



## THE PLAZA

### AN INTRODUCTION

**T**HE HEAT RADIATES THROUGH THE SOLES OF YOUR boots as you wander along the street. The paving shimmers in the noon day sun, cracked and blasted by wind and sand. Most of the citizens are wisely sheltering in, at least subjectively, cooler archways, covered markets or what passes for taverns in this place.

Ahead you see a fountain, its crystal clear water pattering lazily into a wide, star shaped basin. A few ruffians lounge at its edge looking sullenly at the passing locals. An old woman, decrepit with age struggles up the tiled steps surrounding it, her staff in one hand making a dry thud as she walks, a bucket in the other swinging as she hobbles forwards.

As she reaches the top, one of the ruffians stands up, blocking her way. A sneer crosses his face while his friends look on in amusement. "Back off old hag! Go fill your pail at the troughs with the animals".

She stands stock still for a moment, and then with a quick movement whips her staff around in a wide arc, cracking the ruffian across the temple. His stunned expression goes slack as his eyes roll up into his head, his body collapsing at her feet. The other ruffians look on in shock, a group advance on the old crone. She blinks at them innocently "Oh my dear boys, you wouldn't hit a poor defenceless little old lady would you?"

You're not sure she actually needs your help, but as adventurers you feel obliged to at least offer your assistance.

### ENVIRONMENT DESCRIPTORS

- The heat is oppressive.
- The sun bakes the stone street until it shimmers.
- The plaster walls are cracked in places revealing red brick and mortar beneath.
- Palms sway in the light breeze, which is NOT refreshing.
- Incense and strange aromas drift from dark doorways.

### NOTES AND TIPS

- **Water rights** - There is a dispute about who is and is not allowed to use the fountain. Maybe there's a drought, or most of the towns water sources are contaminated.
- **Gang turf** - Drop some ruffians around the fountain. They do not let anyone approach. Have them shout insults at the party, or show them off as bullies.
- **A wild water elemental appears** - An elemental has taken over this fountain, and attacks anyone that walks past. The party have been hired to deal with it.
- **The fountain defiled** - The water spirit which ensures the

fountain always flows is upset. Local thugs have been using the fountain as a latrine. Motivations for doing this could be intimidation of the locals, wanting to drive the spirit off so the fountain runs dry, wanting to weaken the spirit so it can be captured and moved to a new location. This could help lead the party to larger plots with the cities underworld.

- **Assassins up top** - With so much elevation, this map is perfect for ambushes and assassination attempts. The party could be escorting someone through the city, or it could be an attack on them for some reason.

### VARIANTS

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