

THE WRECKS
BY
NIGHT

A RAGING SWAN PRESS MINI-EVENTURE





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THE WRECKS BY NIGHT

Languard is the Duchy of Ashlar's capital city. It is a vibrant, dynamic place full of opportunities, complications and adventures. So often, though, characters moving about the city experience none of this rich flavour—they simply arrive at their destination. Use the lists herein to add depth and flavour to your characters' exploits in Languard.

Designed specifically for you, the busy GM, this supplement enables you to effortlessly bring your characters' next urban adventure to life. This supplement is designed for use with *City Backdrop: Languard*, but can easily be used with virtually any town or city.

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WHAT'S A MINI-EVENTURE?

A mini-eventure is akin to a normal encounter, but does not (normally) feature violence or physical challenges. Instead, a mini-eventure focuses on the use of social skills and role-play to resolve the challenges, or events, therein. Most mini-eventures take place in an urban locale. Mini-eventures are an excellent change of pace and can be used as filler between adventures or as situations in which characters who have invested in social skills can shine. They are also perfect for players who enjoy role-playing.

USING THIS MINI-EVENTURE

This supplement provides everything you need to run a short, flavoursome eventure.

Use the lists herein to add depth and flavour to the characters' exploration of Languard. Use the entries as nothing more than local colour or as springboards to encounters, side quests or even full adventures. You can use this mini-eventure repeatedly, as long as you keep track of which entries you have previously used. Of course, some of the listed NPCs and locales could become staples of your campaign. Be sure to note the location of locales on your GM's city map and develop any your characters seem particularly interested in visiting again.

You can either plan events ahead of time or just "wing" the whole mini-eventure using the tables herein to facilitate play.



THE WRECKS

Where the ramshackle and slimy, sagging wharfs redolent with decay cluster thickly along the Svart's muddy, slick bank gather the ferociously independent and inbred takolen. A singular air of ruin and decay hangs heavily over their home—the rotting wharves and the festering, stinking boats moored alongside or grounded in the shallow water thick with silt, seaweed and jetsam.

Many of the fetid hulks moored along the crumbling docks have not put to sea in living memory. In truth, most cannot. Lashed together, the boats form a confused mishmash of homes, warehouses, whorehouses, taverns and other less pleasant businesses. Even the agents of the Shadow Masks dare not work here, but some of the braver—or perhaps more debased—townsfolk do occasionally visit certain of these uniformly foul, unwelcoming businesses.

Perhaps numbering 200 souls, the takolen are universally thought of as a surly, rude and violent folk. Rumours of inbreeding, the unknown fate of some of those venturing into the takolen's rotting realm and strange religious practices conspire to keep most outsiders at bay. Even among the unsavoury and debauched takolen, however, the cult of Dagon—the Shadow Under the Sea—has found little purchase. Still, a few of the more deranged and morally bankrupt individuals have embraced his blasphemous teachings. Hidden deep in the part-flooded hold and bilges of the semi-sunken *Acheon* lurks the centre of his profane worship—the so-called Briny Fane—in the Wrecks.

THE WRECKS BY NIGHT

Deep shadows haunt the wrecks, by night. Rumours about what happens after dark in the Wrecks swirl among Languard's other citizens. Few outsiders enter the Wrecks once the sun has gone down, and those who do are normally of the worst sort.

FOLK OUT & ABOUT

While the characters are out and about they may encounter one or more folk of interest.

1. **Hanish Larsa** (NE male human [takolen] **spy**) hopes some inattentive idiot will wander into the Wrecks from Languard proper. He is part of a gang who enjoy mugging any non-takolen who falls into their clutches. His mates wait nearby.
2. **Ninki Zimbir** (NE female human [takolen] **bandit captain**) manifests the very worse characteristics of the takolen. She worships Dagon and has many friends among the most base of her folk. She tries to hire herself as a guide to any outsiders wandering the Wrecks at night, and guides her employers to *Acheon* and the profane Briny Fane hidden in its sodden bilges (location W7 on the City of Languard map).
3. **Etana Accad** (CE male human [takolen] **veteran**) believes he has been cursed by a sea spirit and that he needs to make a sacrifice to set matters right—any lone non-takolen will do. Etana is burly a little drunk and desperate to make amends so he can go back to sea.

4. **Agga Kutha** (NE old male human [takolen] **bandit**) cackles to himself as he wanders home. He's a "fisherman" and has just delivered his "catch" to an acquaintance nearby. He is stocky, reeks of salt and fish and has a pronounced squint.
5. **Iisak Salme** (N male human **commoner**) staggers along the road having received a nasty blow to the head. Blood trickles down his forehead into his eyes. Iisak is disorientated; the last thing he remembers is walking toward Water Lane. Then, he found himself in the Wrecks. He is grateful to anyone escorting him out of the Wrecks.
6. **Maija Airikka** (N female human **spy**) keeps to the shadows, moving slowly and deliberately. Her friend, Maija Airikka, recently went missing after boasting he had a job to do in the Wrecks. It's been a week since he's been seen and Maija has come to investigate. The characters, however, spotting her skulking in the shadows, may suspect she has nefarious plans and act accordingly. Maija is a low-level member of the Shadow Masks; she could be a useful contact, if treated well.

LOCALES OF INTEREST

The Wrecks features many notable and not-so-notable locales such as shops, workshops, private homes and the like.

1. **Grebb's Mouth:** This notorious sinkhole lurks in the depths of the Wrecks. Even light rain turns the surrounding mud into a gluttonous morass. Named for an old captain who drowned in the sinkhole decades ago some of the takolen swear the hole is sentient. Some even whisper, it moves around.
2. **Raider:** This caravel sunk two decades ago, during a fierce winter storm. Only her barnacled poop and stern decks remain above the Svart's murky waters. At night, those desirous of privacy often use the wreck for private colloquies.
3. **Bog Queen Alley:** Thick darkness cloaks this low-lying alley running right down to the water's edge. The takolen avoid this place after dark; strange squelchings often emanate from its shadows. A deep sinkhole—the Bog Queen—filled with cloying slime lurks close to the riverbank; more than a few folk have disappeared within her hideous maw.
4. **Low Tide:** At night, lights often glimmer enticingly in the nameless wreck now known locally known as *Low Tide*. The takolen stay clear; those investigating the seaweed-choked hull invariably disappear—sometimes without trace, and sometimes pieces of dismembered corpses are washed ashore by the next high tide.
5. **Jarn's:** This floating still and whisky-dive enjoys a good reputation among the takolen. The old river barge remains seaworthy—barely—and sometimes moves from wharf to wharf. The owner is ancient and gnarled by decades on the water; rumour has it, he has not set foot on dry land for two over decades.
6. **Fins & Scales:** Smugglers, kidnappers and murderers by trade, Fins & Scales also offer night fishing to any outsiders insane enough to pay their nominal fee. Their fishing boat is in relatively good repair and more than capable of carrying their (too) trusting customers far out to sea...

WHAT'S GOING ON?

While the characters are out and about, one or more things from the list below may occur.

1. **Evil Mud:** The slick, glutenous mud of the Svart's banks glimmers evilly in the moonlight. Faint wisps of mist coil and twist over the water as if they were the shades of all those who have drowned in the river.
2. **Thick Mist:** A thick, cold mist rises from the river to blanket the Wrecks. Visibility plummets and sounds are subtly distorted and muffled. Incautious characters may fall from a crumbling wharf into the riverbank's thick, cloying mud.
3. **Drunkard:** A drunk takolen—clutching a near-empty flask of cheap brandy—staggers passed the party. The man mutters evilly to himself and leers in a most unsettling manner at the obvious outsiders.
4. **The Stench:** The stench of decay blows over the Wrecks, driven onshore by a stiff breeze. The smell is redolent with rot, salt and other less identifiable and wholesome things. The smell is particularly pungent under the docks where air rarely circulates with vigour.
5. **Glimmering Lights:** The glimmering lights of noble High City shimmer enticingly across the Svart. Snatches of laughter and singing drift across the water to compare incongruously with the mud, slime and decay of the Wrecks.
6. **Dismal Rain:** A light, dismal rain falls over the city. Quickly, the saturated streets become even more muddy and dangerous. Puddles form almost instantly and water—with nowhere else to go—begins to ooze toward the river.

OPPORTUNITIES & COMPLICATIONS

Lucky adventurers can find opportunities almost anywhere. Unlucky adventurers can find complications almost anywhere.

1. **Something Dumped:** A loud splash comes from the direction of the river as if something large fell, jumped or was pushed into the noisome waters flowing passed the Wrecks. Characters investigating catch a glimpse of something man-sized slipping below the river's foul water.
2. **Drunkard:** As What's Going On? #3, but the man is only pretending to be drunk. He is part of a gang, and is taking a closer look at the outsiders to see if they might be easy marks. Perceptive characters realise the man is not drunk at all, and may—thus—be alerted to potential trouble.
3. **Screaming and Gurgling:** Shrill screaming splits the night. The screams come from the river bank—under a part-collapsed wharf. Characters investigating reach the site as the screaming trails off into a series of indistinct gurgles. The sounds seem to come from behind a part-sunken ship leaning against a ramshackle river barge.
4. **Nighttime Boating:** Dark shadows and faint lights show were several oceangoing vessels have anchored away from the filth and squalor of the Wrecks. Sharp-eyed characters spot smaller shadows—likely rowboats—slowly making their way towards an anchored caravel.

5. **Shouts and Cursing:** Shouts of, "She's got away", "She's in the river" and loud cursing float out of darkness. The commotion emanates from the Gulping Lyza brothel (location W8 on the City of Languard map). Characters investigating are curtly told to mind their own business, but notice two rowboats being pushed into the water—presumably in pursuit of whoever or whatever has escaped.
6. **Sick Woman:** A woman (Maija Airikka, see "Folk Out and About" #6) staggers down the muddy street. At first glance, she appears drunk, but a closer look reveals she is exceptionally haggard and grey-skinned. At the characters' approach she moans and collapses. Maija has been bitten by Mister Palatte owner of The Flotsam Pyre (location W3 on the City of Languard map). The Flotsam Pyre is a flophouse and rum-den, and Mister Palatte (the owner) is an actual ghoul—who delights in inflicting his condition on others.

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

Characters out and about may overhear or learn some of the rumours (which may or may not be true) below.

1. **Mind Your Own Business:** If you see boats on the water or hear sounds of foul doings in the Wrecks at night you would be wise not to investigate. The takolen are merciless in protecting their privacy and business.
2. **Strange Cults:** The takolen worship strange, evil gods in hidden shrines. Outsiders are not permitted in their blasphemous fanes—except as sacrifices! Invariably the takolen conduct their sinister doings at night, and strange things are abroad in the mud and filth of the Svart's banks.
3. **Inbred Takolen:** Inbreeding is rife among the takolen—as evidenced by their insular nature and singular appearances. But some takolen interbreed with other, horrible things brought up through their strange religious practise. Others are born of poor, destitute women snatched from the worst parts of the Fishshambles or Water Lane.
4. **Night Spirits:** When the night-mists writhe over the Svart's black waters, the spirits of those who have drowned in its briny depths are abroad. Some such folk died in normal, mundane boating accidents, but others were victims of the takolen and their blasphemous religious practices. That is why the mists swirl thicker and deeper around the Wrecks.
5. **Fishmen:** Many of the foul and debased takolen literally live their entire lives on the water. They are aberrations—part man, part fish. Some are reputed to have never set foot on dry land—they are born, live and die in their foul, stinking boat-homes.
6. **Dangerous Ground:** The Wrecks are so dangerous even the ground can kill you! Filth-filled pits and sinkholes can open up from amid the mire without warning to swallow up incautious visitors. Some such dangers are known hazards, and the locals even give them affectionate names!

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