

Customs

The docks refer to the actual part of the island where ships moor. The island is called The Stays. Short for 'Staitheline.'

There are several Customs offices. They are heavily secured buildings with many guards and even watchtowers.

Two kinds of cops; Marines and Gold Buttons.

Marines are federal cops, run by House Vorona. Heavily armored, not many of them. They will fuck you up.

Gold Buttons are many, run by the Fulcrum, and are more reasonable.

First Glimpse

From the Somnium Tenebris, you can't see much except the docks. Lots of tall ships from all over the world.

The Fire Giant

There's another party ahead of the Chain. A bunch of Vanirmen raiders with a **Fire Giant**. Hellseekers come on a quest they will not speak of.

The Fire Giant refuses to submit to inspection and Monolo is like "well then you can sit here and rot."

The Fire Giant tries to brute force past the Marines. He badly wounds both marines and then the Gold Buttons jump in. Before he can get another action a Marine uses a *wand of hold monster* on the thing and it freezes.

"Just another BELLadi."

Monolo Corone

Getting through customs is pretty easy, it's just gonna take a while because there's like 25 people in the Chain who all need to be processed.

Customs Officer is **Monolo Corone**. He's a fat dude who serves House Alvaro the House of the Owl. He has a very fine **owl eye** pin on his doublet.

He's officers will confiscate the Treasury. "You'll have to take this to the (Staithe) Exchange

"Name, occupation, business in Capital. Empty your pockets please."

All cash is confiscated and they're given papers they can take to the Exchange to get notes.

"Very musical city. We do everything with notes."

Several **Gold Buttons** show up to watch the event.

A young Higarán-seeming man, very short, in a very crisp outfit, shows up to watch. He talks to the Gold Buttons. He inspects Monolo's paperwork and process, just nods and lets people go. He's with the **Office of Exchange Integrity**..

The Promenade

Impress upon the heroes how crazy Capital is.

- Diversity
- Technology
- Riojan Culture, Theater, Dueling
- Commerce

Diversity

Things Seen On The Promenade

A Frost Giant and a Goblin arguing.

A Khoursairan taking a flying carpet.

A coach with fully drawn windows stops to observe the Chain. A silver widow-spider is embossed on its side. A curtain parts. It is a **Drow** who watches the Chain.

A trio of Dwarves who disappear into what looks like a stone kiosk. Into the Layers!

Technology

Litters, not coaches, the roads aren't wide enough. Coaches in the city.

Little stone Kiosks for entrance into the Layers.

The Tapestries

Run by the Rasp. 10 crowns a pop.

You can't take them "anywhere" only from one Waystation to another. You either pay or show your pass. The attendant hands you a coin, the tapestry takes you to the Waystation the coin is for, you hand the attendant there your coin.

If you don't know where you want to go, but you can pay, the attendant gives you a coin that takes you to the Rasp's HQ.

There are almost always Gold Buttons with them sometimes House Vorona Marines.

The Duel

There's a duel on the docks! There's a "food truck" selling roasted vegetables. The Count Battista Rialdo gets four buttered artichokes and four garlic artichokes for his table. He asks which is which and a noble at another table says "Why don't you taste them? Or is your tongue as dead as your nose?"

There's a huge fight and then the Gold Buttons arrive, break it up, and let the two duel.

The Play

There's an off-off Broadway performance of *A Fool and His Money* being performed. It's a farce in which a rich banker wagers his ownership of the bank that he could walk into any shop, get a job, and within a week make 10 crowns. He accepts and his enemy chooses a bakery. He loses his bank, but wins a duel and the girl. The girl is revealed to be the heir to a noble fortune.

The Reporter

Nero, a tall Khemite, bronze skin, hair worn long, short beard, wearing a long coat with a sword at his side flashes a medallion at the heroes. He's a Knight of the Rubric serving the **Dragon House** (The Broadsheet Guild).

"Don't make this hard for either of us, just answer the questions."

"Talk to me now for five minutes, save everyone a lot of headache later."

"Are you refusing to cooperate?"

"We know the basics, you made an attempt against Ajax, you lost..."

- You the commander of this outfit?
- Why did you come to Capital?
- What are you planning on doing here?

- Are you under contract right now?
- Where'd you get the ship?
- How many of you made it?

It ends when **Captain Cinzia** of the Gold Buttons shows up.

“This guy bothering you?”

“You been here five minutes and you’re already talking to a reporter. Great. ‘Chain of Acheron. Keeping A Low Profile Is Not Our Business.’

“Find a place to stay will you? Try to stay off the streets and don’t scare the horses.”

The Broadsheet

Pharoah Captured!

Khemhara Falls To Ajax

Opal Armies Prepare For Invasion

Mugged!

A thief, an agent of the Balance Spring (aka the Balance, or the Spring), bumps into King.

“Forgive me my lord, I believe you dropped this.” He hands King a note.

“The stray dog barks at midnight,” it reads. This is a ruse. While King is reading the note, the thief is off with the Chronicle and it’s a CHASE!!!

Skill Challenge: The Chase!

The Chain catch up to the Balance Spring once they’ve accumulated 6 success **or** 3 failures.

Initiative: Make a skill check or Fall Behind.

The order in which people fall behind is the order in which they arrive at the battle.

The Combat

Bronze Scout x4 *emerges from the ground*

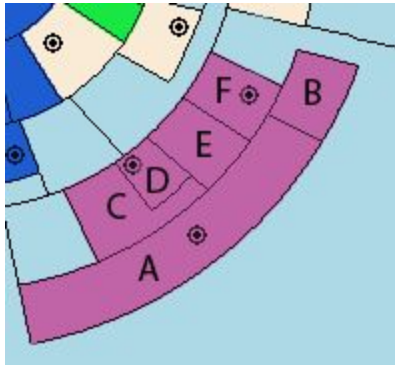
Iron Cobra x2

Oaken Bolter x2

Stone Defender x2 *emerges from the wall*

Defenders stay near the Cobras to...defend them.

The Stays



Six Neighborhoods

- A. The Piazza (The Exchange, commercial)
- B. The Scales (fisheries, commercial)
- C. Dogs, the Leg, the Dog Leg (residential, poor)
- D. The Shavings (The Imperial Bank of Capital, Commercial)
- E. Foxes (Residential, expensive)
- F. The Roses (Tannery, Commercial smells bad)

“Dogs and Foxes” = Rich and Poor

13 miles long, 3 miles wide.

Major Roads	Streets	Alleys
Via Grippa	Iter Acernis	Secta Pannes
Via Corbulo	Iter Carasus	Secta Maneo
Via Tertulla	Iter Picea	Secta Uva

Three Inns

Which Inn the heroes stay at determines things like

Disposition: Tavern's willingness to help you.

Visibility: How widely reported your actions are.

Contacts: Ease of people making contact with you.

The Dream (expensive)

In the Shavings

Disposition: Unwilling to help.

Contacts: Powerful only.

Visibility: High

The Stool (Middling)

In the Piazza

Disposition: Hesitant

Contacts: Pretty much anyone might come in here.

Visibility: Medium

The Gods (Cheap)

In the Roses (the tannery)

Disposition: Willing

Contacts: Pretty much anyone might come in here.

Visibility: Low

The Dream (Expensive)

Aka the Pharaoh's Dream, sign depicts a sleeping Tutankhamun-like figure's sleeping face. The whole place is kitted out like a really expensive hotel with a Egyptian theme. Many Khemites work here, but even the riojans who work here dress in Egyptian garb.

The concierge, a tall Khemite, is unwilling to find them rooms but plays it off like

Disposition: Unwilling to help.

Contacts: Powerful only.

Visibility: High

Menu

Smoked Salmon Salad: 6sp	Rum: 8cp
Kito's Spiced Potatoes: 8cp	Askarus (heavy) Ale: 5cp
Beef in Ginger & Cinnamon: 7sp	Vodka: 8cp
Stuffed Mushrooms with Thyme & Creamcheese: 4sp	Invidian (pale) Ale: 6cp
Roast Goose strewn with Caraway seeds: 6sp	Finnell (pale) Ale: 6cp
Braised Oxtails with Mushrooms: 8sp	Chanusian Wine: 7cp
Grilled Fillet of Salmon: 5sp	Yanusa Wine: 4cp
Garlic and Basil Leg of Lamb: 7sp	Khellanic (dwarven) Ale: 9cp
Cheese rolls with a filling of nuts, honey and vegetables: 6cp	Heron Wine: 6cp
Mutton, Lettuce and Tomato: 5sp	Ervanic Lager: 6cp
Roast Beef Served with Cranberry Sauce: 8sp	Dwarven Spirits: 9cp
Chicken Liver Pate and Bread: 5sp	
Breaded Breast of Chicken, Whiskey & Mushroom Sauce: 5sp	

The Stool (Middling)

Aka the Prince's Footstool.

I am his majesty's willing stool
Pray tell me sir, who's stool are you?

Disposition: Hesitant

Contacts: Pretty much anyone might come in here.

Visibility: Medium

Bartender: Halfling named Melody Cobblepot.

Server: Orc named Kulesk, formerly of the Nails. She's a stone cold bad-ass.

Menu

Prime Roast Sirloin: 4sp	Fallan (elven) Wine: 9cp
Boiled Callan Bacon & Cabbage Parsley Sauce: 4sp	Askarus (heavy) Ale: 4cp
Smoked Fresh Trout Fillets: 3sp	Vodka: 7cp
Roast Duck with Apples: 3sp	Invidian (pale) Ale: 5cp
Beef & Vegetable Casserole: 4sp	Chanusian Wine: 5cp
Artichoke Soup: 8cp	Finnell (pale) Ale: 5cp
Pickled Beats: 7cp	Dwarven Spirits: 8cp
Braised Oxtails with Mushrooms: 7sp	
Roasted Peppers Filled with a Mix of Cheeses: 2sp	
Smoked Salmon Salad: 5sp	
Breaded Breast of Chicken: 4sp	
Oyster and Mushroom Stew: 6sp	

The Gods (Cheap)

In the Roses (the tannery)

The sign shows a cheaply painted starfield on a blue background.

Lots of seedy folks stay here, the Chain will be right at home.

Disposition: Willing

Contacts: Pretty much anyone might come in here.

Visibility: Low

Bartender: A Stone Giant named Gront.

Staff: Voz, a dwarf. "Gotta clean up after this goblin SHIT!"

Smoked Pork: 2sp	Lager: 4cp
Boiled Leeks: 1cp	Ale: 4cp
Biscuit: 3cp	Table Wine: 4cp
Clam Chowder: 2cp	Spirits: 6cp
Artichoke Soup: 2cp	
Spiced Potatoes: 3cp	
Shepherd's Pie: 2sp	
Porridge: 2sp	
Cheese & Crackers: 5cp	
Beef Stew: 2sp	
Bread & Butter: 1cp	
Mashed Potatoes: 2cp	

3 Major Churches

The Church of Saint Pellario the Aspirant

Saint of Ambition. Sponsors the Knights of the Black Glove. Saint of Lord Anso, the God of Nobility.

Allied with House Navarr, the Church of Saint Ysabella the Remorseless. Duke Orsino, the dude who went to school with Ajax. House of three Lions.

The Church of Saint Amato

Saint of the Seas and Travel, blesses journeys. Very popular in the Stays. Saint of Lady Donisa the god of Fate and Fortune.

His symbol is the triangular sail.

Allied with **House Vorona**. The Imperial Navy House

The Church of Saint Yça

Saint of Lore, Magic, and Craft. Saint of Margrave Causolu the God of Art.

Allied with **House Alvaro**.

Many Minor Churches

Phaedran Church

Khoursarean Church

Three Offers

Into the Citadel

Offered By: House Navarr

A Subsidiary Of: The Church of Saint Pellario the Aspirant

In the Person Of: Abbot Nofri.

The Church wants to recover an artifact from the Citadel.

“It’s a trifle. A symbol of the church’s blessing on the lawgivers of this island, but it is very valuable to us. It has cultural value, and we think it would be meaningful to award it to Lady Shirome as a sign of our faith in her and the continued prosperity of the Fulcrum.”

But the citadel is a ruin, no one goes there. It's said to be haunted. Everyone assumes it's pirates, but this is impossible. House Vorona would never allow such a thing operating under their very nose. The truth is almost certainly much more mundane.

Demons!

Into the Mausoleum

Offered By: The Royal Heraldic Society

A Subsidiary Of: The Fulcrum

In the Person Of: The Honorable Pursuivant Ithilwith (Elf)

One of our couriers was sent to the Library at Argea, over on the Pellet. He was there to acquire a notarized copy of a government document, perfectly legal. He seems to have disappeared.

Now, the loss of a courier is a tragedy and of course we would like him returned but moreover, we need that document. It is an agreement between a former Prince of Capital and a knight, Sir Felice Brunadetti. The agreement has the prince's seal on it.

The descendants of Sir Felice would like to work the Prince's device into their family crest, but we have our standards. They must prove some legal, ancestral connection. This document would give them that.

The document is a deed to a manor house on the Pellet and awards the land and any structures on it to a knight, Sir Felice Brunadetti, and his descendents in perpetuity.

There is a mausoleum under the library. "This is very old, it will require a key to the catacombs. Could you come back tomorrow?"

Into the Underdark

Offered By: The Screen, also known as the Royal Antiquarian Society

A Subsidiary Of: House Valetta

In the Person Of: Reginald Orpheo, a revenant

"I represent a very old family. Something was stolen from, them, centuries ago. This item belongs legally to the family I represent, you understand.

The aging matriarch of this family has often begged us to recover this heirloom. She knows where it is, but we have no facility to reach it and so, we have politely declined. We have no facility to reach it. But...you do."

The item in question is a crown. The Crown of House Valetta.

The Cops

Captain Cinzia of the Gold Buttons shows up. She lets them know; everyone thinks the Chain have allied themselves to House Vorona. How else to explain the ease with which they passed inspection?

Commander Donogault one of the Knights of the Black Glove. Church of Saint Pellario the Aspirant arrives.

Shadows in the Night

The Cult of the Iron Saint has already struck twice. Corpses found, shadows created. The Chain are their next target.

When they come down from their slumber, **everyone in the inn is dead.** here's a broken window and an iron bar.

Riojan Calendar

Monday -> Auradi

Tuesday -> Belladi

Wednesday -> Celeradi

Thursday -> Erodi

Friday -> Follidi

Saturday -> Dualidi

Sunday -> Solidi

Questioning the Balance Spring

Aka "So, tell us what you know."

Benny isn't going to tell the Chain anything Grandmother wouldn't want them to know. If successfully intimidated, he'll just shut down.

He calls himself a 'makeshift boy.' He's not worried about his friends, because they all have a 'timing crystal' that stores their 'algorithm.' He means their soul.

He calls Judge "Bruise" short for Bruised Mash, rhymes with Trash.

"They should have sent Diego or Franny."

“Oh I’m 22. I mean, I’m Beneto 22. My friends call me Benny, or B22. Or the Bee Two Two, or just Double 2. Or 44 halves. Little math joke.”

“Seems to be a flaw in my counter-rotating expression pinion.”

“Anyway so...I can’t have the book I guess. It’s ok, probably they’ll find another way in.”

“Hey are you an alien. You look like an alien. Are you from another world? Which one? I’d like to see another world. I bet I’d like Ordos. WOW you’re a tiefling! But you’re not a Bruise you look nice. I mean not “nice” you know, but yeah...nice outfit, right? Like a...uniform. Like...ooohh I’m in charge, don’t mess with me. I bet you don’t have to beg for food.

Hey how come he doesn’t talk much? Is he angry? He seems angry. Actually you all seem angry. Including the cat. Like WOW that is an angry cat. You seem nice. Hi! I’m Benny!”

“Grandmother doesn’t like it when we’re late back from a job.”

Grandmother takes over. “Alright enough of that Benny, let me drive.”

“My apologies to the officers of the Chain of Acheron. Made a bit of a mistake, I did. Don’t fink I’ll be doing that again. Carry on with your business, I’ll return the gentleman’s money and leave you to the more senior guilds.”

“I’ll be taking Benny if you don’t mind. Ta!”

The cop shows up. She doesn’t bother trying to arrest Benny. “Don’t you have somewhere to be?” And Benny says “Uh-oh” and deactivates.

The Pharaoh's Dream

The concierge is a Khemite named Nebkhare (but his real name is Mercato, he’s a Riojan). He’s bald, he has the Khemharan rouge, he looks the part.

The Dream looks like they stepped into Khemhara. Palm trees, gold and sandstone everywhere. Porters are ready help.

If they try and get rooms without doing any work for it, they’re gonna have a bad time. They’re gonna get the runaround. They’re going to get rooms on different floors. Some of their rooms will be stupid small for how much they’re paying.

It’s 5gp per day to stay here.

Security

The hotel detective is a Drow named Ryll. He smokes.

The Tailor

Agostino & Bonida & Campagno: These guys are the best tailors in the Stays.

“Ah, officers! You must look good for formal dinners, we understand! We have trousers, BOOTS (those are quite fine) doublets. Whom are you trying to impress?”

Where are you staying?

It'll take 10 days to get anything cut to fit, but if they're willing to buy something off the rack.

The Blacksmith

The Rondel is a really nice smithy. They have a lot of armor and weapons on display, but they make mostly seals for various guilds and houses, and other fine silversmithing.

The blacksmith is a Riojan of Vaslorian descent named Pazzino.

The Next Morning

Headlines

Blackbottom sacked!

Trade with Vasloria cut off. It is unknown how the Crysopolis was able to get from Khemara to western Valsoria. Artifacts gathered from the cities he's plundered may be fueling his incredible power.

Chain Vows To Stop Ajax!

Nearly annihilated after a poorly-planned assassination attempt, the remains of a once-great mercenary company have washed up on the docks of Capital.

King, the Commanding Officer of the Chain of Acheron, proclaimed; “We took a contract to eliminate Ajax's wizard, but we were betrayed. We intend to find allies here, and finish the contract.” The senior officers intend on using the Pharaoh's Dream as their headquarters.

The origins and backgrounds of the senior officers are shrouded in mystery. King appears to be of Higarán descent. Some say he is an exile, forced into mercenary service after a failed attempt to overthrow the Immortal Empress. The company's ship is an illithid mind raider, piloted by an enigmatic alien who may have mind control powers.

City Officials Divided on Ajax

When asked for comment on recent events, Count Gianna Alvaro said "We face a serious threat. This self-styled Iron Saint means to bring the entire world under his boot, including Capital. We should be offering the Immortal Empress aid, but instead we bicker. When all else is lost, in the end, Capital will fall just like the rest."

Lady Fausta Minetti, president of the Imperial bank speaking on behalf of the Fulcrum, was more practical. "Everyone agrees; the city badly needs leadership, the only question is who, and when? Ajax seeks to make the answer simple. Personally I was never a great fan of the Prince, and have little interest in who rules." After a thoughtful pause she added; "This city was founded by an emperor."