

VISITING
— THE —
POORHOUSE

A RAGING SWAN PRESS MINI-EVENTURE



OSR

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VISITING THE DULWICH POORHOUSE

The growing trade town of Dulwich looms over the Great Salt Mire in the Duchy of Ashlar. A veritable torrent of lumber from the nearby forest enriches its citizens' coffers and emboldens the growing merchant class. Dulwich's lord, Wido Gall, resists the merchants' efforts to topple his rule while coveting the nearby village of Longbridge. Both sides seek support from the followers of Conn, hoping to sway the newly appointed and young high priestess. Meanwhile, adventurers flock to the town's inns and taverns, preparing their own expeditions into the ruins hidden in the nearby Forest of Grey Spires.

Designed specifically for you, the busy GM, this supplement enables you to effortlessly bring your characters' next urban adventure to life. Designed for use with the town of Dulwich, this mini-eventure can easily be used with almost any town or city.

CREDITS

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USING THIS MINI-EVENTURE?

A mini-eventure is akin to a normal adventure, 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.

Use the lists herein to add depth and flavour to the characters' exploration of Dunstone. 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 DULWICH POORHOUSE

The Dulwich Poorhouse is location 12 on the Dulwich map.

Girded by high, grim stone walls, the Dulwich Poorhouse is a bleak, hard place. Sadly, those dwelling within have little choice in the matter: it is the poorhouse or the street. The building is set out in a horseshoe shape around a central, muddy courtyard. Here, Chancellor Aadam Ehtaro hosts the daily hire. The poorhouse's residents earn their keep by doing the jobs no one else wants to do. In return, Aadam provides them with basic food and barely adequate shelter.

- **Lifestyle:** Characters staying at the Dulwich Poorhouse can enjoy a destitute lifestyle (0 gp) in exchange for work or a poor lifestyle (3 p/month) if they wish to rent floor space on which to sleep.

Aadam leads a small staff of overseers, cooks and guards. None are particularly pleasant folk, but abuse at the poorhouse is rare. (Most of the staff are one-time residents who earned Aadam's trust somehow and thus have at least a small amount of empathy for their charges.)

THE DULWICH POORHOUSE BY DAY

The poorhouse's residents rise at dawn to be given their daily assignments by the chancellor. Shortly thereafter, they disperse to their assigned jobs, and the poorhouse is almost empty—only the sick and injured remain along with the staff. At dusk, the residents straggle back to the poorhouse to eat their evening meal and collapse into bed.

THE DULWICH POORHOUSE BY NIGHT

At night, the poorhouse is quiet. Most of the residents have worked hard all day at a job no one else wanted. Most are exhausted. A few chat and tell stories for a while before they slump into exhausted sleep.

NOTABLE FOLK

Some folk are often encountered at the Dulwich Poorhouse.

- **Chancellor Aadam Ehtaro** (LE middle-aged male human) sees the plight of the poor but is inured to their suffering. A hard but fair man, he gives what is owed and takes what is owed—no more, no less. Aadam is lean and has a hard face set in a near-constant scowl.
- **Filppu Ilakka** (N old male human) oversees the poorhouse's kitchen. To him, this is a job. He doesn't particularly care one way or the other about his charges. He feeds them and keeps within the chancellor's budget; sometimes, he pockets some coin for himself if he gets a good deal on supplies. He has no empathy for others, and few deep thoughts disturb him.

OTHER FOLK

While the characters are at the Dulwich Poorhouse, they may encounter one or more folk of interest.

1. **Issu Miekka** (N middle-aged male human fighter 1) lived here for a while before earning the chancellor's trust. Now he works at the poorhouse as a guard. He has little empathy for those he watches over—if he earned a better position through hard work, so can they. He hates lazy people.
2. **Helka Neuvo** (NG female human) lived at the poorhouse because it is this or the street. She is desperate to improve her lot and escape. She is friendly—perhaps a tad too friendly as she comes across as desperate—to anyone she thinks can help her. Helka was once a seamstress, but her business collapsed after she was (falsely) accused of thievery. Abandoned by her friends and husband, she ended up here.
3. **Kustaa Helliikki** (CN male human) had parents once, but they were caught in the middle of a brawl between rival adventuring groups. The brawl took a fatal turn when a drunk wizard hurled a *fireball* at his enemies—killing his parents. Kustaa hates adventurers, and he loathes wizards. He is capable of great deception to have his revenge. He is 12 years old, short, scrawny and wears clothes only a little better than rags. He is skilled at gaining other people's sympathy.
4. **Jaakko Vartia** (NE male human fighter 2) lost a leg three years ago in the service of Wido Gall fighting the bandits lurking in the southern woods. No good to anyone now—so it seems—he has been forced into the poorhouse. This embittered man now works here as a guard. He hobbles about on a crutch and seethes with hatred for his former lord and master. He is not a pleasant man but could be a useful ally for those working against Dulwich's lord.
5. **Aleksi Kokko** (N middle-aged male human) languishes at the poorhouse because everyone hates him. It's not his fault, obviously; no one understands him or his needs. This whining man does as little as possible and always looks out for himself. He has no friends. If the characters seem gullible, this red-faced man homes in on them and relates his (epic) sob story.
6. **Kreeta Ahti** (CE female human thief 3) hides in the poorhouse until the heat dies down. She recently murdered a wealthy merchant during a robbery gone wrong. In her mind, the robbery went wrong because she didn't get what she came for, not because she murdered someone. In any event, here she hides—where she thinks no one will look. She has concealed her gear—and her loot—in a remote spot of the poorhouse's attic while she waits for the right time to flee. She is attractive but tries to hide her beauty as it makes her noticeable. She rarely smiles unless she is winning in some way.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

While the characters are at the Dulwich Poorhouse, one or more things from the list below may occur.

1. **Quiet:** If the characters visit during the day, the poorhouse is mostly empty—the residents not injured or sick are out working. If the characters visit at night, the residents are resting after a hard day's work.
2. **Maintaining the Courtyard:** A few residents—recovering from sickness—are raking the courtyard, filling in holes, repairing the flagstones and so on. All are happy to take a break and chat with wealthy visiting adventurers.
3. **Ragged Man:** A ragged man, Lassi Vihas (N male human), hangs around outside the poorhouse, debating with himself whether to go in or not. After a minute or so, his shoulders slump, and he shuffles inside.
4. **Roll Call:** Chancellor Aadam Ehtaro (see "Notable Folk") is taking the details of all the residents still in the poorhouse. Unless someone has a good excuse for not working, they won't eat tonight.
5. **Argument:** Two of the residents are arguing about who owns a threadbare cloak. The two may come to blows; their shouting carries throughout the poorhouse. As the argument intensifies, other residents come to watch the inevitable fight—it's free entertainment, after all.
6. **A Donation:** A well-to-do woman, Ulriikka Tuuli (LG female human), arrives at the poorhouse with a wagon of old spare clothes and basic foodstuffs she wants to donate to the residents.

OPPORTUNITIES & COMPLICATIONS

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

1. **Let Me Serve You:** Ari Hirvi (N young male human) begs to serve a random character as a general servant. Ari is a poorhouse inmate and desperate to escape to better his lot. He is a coward, however, and is useless when danger appears.
2. **The Chancellor Will See You:** As luck would have it, Chancellor Ehtaro (see "Notable Folk") is available to meet with the characters. Even if they don't seek him out, he tracks them down to discover what the adventurers want at the poorhouse.
3. **Besieged by the Poor:** Several of the house's residents spot the obviously wealthy characters arriving. They rush out to offer their services to the characters, beg for spare coin and so on. Quickly, the characters find themselves amid a crowd of desperate, ragged men, women and children all clamouring for attention.
4. **Juicy Rumour:** One of the residents (roll on "Other Folk") has just heard a juicy rumour. They relate it to the characters, for a shiny silver coin. For a gold, they'll remember, or wildly embellish, extra details.

5. **A Beating:** One of the residents has been caught stealing from the kitchens and is being punished. Their shouts and calls for mercy fill the air as a skinny guard, Kalle Vesivalo (CE male human fighter 2), beats them. If accosted by the characters, he stops the beating but reports the incident to the chancellor.
6. **Drunk Rumour:** As the characters approach the poorhouse, a drunk, Jooseppi Tapo (N middle-aged male human), decides to spin a hilarious yarn. He tells the characters that the poorhouse's chancellor is a vampire who sups on the blood of his residents. Apparently, the chancellor is also a powerful wizard as he possesses magics that let him survive outside in the full light of day! Any halfway perceptive character can tell Jooseppi is lying and the drunk is oblivious to the problems his "hilarious" story could cause for the chancellor, the town and the characters.

WHISPERS & RUMOURS

The characters may overhear or learn some of the rumours (which may or may not be true) below.

1. **A Necessary Evil:** Dulwich's Poorhouse is a necessary evil; without it, its residents would end up on the street, and petty crime would increase. The chancellor is not a bad man—in fact, he performs a vital service for the town.
2. **The Spirit of the Great Bard:** Some say the spirit of Vilimzair Aralivar himself has, in some way, imbued the Vilimzair's Arms tavern. Vilimzair is said to have played with Vainamon (N lesser god of art and music), and this connection explains why the tavern is such a hub for singers, performers and the like.
3. **Plague:** The plague still savages the doomed village of Ashford. How anyone is still alive there, Darlen only knows. Something should be done about it. Militant—or perhaps scared—folk call for the village to be burnt to the ground to contain the contagion.
4. **A Nest of Thievery:** Dulwich's Poorhouse is a front for the chancellor, Aadam Ehtaro, to enrich himself from the suffering of others. His workers pop up all around town doing the jobs no one else wants to do. Petty theft and so on often follow in their wake; the poorhouse could be a front for a criminal gang or thieves' guild!
5. **Bandits on the Borderlands:** Bandits again haunt the southern woodlands. Their raids are affecting trade. Several different groups are said to be in the vicinity; one such group is thought to lair in the so-called Shadowed Keep on the Borderlands.
6. **The Forest of Grey Spires:** The southern forests have long been a place of mystery and ruin. Ancient ruins lie scattered throughout the forest, ensuring a steady stream of adventurers and explorers pass through Dulwich on their way south.

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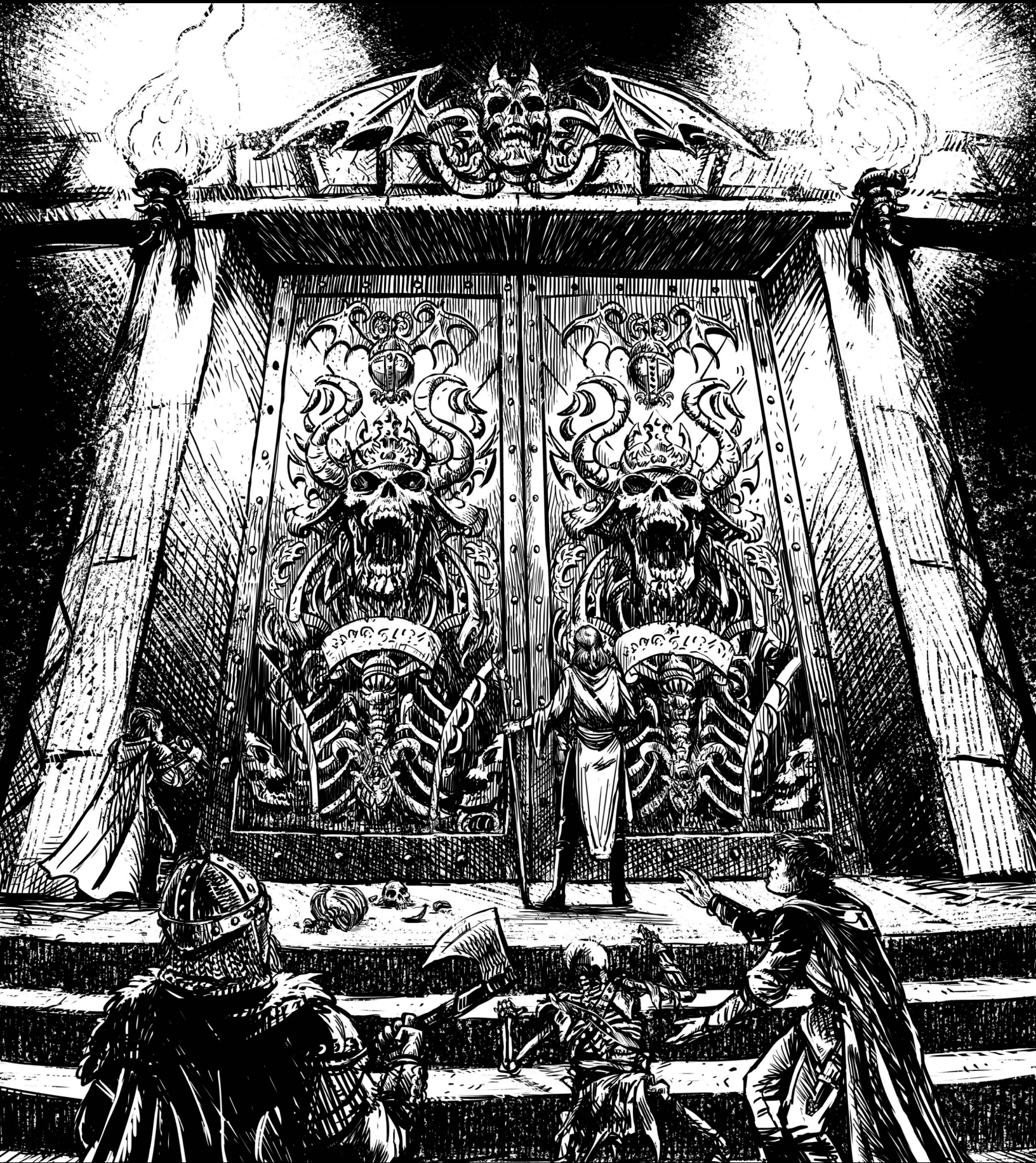
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