Fire Knives were driven from the kingdom in the Year of the Gate (1341 DR), the War Wizards discovered that several Cormaerils were part of that treasonous organization. The family fortunes took another blow when a few members were implicated in the Abraxus Affair of 1369 DR (in which a magical, bull-like creature tried to assassinate King Azoun IV). The king exiled the entire family and seized all its lands.

Azoun V restored the Cormaerils to nobility late in his reign, but he did not restore their lands, which have remained with the Crown. Fortunately for the Cormaerils, they are a widespread family with influences in many lands outside Cormyr, including Daggerdale. They are determined to rebuild their influence and reputation in Suzail through loyal service to King Foril, shows of generosity to the commoners, and patronage of the arts. The younger Cormaeril scions have a friendly competition with the younger Hawklins for capturing bounties and claiming rewards. The Cormaerils have a longtime rivalry with the Huntcrowns, who whisper insinuations against the former landowners. To counteract these rumors, the Cormaerils are trying to build relations with the Crownsilvers.

Crownsilver: One of the two remaining royal houses, the Crownsilver family is growing tired of the games of the Royal Court and the positioning that plays out as Foril's reign draws to a close. The Crownsilvers are not completely reliant on the king's patronage; their vast fortune is more than enough to support them in regal style. They dislike how blatantly dependent on trade some of the younger houses have become, feeling that this trend makes Cormyr more like Sembia. The family finds the Alsevir's,

Goldfeathers, and Marliirs particularly egregious in this regard. The Crownsilvers sponsor events throughout the year that emphasize chivalry and honor, such as tournaments and hunts.

Dauntinghorn: The Dauntinghorns' wealth is based on shipping, and they are keen to expand Cormyr's nautical power. The shifting of the Imperial Navy from Marsember to Suzail has increased the family's influence and reputation in the city. The Dauntinghorns are strong allies with the Truesilvers and support that house's efforts to have a greater presence on the Lake of Dragons. The Dauntinghorns zealously pursue pirates, and unlike the Blue Dragons, they seek to eliminate piracy throughout the Sea of Fallen Stars. The family regularly posts bounties for the capture of pirate ships. Many times these vessels are found to be based out of Westgate, a fact that has aggravated tensions between Cormyr and that port city. These strained relations do not concern the Dauntinghorns, who consider Westgate a nest of vermin.

Dracohorn: This small house has a terrible reputation among the other nobles in Suzail. The Crown ennobled its founder for slaying a blue dragon near Suzail, but detractors whisper that the dragon was already dead and the founder's deed was fraudulent. During the Abraxus Affair, the Dracohorns publicly suggested transferring power from the monarchy to a council of nobles. The family narrowly avoided exile but was harshly reprimanded by the Crown. Although they have not repeated this proposal since, the Dracohorns still desire to shift power away from the monarchy. The family has been making strong alliances with House Illance and House Wintersun, and it sees opportunity in the upcoming royal succession.

Emmarask: This family is composed of career politicians and governors who have a long tradition of quiet service without abuse of power. The king draws many local lords and their heralds from its ranks, giving the family tremendous influence throughout

Cormyr. Wise nobles respect the Emmarasks for their service even if they consider the family conservative and staid. Foolish nobles find that the family's subtle influence can devastate a promising career. House Emmarask has conflicting opinions on the rapid rise of Eleanor Thond to the position of herald of Suzail. Some members find her an upstart commoner who is usurping their traditional role in the kingdom and want her removed. Others point out her effectiveness and suggest marrying her into the family.

Greatgaunt: Ennobled two centuries back for outstanding military service, the Greatgaunts began as horse breeders and parlayed their earnings into modest but ever more valuable properties in central Suzail and western Marsember. The Greatgaunts maintain a low profile as dignified supporters of the royal family. Sticklers for tradition and etiquette, they are almost always voices of moderation in noble gatherings. Family members are shrewd but patient investors, and they are also philanthropists who make friends high and low in social standing. Like the Crownsilvers, they find the grasping of the Alsevir's, the Goldfeathers, and the Marliirs unseemly. Recently, a recurring plague of strangles struck the family's herds, damaging the season's crop of foals and sullyng the Greatgaunts' reputation in the city. Some family members suspect foul play and believe that their horses are being purposely infected with the highly contagious disease.

Goldfeather: The Goldfeathers have a long, scandal-ridden history. Twice stripped of their noble title, they most recently regained it under Azoun V in the Year of Darkenbeasts Risen (1442 DR). Six years later, the family's fortunes took a strong turn for the better when Prince Irvel, Azoun's grandson, married Ospra, the daughter of the current Lord Goldfeather. The marriage caused quite a furor among the other nobles, especially the Crownsilvers, who did everything in their power to prevent the union. The Goldfeathers have not forgiven the Crownsilvers for this slight and look for any opportunity to embarrass

that royal house. Despite their vacillating wealth and the opposition of many other noble houses, the Goldfeathers are, for once, steadfastly loyal to the Crown. Perhaps aware of the tenuous position her family holds in the city, Ospra refuses to advocate for her father, which greatly limits the family's influence on the Crown's decisions.

Hawklin: Before being ennobled two centuries ago, the Hawklin's supported Cormyr for generations beforehand through service in the Purple Dragons. They continue their military service and are one of the few families that tolerates its younger members becoming adventurers. It is not unheard of for a scion of House Hawklin to visit taverns in Suzail, seeking chartered adventuring parties for a dangerous quest. The house compensates for its lack of lands and businesses by surviving off rewards and looting from successful adventures. The Hawklin's believe that war with Netheril is inevitable, and they advocate for a strong stance against Sembia, a dramatic increase in military spending, and training by the War Wizards to counter the power of the Shades.

Huntcrown: The Huntcrown's are a diverse family with interests all over Cormyr. They are active participants in the functions and intrigues of the Royal Court, where they are known gossips and have a reputation for the most scandals of any noble family. The Cormaeril's were their historical rivals, but since that family's exile, the Huntcrown's competitive ire is split between Emmarask, Illance, and Marliir. The resulting lack of focus has weakened the family's effectiveness in the Royal Court, especially with respect to the Emmarask's and the Illance's, but the Huntcrown's have had great success in humbling the Marliir's—so much so that the present rumor-mongering campaign is in danger of becoming an open feud. The Huntcrown's have taken the precaution of hiring bodyguards for protection when they leave their estate.

Illance: The Illance family's star is rising again after generations of the house's slowly losing influence because of poor management of its fortunes. Its

financial woes were solved through a series of clever deals with the Seven Suns Trading Company and by taking advantage of reopened trade with Sembia. This reversal of fortune has caused some to question the family's loyalty to Cormyr, but most blame the insinuations on the wagging tongues of Huntcrown and put little stock in the tales. Notorious womanizers, the Illance's are frequent patrons of mask-dancer clubs. The family is vocal in its opposition to the Suzail Writ and finds a friendly ear in House Dracohorn. It remains to be seen if Illance will join with Dracohorn's plan to create a ruling council of nobles.

Marliir: Traditionally, the Marliir's had their power base in and around Arabel and were outsiders at the Royal Court. That situation changed when Azoun V married Nalara Marliir in the Year of the Secret (1396 DR), which elevated the family's status and influence in the court. Its fortunes have waned in the century since this coup, especially under the relentless social assault of the Huntcrown's and the disdain of the Greatgaunts and the Crown'silver's. The animosity between the Marliir's and the Huntcrown's is particularly virulent and threatens to erupt into an open feud. Already, fisticuffs between their younger scions are becoming common, and courtiers have observed more than a dozen duels in the Royal Gardens.

Rowanmantle: The Rowanmantle's are a small family with ancestral possessions near Tilverton. Their status has steadily climbed in the last century because they expanded to rule most of the lands near the Tilverton Scar and married into the "nobility" of Shadowdale. The family steadfastly supports the Obarskyrs and became advisors to the Crown during the rule of the Steel Regent and Azoun V. The Rowanmantle's connections with the Dalelands were instrumental in creating the alliance between Cormyr, the Dalelands, and Cormanthor against Sembia. This alliance forced Sembia to come to terms, which greatly enhanced the Rowanmantle's reputation in Cormyr as one of the top noble families.

The family continues to maintain close ties with the Dalelands and Cormanthor, supporting those lands against the many threats that surround them.

The Rowanmantle's are strong allies of the Hawklin family, sharing concerns about the intent of Netheril and opposing the efforts of House Truesilver and House Dauntinghorn to focus the kingdom's might southward, across the Dragonmere. The Rowanmantle's watch House Cormaeril's ascension of power in Daggerdale carefully. By taking an active role in the dales, the Cormaeril's are treading on the Rowanmantle's self-proclaimed sphere of influence. However, House Rowanmantle could use more allies in the court, and if Cormaeril is sincere about helping the dales, the two houses would have a common cause.

Truesilver: This house has a long military tradition, and its nobles have commanded the Purple Dragons several times. It has maintained its status by having skilled and well-placed members of the family in the military, particularly the burgeoning navy. The Truesilver's have formed a strong alliance with the Dauntinghorn's, who share their focus on the Dragonmere and the Inner Sea. This relationship puts them in opposition to the Rowanmantle's and the Hawklin's in court. The Truesilver's are too gracious to consider another family as an enemy, but they strongly disagree with the Rowanmantle's on the priorities of the nation. The weight of the royal house has carried the day so far, and the kingdom places increasing emphasis on expanding its naval power and stretching its influence on the Dragonmere. The Truesilver's share the concerns of the Crown'silver's over the perceived obsession with trade shown by some of the lesser noble houses. Although they are not as shrill about it as the other house, the Truesilver's participate in the chivalric events sponsored by the Crown'silver's.

Wintersun: The Wintersun's are upcountry nobles who until recently had almost no presence in Suzail. They own extensive country estates and have made a great deal of money leasing fields, hiring tenant farmers, and selling off the surplus crops.

During the Abraxus Affair, they learned that nobles without holdings in Suzail are considered backwater hicks, so they started investing heavily in the capital. The family has quietly and steadily bought properties in Suzail and is now the largest landlord in the city. Over the years, many accusations have dogged the Wintersuns, claiming that they engage in high-pressure techniques and intimidation to get owners to sell. The gossips of House Huntcrown say that House

Wintersun acts as much like a criminal organization as one can without engaging in anything criminal. The family has found common cause with the Dracohorns and the Illances. House Wintersun also detests the Suzail Writ as an affront to the privileges of nobility. However, the Wintersuns do not want to risk their property in the city becoming subject to royal seizure and have refused to support the Dracohorns' treasonous idea for a council of nobles.

RUMORS ABOUT TOWN

Rumors abound in the noble-laden halls of the Royal Court and the streets of Suzail. Below are some of the latest stories to circulate through the city.

Semia is about to invade. That country is already buying up Suzail building by building and trading company by trading company. They will make their move any day now, probably working through swindlers in Westgate.

The priests of Oghma have become very secretive since the Church in Exile took over the Silent Room. Perhaps they have knowledge that was thought to have drowned with Lantan and want to keep it for themselves.

King Foril plans to make commoners the equals of nobles. He pursues this goal slowly and by trickery to avoid civil war, but he is going to do it—that is, if the nobles don't have him assassinated first. And they're trying, twice or thrice every tenday.

One of the younger Truesilvers has run away, and no one knows why. It was probably to avoid being enlisted in the military, but some say it was to elope with a commoner. A commoner! Can you imagine it?

An argument erupted last night between a Marliir and a Huntcrown at the Witch-Duke's Bride. Blows were avoided at the tavern, but a challenge of a duel has been made and accepted. They're sorting out where and when it will take place. There could be noble blood spilled soon.

Exiled House Bleth has found a bastard descendant of Azoun IV. It is supporting the scion's claim to the throne of Cormyr in return for being restored to nobility. When the Bleths are back in power, they will take their revenge on all who wronged them.

A Sembian merchant was caught importing fake saffron from Turmish. The merchant has been chained to a stone chair and doused with water stained by his fake goods. Semia will respond; it's just a question of when and how.

The Wintersuns have their fingers in everything. They even own the deed to the Cormaerils' manor in the city. They hold it over the family's head and make them support the Wintersun agenda in the Royal Court.

The Rowanmantles are pushing King Foril to establish a permanent embassy with Cormanthyr in Myth Drannor. Although this seems to be in Cormyr's interest, how will Semia respond? More important, how will Netheril respond?

TRADE

As one of the two major ports in the nation, a wide variety of goods enters and passes through Suzail. The city exports copper bars from Espar, grain from all over Cormyr, and bone carvings from the uplands. Suzail imports wine from the Sword Coast, spices and silks from the east, and citrus from the southern Inner Sea. Artisans in the city craft musical instruments, cloth, finished garments, sword blades, and armor. Suzail is especially known for its durable, everyday woolens that are often trimmed with leather. Most of the sail making and shipbuilding had moved to Marsember as land became more valuable in Suzail, but with the return of the Imperial Navy, these industries are increasing once again.

The guilds of Suzail pride themselves on their quality and take substandard goods very seriously. They often hire third-party inspectors to peruse the markets and shops to ensure quality. Miscreant shopkeepers are chained to a stone chair in the Market Hall for a day with defective wares hung around their necks or burned at their feet. Bad produce, wine, ale, or scent is poured or smeared over them. Visiting merchants are punished the same way, after which their goods are confiscated and they are exiled from the city for a season.

Small artisans provide the bulk of the manufacturing in Suzail, and merchant houses and trading families dominate shipping and caravan transport. The most powerful merchant houses include the Seven Suns Trading Coster, the Trueshield Trading Priakos, and the trading families of Glanend and Skatterhawk. The Seven Suns' caravans have the leanest guards and the worst wagons, but the coster undercuts its competitors on most routes. It continually offers employment for guards, because the coster's low pay ensures a constant turnover. More than one adventuring party has gotten its start by escorting the coster's rickety wagons. In contrast, the Trueshield Trading Priakos builds its own wagons

and equips and trains its own guards. Few bandits tangle with its caravans, and even orcs leave them alone on most trips. Trueshield's rates are expensive, but the company almost always delivers.

The Glanend family focuses on land trade inside Cormyr, such as bringing grain to the markets in Suzail. The Purple Dragons suspect some of the Glanend agents of smuggling goods in the sacks of grain that rumble through the gates daily. The wealth of the Skatterhawk family centers on shipping, and it owns many ships large and small. Its greatest concern is the pirates who operate out of Westgate across the Dragonmere and who seem to have a disturbing knack for finding vulnerable Skatterhawk ships. The family suspects that the pirates use magical divinations or receive information from a spy.

RELIGION

Suzail boasts major temples to Tymora and Oghma and lesser shrines to Lliira, Malar, Tempus, and Milil. The most prominent temple in Suzail is the Towers of Good Fortune, dedicated to Tymora. During the Time of Troubles, Tymora herself appeared in Arabel, prompting a resurgence of her faith throughout Cormyr that continues to this day. Although the goddess stayed at her temple in Arabel, the temple in Suzail is larger and more impressive. An elaborate wishing well has recently been constructed in its sanctuary. The well is more of a fountain—water cascades down a series of steps beneath a statue of Tymora as she appeared in Arabel many years ago. Those who cast a gold piece into the well while saying a prayer to the goddess are said to gain her blessing on their next venture.

Luckmaster Olane Davanac oversees the temple and is assisted by more than a dozen priests (called Luckbringers) and several hundred lay worshippers. Davanac is an older human woman who began her service to Lady Luck in Arabel. She traveled widely in her youth, serving in multiple temples throughout

the Heartlands. Rumors persist that on her travels she met and fell in love with a talented minstrel from Berdusk. At this point, the accounts diverge. Some claim that the minstrel broke her heart, while others say that he was slain by a jealous rival. Davanac does not speak of her past, but she has never married.

Nobles and merchants constantly seek the blessing of Tymora, and no significant venture is undertaken in the city without the prayers of the Luckbringers. Although the priests do not charge directly for their attentions, most people provide offerings in the hopes that it will tip the odds in their favor; thus, the temple is extremely wealthy. Luckmaster Davanac is willing to cast rituals for adventurers in return for donations to the temple.

The second major temple in Suzail is the Silent Room, once dedicated to Denier but now sanctified to Oghma. When Oghma's Chosen, Grand Patriarch Cullen Kordamant, disappeared more than 120 years ago, his faith split into two major factions. The Orthodox Church of Oghma based in Procampur refused to appoint a new grand patriarch until Cullen was proven to be dead or until Oghma named a replacement. The Oghmanyte Church in Sembia did appoint a new grand patriarch, which the Orthodox Church refused to accept. The Sembian faction also disagreed with the Orthodox Church on the dissemination of knowledge, teaching that knowledge must be tested and proven worthy before being released to the public. The Oghmanyte Church recently relocated from Sembia to the Silent Room in Suzail.

High Namer Wyndel Sedranis leads the Silent Room, holding sway over a half-dozen other priests and nearly one hundred lay followers. Sedranis is related to the Emmarask family, which supported his accession to the head of the temple. His primary focus is the schism with the Orthodox Church. He constantly writes to the other temples to convince them of the need to recognize a new grand patriarch. If his messages are not persuasive, Sedranis plans to seek diplomatic emissaries to represent the Oghmanyte

Church to the other temples in an attempt to heal the schism.

The Silent Room houses a large library of histories and fiction of the Dragonreach lands. For a small fee per volume, anyone can peruse the books. The church maintains auditoriums to discuss and test theories before releasing them to the public. The priests take significant steps to ensure privacy of the discussions to keep dangerous and untested knowledge from spreading.

CULTURE

Suzail functions as two cities. The Royal Palace, the Royal Court, and the noble estates surrounding them form a sphere of wealth and power that is not accessible to the common Suzailian. The rest of the city is given over to crafts and trade, which are beneath the notice of most nobles. However, these two cities rely upon each other heavily. The commoners provide goods and services needed by the nobles. In turn, the commoners derive their livings from the nobles and emulate the nobility in their entertainments.

Fairs and Festivals

The city celebrates the usual festivals of Midwinter, Greengrass, Midsummer, Highharvestide, and the Feast of the Moon. Suzail adds three festivals of its own devising—the hiring fairs, the Festival of the Sword, and Chasing the King. With the exception of the hiring fairs, most shops close down for all these celebrations, and many noble families host grand soirees. Many shops are closed the day after a festival to recover.

Hiring Fairs: Workers skilled in a trade gather at hiring fairs held in the spring, summer, and fall so that prospective employers can select new employees. The choices offered by a large selection of skilled craft-folk please the employers, and the public nature of the fairs prevents unscrupulous merchants from hiring desperate workers at exploitative wages to undersell

their rivals. Lately, chartered adventuring parties have used hiring fairs as a way to find patrons. It might not be glamorous, but the adventurers say it is more likely to produce work than waiting in a tavern.

Festival of the Sword: Held on the fourth day of Kythorn, this festival represents the importance of the arms trade to Suzail. The celebration consists of a mounted parade of armorsmiths dressed in the best armor their shops make. They gallop through the streets, waving blades, bellowing war cries, and sounding horns. When the bells toll at the Citadel of the Purple Dragons, the riders race to the gates of the Royal Court, where an assembly of nobles and courtiers toasts them with fine drink. Afterward, the crowd watches champions fight monsters in a prepared ring on the court's grounds. Long ago, the combats were playacting, but for the last hundred years, the monsters have been real and the battles in earnest. Adventurers vie for the opportunity to fill the role of champion, which carries a fat purse. The Lord Magister also hires adventurers to capture monsters for use in the festival.

Chasing the King: The other uniquely Suzailian holiday is Chasing the King. This macabre festival is celebrated on the sixth day of Marpenoth in dubious honor of Boldovar Obarskyr. Mad Boldovar would fly into berserk killing rages and set off across the city, hacking and slashing at everything and everyone in his way. For this festival, a criminal condemned to death volunteers to play the role of the king. He is given armor and a blunt sword and allowed to roam the streets till sundown. Anyone can attack the "king," but he is allowed to defend himself. If the king can stay alive till dusk, he wins his freedom.

Fashion

As the home of the Royal Court, Suzail sets fashion trends for the rest of Cormyr. Nobles and wealthy noble aspirants follow new fashions eagerly, and the city's designers are only too happy to provide. Suzail

is a busy trading port, and visitors from across the world add variety to the trends. Adventurers seeking noble patrons are advised to keep up with the fashions in the city to make the right impression.

The current trend for men is loose white cotton shirts with belled sleeves and a laced collar and cuffs matched with knee-length breeches and bucket-top boots. For formal occasions, men wear patterned doublets over their shirts. Short cloaks, usually hip-length and often with sleeves, are slung over the shoulder. The lining of the cloak matches the doublet. Two belts are worn—one to hold up the breeches and a second for pouches. Baldrics have replaced sword belts in recent years, but older fashions hung the scabbard from the second belt. The hat of choice is a Capitano with a wide brim and a crown that is low rounded or flat. The hat is often decorated with exotic feathers, and one of the brims can be pinned up if desired.

Women's fashions are a smock or a bodice worn over a white cotton chemise, which might have long sleeves, short sleeves, or no sleeves. The bodice is matched with a skirt that is split to reveal the petticoat underneath, which is patterned to match the bodice. When dressing formally, women wear gowns with low, rounded necklines and vests over the top for warmth. Women's headgear varies widely, ranging from a simple linen coif to a feminine version of the Capitano.

Shopkeepers of both genders add various styles of aprons or coveralls over their other clothing and whatever headgear they prefer (or their guild and profession customarily uses). Scholars, mages, and scribes wear robes with breeches and an overcloak.

Ornamental canes are a trend of the past two seasons. Favored by younger nobles and noble sons (who have no use for a real cane), they are the latest example of conspicuous consumption. The canes are slim rods of fine, polished wood, shod at both ends with ornately crafted precious metals. The handle caps are ringed with the owner's crown of rank, and the end has the armorial bearing, in relief, of the owner's family.

Nightlife

Full of nobles, wealthy merchants, and foreign dignitaries, Suzail has a thriving night life. There is no lack of entertainment or dining experiences in the city that has been called the brightest jewel in Cormyr's crown.

Suzail is a city of clubs, and almost everyone of importance belongs to at least one. Entrance to the clubs is restricted to members, who are commonly allowed to bring in one guest each. The tradition of clubs began several hundred years ago as exclusive gathering places for nobles who wanted to drink, gamble, and be entertained without wading through a sea of commoners. After a few prominent nobles joined the nascent clubs, everyone wanted to be part of one. Most clubs are drinking establishments, but many specialize in gambling or in providing services to adventurers. The most recent trend in club entertainment is the mask-dancer clubs, which feature beautiful dancers who wear masks of fearsome creatures and little else.

Eating out is a citywide tradition, and Suzail has many restaurants to accommodate the demand. A great deal of business in the city is settled during the course of a meal. Refined patrons who wish to discuss employment with chartered adventurers usually do so over dinner. Restaurants range from shuttered dockside windows to haughty establishments that cater to the wealthiest nobles, and many of them come and go with the seasons. They typically shut down in the winter and reappear in the warm months under new names and in new places to take advantage of the tax breaks the lord chamberlain gives to all new businesses.

The city is well furnished with watering holes, since most Suzailians prefer a quick drink after work before stumbling home to bed. Taverns tend to be small, quiet establishments that cater to locals, but several notable exceptions exist. Every tavern in the town has a "snoring room" where customers can

sleep off their drinks. In compensation for the room's use, the tavernmaster is entitled to take the cost of one drink of the most expensive sort that the sleeper drank that evening.

Suzail has many inns to accommodate visiting travelers. Innkeepers are notoriously discriminatory about the sort of lodgers they take, and adventurers are steered to the handful of inns that cater to their needs. (The inns described in "Important Sites" below accept adventurers.) Most inns rent rooms by the month over the winter when traffic is slowest.

IMPORTANT SITES

Suzail is built on a deepwater harbor on the north shore of the Dragonmere. The city barely felt the physical effects of the Spellplague. The deep harbor meant that the lowering of the water level in the Lake of Dragons had a minimal effect on the city.

Unlike many larger cities, Suzail does not have sewers because the tides of the Lake of Dragons backwashed the waste into the city, causing significant sanitation problems. The sewers that had been dug were filled in. Instead, dung wagons patrol the streets and cart unwanted waste to the midden fields outside the city walls.

Locations likely to be of importance to adventurers are described below.

Bindle's: This club was once the place to be seen among the nobility but has since lost its allure. It is now a drinking club for merchants to discuss business, and many deals are sealed in the wood-paneled rooms. Visitors should be aware that intrigue among the merchants can be just as vicious as that among the nobility.

Dragon's Jaws: This inn faces onto the Promenade and is renowned for a number of exciting and dangerous encounters in its taproom, including the death of a mind flayer and the revelation of a gold dragon. A gnome called Gnorm owned the inn, but he passed away several years ago. He left the inn to

a distant cousin who lives near Scornubel, but the cousin has not arrived to take possession. The dwarf bartender Milo Dudley continues to run the day-to-day operation of the Dragon's Jaws, as he always has, even though he is getting on in years. Milo is concerned that something might have happened to Gnorm's cousin and would be pleased if anyone passing through Scornubel would check on him.

Dragonriders' Club: This private club is the favorite nighttime destination of many nobles and wealthy merchants. Its primary attraction is its beautiful mask-dancers. Nobles often invite people they are attempting to impress to the club for a dance by their favorite performer. The club's owner, a woman named Tress, is very protective of her dancers, even in the face of drunken nobles. During the daytime hours, the club offers meals and services such as haircuts and baths to its members. It was recently damaged in a brawl between nobles, but it has since been repaired and is open for business.

Golden Goblin: Angry men come to this tavern looking for fights—and often find them. The regulars like picking fights with newcomers, so those who wish to avoid a barroom brawl should drink elsewhere. The tavern is a smoky place with a low ceiling and oft-mended furniture. A huge statue of a goblin leers from a perch. It glows with a golden hue and lights the tavern.

The Jaws: This culvert siphons the stream from Lake Azoun under the streets of Suzail to the Basin. Since it allows travel through the city unseen, it is attractive to those who are up to no good. The Purple Dragons are aware of the culvert and have it under strict surveillance.

Laughing Lass: The Laughing Lass is a tavern that transforms into a festhall on warm summer evenings. Adventurers gather here, where Purple Dragons and War Wizards are not welcome, to drink and make deals. Lassendri owns the tavern and knows much about the Suzailian underworld. The best way to fence stolen goods, make contacts with outlaws, or

arrange shady deals is with the help of one of the lovely professional escorts in a room upstairs.

Leaning Post: This quiet inn owned by the Hawklin family reflects its desire for no-nonsense quality. It uses the inn to house retainers it does not want to keep in its mansion or for meetings away from the eyes of other nobles. A few of the other families, including the Huntcrowns, are aware of these meetings and spy on the inn to see what the Hawk-lins are up to.

The Lockup: An imposing and dour building that resembles a giant square of stone, the Lockup is the prison of Suzail. Suspects awaiting trial are kept here, as are criminals serving their time. Rumor has it that the statues of Purple Dragons built into the edifice animate at the warden's command to put down riots.

The Myrmidon: Once called Thelmar's Inn, this place changed names when new owners took over and rebuilt the entire structure. The proprietors are a pair of brothers who served in the Purple Dragons. They rescued a member of the Cormaeril family from a gang of dark ones from the Shadowfell. The reward from the grateful Cormaerils was enough to let the brothers purchase the inn. Dark ones are notoriously vengeful, and the brothers encourage adventurers to stay at the inn to discourage retribution.

Nightgate Inn: The Nightgate Inn is the only inn outside the walls of the city. It looks like a fort and has stone walls as thick as those of the Citadel of the Purple Dragons. The inn is damp and gloomy year-round and the prices are outlandish, but visitors do not have to contend with the city gate, so it has a constant supply of guests. The Nightgate Inn also provides an excellent venue for clandestine meetings with those who are barred from entering Suzail.

The Osculatory: "The Osco" is a private club that caters to young nobles and citizens of quality who wish to meet others of similar social status for romantic encounters. Sometimes called a kissing club, the Osco gets pretty wild late at night, and being seen leaving the club in the morning can damage a

member's reputation or make it, depending upon the kind of reputation sought.

Promenade: The most popular location in Suzail is the Promenade, a long, semicircular street that divides the royal area from the rest of the city. The Promenade is illuminated with magical flames of bright amber tones, making it safe and well lit at night. These radiances also light major cross streets throughout the city at each intersection.

Ring of Coins: This pawn shop is renowned throughout the city for its wide variety of wares. The selection ranges from outdated furniture to wild costumes and outrageous accessories. The Ring of Coins deals with dubious items as well, such as thieves' tools, and some of the items might be stolen. The shop purchases intriguing items from adventurers that they cannot sell elsewhere.

Royal Court: The Royal Court is a sprawling labyrinth of interconnected buildings, erected and expanded over the centuries. The court stretches almost a quarter mile along the Promenade. Its several hundred chambers house the legal and administrative bureaucracy of Cormyr, including the Lord Magister and his herald. The nobles of the country gather here to meet, discuss, and plot.

Royal Palace: The Palace of the Purple Dragon rises out of the wooded Royal Gardens like a fairy-tale castle, all slender spires, balconies, and pennants. The palace is the private residence of the royal family. The royal houses of Crownsilver and Truesilver have apartments here, but their family members usually stay at their individual estates. Most matters of government are handled at the Royal Court, and an invitation inside the walls of the Royal Palace is extraordinarily rare.

Six Candles: "The Sixer" is an old inn that has a reputation as a den of smugglers and other nefarious patrons. The inn has a crowd of suspicious-looking regulars who always seem to be present, nursing their drinks and having mumbled conversations. The

Sixer also has extensive cellars, making it easy to hide goods or conduct secret meetings. Some say that the cellars open into the abandoned sewers of Suzail, which were not quite as filled in as the Purple Dragons think.

Society of Stalwart Adventurers: This exclusive club is housed in an old, luxurious mansion boasting many fireplaces and the stuffed heads of monsters. Older members meet here to talk about their adventures and reminisce about expeditions. The club has an extensive library of old adventurers' journals, which detail lairs, ruins, and dungeons scattered across Cormyr and beyond. The staff includes several shifters, who are given to pranks such as displaying fangs, claws, or horns.

Tavernant's Tellings: This shop was the original innovator that began offering printing services to the general public. Tavernant's prints advertising broadsheets, notices, and menus and is the best way to spread information to a lot of people very quickly. Posters sometimes glue broadsheets to stone walls around town, forcing property owners to burn the sheets off. This situation gave rise to the Suzailian expression "the latest scorched," which refers to recent news.

Wailing Wheel: This is the quietest of Suzail's large inns. The prices are low, but the inn is cold and dirty, the dining room fare is meager, and the service is nonexistent. Rumors say the Wailing

QUESTS IN SUZAIL

With all the nobles and other powerful individuals in Suzail, adventuring parties have a virtually limitless number of potential patrons. Suzail is highly politicized, and choosing one patron could alienate others. Below are four patrons who make excellent sources for adventures.

Lady Eleanor Thond is a valuable resource for a chartered adventuring party in Suzail. She is well connected politically and has access to information and people unavailable to most characters. Although she is part of the establishment, she is willing to bend the rules and hire adventurers to take care of matters quietly, outside of official channels. Thond's concerns are mostly inside the city, so her missions and adventures would take place in Suzail.

Gyles Hawklin, the senior member of House Hawklin in Suzail, is extremely concerned about Netheril's plan for Cormyr. He seeks adventurers to scout the activities of the Shades of Netheril and report on their plots. Hawklin missions would send the characters into Sembia, the Dalelands, the Moonsea, and Netheril.

High Namer Wyndel Sedranis of the Silent Room is facing polite resistance from some of his noble sponsors in Suzail who want the internal conflict in the Church of Oghma ended as quickly as possible. The easiest way to heal the rift is to prove that Grand Patriarch Cullen is dead. Sedranis seeks adventurers to follow leads and discover the final fate of the grand patriarch.

House Dauntinghorn regularly posts bounties for pirates who plague shipping on the Lake of Dragons. Interested adventurers are directed to Lavertes Dauntinghorn, who pays the bounties. Lavertes knows a great deal about activities on the high seas and is a source of many nautical adventures..

Wheel stays in business only because it is owned by Sembian agents.

Witch-Duke's Bride: A relatively new tavern, the Witch-Duke's Bride is the current favorite among Suzail's high society. The owner, Mastaal Gerahgen, is a retired ship captain, and he stocks the largest variety of liquor in the city, using his many contacts around the Sea of Fallen Stars. Many younger nobles come to taste exotic liquors and hear tales from travelers from across the sea. A perceptive patron can learn much about the shipping in and out of Suzail by listening to the nobles talk after a few potent drinks.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Service to the Crown, the schemes of the nobles, and travelers from many foreign lands make the city a location brimming with adventure possibilities. Below are several ideas for adventures set in Suzail.

A Dread Pirate in Need: During the Chasing the King festival, the prisoner "king" runs down the street, through the inn, or wherever the characters are staying. She spies them and begs them to help her escape from Suzail. If they agree, she promises to split a sizable hidden treasure that will make them very rich. If the characters don't help her, a horde of bloodthirsty citizens chases her off. If they do help, the prisoner is true to her word and leads them to the buried treasure once they are away from Suzail. The treasure is something she hid before her arrest. She was captured and condemned to death for piracy, but she is not just any pirate—she is the notorious Kharee Beltran, captain of the *Revelation Mead*. Now free, she intends to resume her old ways, but she needs a crew of formidable adventurers to help her.

A Masked Dance: A mask-dancer club hires the party for extra protection. A minor noble of House Illance has taken a fancy to one of the girls and is practically stalking her. While the party guards the club, the dancer, Dedania, becomes very friendly

with one of the characters. Does she honestly like the character, or is she just using the adventurer for protection? If her advances are reciprocated, she asks the character to deliver a letter to her brother in Daerlun. Meanwhile, the Illance noble approaches the party and informs them that the dancer is actually a spy for Sembia. He wants to hire the party to find out what Dedania has learned about his family's business and to whom she is reporting. Is the Illance noble telling the truth, or is he using the adventurers to learn more about the dancer? The letter to Dedania's brother seems innocuous enough, but is it in code? And what awaits the party in Daerlun—the dancer's brother or a Sembian spy ring?

Staying out of Print: Penelope Nilain is a courtesan renowned throughout the city for her wit, beauty, and physical talent. She has escorted many nobles over the years, and her companionship is always in demand. Nilain recently decided to retire from the business. To support herself in retirement, she is writing her autobiography, which is sure to contain salacious details on a large number of nobles. She is offering her former clients the opportunity to buy their way out of being mentioned in her book. She hires the party to protect her from any accidents that might befall her during the writing process. On the other hand, parts of her autobiography must be juicy indeed if nobles are willing to spend significant gold to prevent themselves from being included. Those pages would be extremely valuable in the right hands. Anyone who steals her manuscript can name his own price—or he might become the new target.

Travails of a Messenger: The Rowanmantles are vigorously reinforcing the alliance between Cormyr and the Dalelands. The family hires the party to escort a messenger traveling overland from Suzail to Ashabenford. Before the characters leave Suzail, they must contend with agents from the Huntcrowns, who use tricks and intrigue to learn about their mission, and the Truesilvers, who evoke patriotism and

loyalty to the Crown. In addition to the usual bandits and monsters that harry the roads, at some point during the trip, agents of Sembia or Netheril try to kidnap the messenger to extract information. Are the characters just unlucky, or did the Rowanmantles use them as a decoy for the real messenger? If the party's messenger is the real one, what information is being carried to the Dalelands? What if the "message" is actually the party, because the Rowanmantles have promised to send adventurers to help the beleaguered dales?

About the Author

Eric Menge is an author, editor, and intermittent attorney. He has designed nearly twenty adventures for the RPGA, written website articles for Wizards of the Coast, and acted as a campaign administrator for the *Living Greyhawk* campaign. He is currently creating an online graphic novel, *Snow by Night*, and dreams of muskets, alchemy, and snow in the moonlight. Eric would like to thank Brian Cortijo, Brian R. James, and Ed Greenwood for their invaluable assistance during the writing of this article.

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