The City of Griffonport

When the kingdom of Bryndell was founded in 1614 AS, it attracted thousands of tribal humans from the surrounding continent, along with refugees from Cythean and Majeed controlled lands. Over the following hundred years the settlement around Bryndell Castle swelled beyond the local farms ability to provide for them. The King decreed the borders must be expanded. First in 1730 AS, the explorer Jandor Birdsong traveled south, establishing the town of Brighton along the Talmaara River in the shadow of quartz-laden Bright Mountain. Then, in 1789, King Orwen tasked the country's greatest military hero, Marshal Harmon Bhestos, with installing defenses along the south-western coasts. He marched his troops to the cliffs overlooking Griffonbay, and built Fort Talongaurd, simultaneously founding the city of Griffonport.

As the city grew, so did its port. Traders from distant

Kladivo and Briranor arrived bringing exotic goods, while Majeed pirates smuggled in the worship of their ocean goddess Amaura. Shrines dedicated to her sprang up along the Talmaara almost overnight, and she was quickly adopted as the patron goddess of Griffonport.

The city takes its name from Griffonbay, which earned the title long before Brynn and Gran settled the continent. Numerous prides of the beasts dot the mountains surrounding the bay and made the early years of life in the city difficult. They would dive down onto the decks of docking ships, attacking wayward sailors.

In Cythea, griffons are used by the dragon kings as mounts, and even the heroes Gran and Brynn rode upon one in their campaign against the vile necromancer Ekos the Unclean. Knowing they could be reasoned with, druids from the grove of the Creator in Brighton were employed to make an alliance with the native griffons surrounding the bay. They were successful in their diplomacy, and many griffons agreed to become mounts.
for high ranking members of the army. The agreement, one that continues to this day, was for Griffonport to breed horses to feed the prides. The Singing Valley, west of the city, was designated the hunting grounds for the griffons. Horses were bred extensively there until their numbers were great enough to satisfactorily sustain the beasts. In recent years the horse population has been in decline, for reasons unknown to sages, causing some griffons to become hostile towards humans.

For the following hundred and twenty years, Griffonport thrived, but it suffered sporadic raids from pirates. The thieves used the small island in Griffonbay as a launching base, disappearing into the dense forests when pursued by city authorities. Lord Governor Saren Bhestos issued several anti-piracy decrees and posted bounties on the criminals. This did little to curb the practice and most citizens simply accepted the raids as a sad fact of life.

**THUNDERBEARD**

The worst of the pirates to besiege Griffonport during this period was the brutal orc, Captain Thunderbeard. A devout follower of Krokar the Stormlord, Thunderbeard timed his assaults during terrible storms, augmenting his bloody tactics with evil, divine magic. Painted head to toe in black and white to resemble killer whales, his orc pirates struck fear into the hearts of Griffonport for almost twenty years. They robbed from the panicked citizenry, and sacrificed innocents to their violent god, often walking them off the plank of their ship, the Wave Reaver. Rumors spread across Bryndell that Thunderbeard had carved out smuggler tunnels throughout Griffonbay Island, trapping them, and sealing his vast treasure in a magically protected vault. This attracted adventures from all over the kingdom and from far-away Majera, but no one was able to oust the pirate lord and claim his riches.

Five years after Thunderbeard claimed Griffonport Island, a fleet of Udaeo invaders from Cythea arrived, intent on landing and conquering Bryndell. They never got past his ships. As the Udaeo moved into the harbor, Thunderbeard attacked, summoning a violent storm that called giant sea-monsters to his side. Mighty tentacles erupted around the invaders, smashing their hulls and dragging sailors to their watery graves. Devils swimming in the depths made sure none survived. Using the attack to his advantage, Thunderbeard RAIDed the city, and captured a hundred villagers he later sacrificed to Krokar. Enraged, the Lord Governor posted bounties that brought hunters from across the lands of the West.

In 1818, the ambassador Aelynara came to Castle Bryndell and asked the king for permission to build an elvish embassy in the country. The king agreed, and hoping to attract more wealth to the southern city, decreed the embassy would be built in Griffonport. Lord Governor Kasta Bhestos, was weary of the elves and their intentions, so she granted them the island in the bay as their sovereign territory. Assuming Thunderbeard would make short work of the newcomers, she turned her attentions away from the elves and toward expanding the city. She couldn’t have been more wrong.

Over the next two weeks, strange colors and lights filled the sky over Griffonbay Island. The sounds of combat and cannonball explosions echoed throughout the bay, sporadically punctured by ear-piercing screams. Many citizens reported suffering from night terrors and madness during the conflict. As the melee ended, a blue flag showing a crescent moon was raised on the rocks. Now claimed for the elves, Ambassador Aelynara directed the construction of the Great House immediately, and Griffonbay island became known as the Court of the Spring Lotus.

**THE PEOPLE**

Although it is governed by the kingdom of Bryndell, the city of Griffonport is widely considered to be a “free-city”. Citizens of various races and cultures walk its cobble-stoned streets, selling and trading goods in the markets. This idea of freedom spills over into the art,
music, and attitudes of its people. Personal expression, and space are highly valued leading to a plethora of interesting, eccentric residents. Taverns and temples are centers of intellectual and philosophical debates, and the public bath-houses are safe spaces for anyone to voice their opinions.

While these traits make many “Portlanders” appear cultured and empathetic, they can be surprisingly judgmental and insular. Many use sarcastic, bleak humor at the expense of others. This has given the citizens an unfair reputation elsewhere in the kingdom.

Griffonport has a large and varied population. Most are Brynnyn, but a surprising number of Majeed and Kladavain communities exist within the city. Non-human merchants are a common sight. Dwarves, oyapok, lizardmen, and sylphs operate permanent shops in the markets and along the docks. Orcs and half-orcs avoid the city as it remains unfriendly due to Thunderbeard’s past atrocities against its people.

The Nobles

The Bhestos Family has ruled Griffonport in the name of the Quartz Throne since its founding. Lord Governor Gavin Bhestos often stays north in the town of Brighton advising Prince Goodwater on affairs of the port city, while his wife, Sybyl, administers day to day operations. Lord Bhestos has five children, a son and four daughters. Martin stays with his father sometimes in Brighton, carousing in the town’s inns. His daughters are cow masters at ferreting out information, and their beauty makes it hard for many to resist their charms. The family own several manor homes across the country and vacation in them as the seasons and weather dictate. In the capitol city, Gavin’s brother Arthus oversees the Royal Carpenter’s guild, a major source of income for the family. Rumors have long plagued the family that Martin is the offspring of an affair Sybyl had with the Brighton town hero, Gendrin Windrider. Gavin is quick to take offense at the suggestion, and has denied one man to the death over the insult.

The Eulogast Family has a long history in Griffonport. After Harmon Bhestos allied with the region’s griffon’s he promised they would have a steady supply of horse meat to eat, and so the Eulogast family was put in charge of breeding the animals. The family has fallen on hard times in recent generations, and the current matriarch, Indrig, is a childless widower. Regardless, her name carries influence, and her estates produce almost a third of the horses used throughout the countries armies.

The Pendergil Family owns most of the businesses and land in the Char district. Extremely wealthy, the family employs many residents at the sawmill, ironworks, tarworks, and glass works. Carlion Pendergil passed away six months ago from a chest infection. Now his young widow, Lady Estrella Gaument-Pendergil (human female Aristocrat level 2, LG, dagger), controls all family properties on behalf of the heir, her younger brother Albinus. Estrella receives guests in her parlor, a somber room decorated with family portraits, a model of her deceased husband’s whaling ship, and stuffed rats. She always wears a black silk armband, a token of mourning that contrasts her fair skin and matches her sooty hair. She remains composed at most times, but works into a slow burn whenever discussing wrongs done to her family. Estrella entertains dark suspicions about the corrupt stedwards she had to fight for control of the estate, which she made public during the legal hearings. If encountered outside Pendergil House, she will always be accompanied by a maid and at least two guards.

Estrella has learned that a copy of the Codex Rodemus Variatus, a fancy-rat breeding manual penned by her late mother, Jocasta Pendergil, was sold by the Curio Shop. She will pay adventurers to track down and get the copy, and for a thorough investigation if the manuscript turns out to be the original that was supposed to have been destroyed in the fire at Pendergil House.
Temples and Shrines

Fane of the Grey Maiden. This obelisk of rough masonry rises higher than the roofs of all the squat houses and workshops that surround it. A varnished wooden statue of the Gray Maiden stands at the apex of the monument, facing west. Yellow ivy clings to the crevices in the stonework, climbing to wrap about the statue’s feet. Blackened skulls stare out through the vines, tucked into nooks in the masonry. The shrine-keeper’s hut stands by the monument’s base. A manhole on the shrine grounds leads down into a crypt full of charred bones.

Friar Pugilio maintains the shrine. This balding, scarred man wears homespun gray robes and a glass pendant symbol of his patroness. The Friar serves as the undertaker for poor folk, hauling the dead in a handcart to a cremation pit in the woods, then returning the bones for interment in the common crypt. Pugilio grew up in the forest work camps. He acquires himself well in fights, but he prefers never to take lives, leaving death for the Maiden to send in her own time and way.

While excavating an expansion to the crypt, Pugilio uncovered an older network of cellars and galleries. It may predate the establishment of Griffonport. He found an amber necklace in the entryway. The friar has been too busy with his duties to investigate further, so he sealed the opening with planks. If adventurers seem pious, he may tell them about his discovery and allow them to explore the dungeon.

The Coterie of Metamorphosis is a cult that worships a perverse version of the Mother of 1000 monsters, specifically the adaptations that such creatures have. They believe the key to transcending mortal limitations is taking these gifts into their own physical form. Each member is dedicated to changing themselves as much as possible. Members often look like scholars, and take in people unhappy with the position they currently have in life. Through promised power or a new social position, the desperate, disillusioned, and enfeebled are drawn to the cult.

The entry rights of the Coterie is a secret; though the purpose certainly is shrouded. The Rites and rituals are expensive, and each member is expected to pay for the obscure components themselves when they attempt to transform themselves.

Life among members is a quiet one. Each member saves gold so they can afford the costly reagents and monster parts for their own ritual. This money is then gifted to the compound’s clergy. Gathering such income must come from innocuous means, and members know that being remotely suspicious could bring them into danger.

Those that undergo the final transformation often struggle, as the primary doctrine demands they maintain the mind they had before undergoing the rite. This poses immense stress on the individual. They become physically unrecognizable as mortal, leaving them entirely at the mercy of the Coterie for social interaction. The process renders many brain-washed and suggestible to the desires of those in charge of the compound.

Shrines to Amaura. Along the Talmaara River are several standing stone shrines dedicated to the sea-goddess Amaura. Most are large, simple rocks, although a couple of carved statues of the goddess dot the shores. Bowls set at the foot of the statues are filled with sea water by the faithful, while the shrines themselves are decorated with strands of sea-shells, star-fish, and seaweed. Most residents pay homage to Amaura before the more established religion of the Grey Maiden. Because many citizens earn their livelihoods along the river and in the sea, they honor her to remain prosperous.

Old superstitions hold that the island in
Griffonbay was once cursed and caused births in the region to become tainted by some oceanic evil. Prayers to the goddess are said to prevent the curse from affecting newborns.

**Griffonport**

**LN Large Town**

Corruption +0 ; Crime +0 ; Economy +2 ; Law +1 ; Lore + 2 ; Society +0

Qualities: Academic, Prosperous, Strategic location

Danger +5

**DEMOGRAPHICS**

Government: Autocracy

Population: 2967 (1839 humans, 274 gnomes, 198 elves, 35 half-orcs, 99 halflings, 95 ooyapok, 121 dwarves, 56 half elves, 51 lizardmen, 200 other)

Notable NPCs:

- Lord Governor Gavin Bhestos (LN male human skyrider 12)
- Ambasador Aelynara (N female elan, dimensional wayfarer 12/sorcerer 8)
- Friar Pugilio (NG male human, brawler 1/cleric of the Grey Maiden 2)
- Mother Farah Niven (CG female human, cleric of Amaura 5)
- Guild Master Murilo (NE male human, rogue 3, summoner 3)
- Indrig Elulogast (LN female human, transmuter 8)
- Sir Thurien Fanex (LG male human, paladin 6)
- Phaedra Kava (CG revanchist 6, rogue 2)
- Sawboss Azdok (LG human dwarf, expert 3)

**MARKETPLACE**

Base Value: 2,600 gp; Purchase Limit: 15,000 gp;

Spellcasting: 6th; Minor Items 3d4 items; Medium Items 2d4 items; Major Items 1d4 items

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**Griffonport Timeline**

The folowing events are presented in the current timeline AS (After the Shattering).

1614 AS- Kingdom of Bryndell is founded. King Gran rules alongside his sister Brynn Goodwater.

1619 AS- Dwarves from the Copper Crown Mountains gift Bryndell with the majestic Quartz Throne. This solidifies an alliance between the kingdoms.

1689 AS- King Orwen, son of Brynn, command Marshal Harmon Bhestos to secure the western coast. Marshal Bhestos builds Fort Talongaund and founds the city of Griffonport.

1705 AS- Alliances arebrokered with the regional griffon prides. They agree to train as cavalry mounts in exchange for a constant supply of horsemeat. Elulogast the Horse Whisperer becomes the nations official horse breeder and is awarded a title and estate in Griffonport.

1741 AS- The Lighthouse is built at Griffonport’s most norther point. The engineering marvel attracts sea-commerce to the city, but also brings pirates.

1803 AS- Ogres sack the town of Brighten and kill several prominent nobles. They hold the town for thirty days before being driven off by Marshal Invis Volaara.

1860 AS- The orc pirate Thunderbeard claims Griffonbay Island and uses it as a base to stage raids against the cities of Bryndell.

1865 AS- The Udauoi fleet from Cythea invades Griffonbay but are repelled by Thunderbeard’s ships. The pirate absconds with over a hundred Griffonport citizens to sacrifice to Krokaar honoring his victory.

1878 AS- Ambassador Aelynara petitions the king to build an elvish embassy in Bryndell. He grants permission, and Griffonbay Island is named their territory. The elves quickly dispel Thunderbeard and his fellow pirates. Griffonbay Island becomes known as Spring Lotus Island.

1889 AS- The transmuter Varno Elulogast breeds the first Hippogriff.

1914 AS- The Lamplighters guild is founded to assist evening trading in the marketplace. They are tasked with maintaining the oil-lamps that dot the streets, and the lighthouse flame, but their true mission is to defend Griffonport from vampires, and nocturnal threats.

1950 AS- Lord Governor Roric Bhestos disappears while adventuring below Spring Lotus Island. Tensions rise with the elves, but simmer off when adventurers return with his corpse, sighting a vast network of deadly traps in the tunnels beneath the island.

1976 AS- Princess Mayaa Goodwater is kidnapped by ogres from the town of Brighten. An unknown hero, Gendrin Windrider, single-handedly rescues her. The pair marry, and Lord Governor August Bhestos holds a parade in their honor.

2003 AS- The adventurer Darla Burdenfellow purchases Meadowfield Villa. She opens her home to wayward rogues, hiring adventurers to spin tales of their exploits.

2016 AS- Current year.
Griffonport Locations

As the town expanded, what began as a few taverns around the docks expanded to a thriving melting pot—a community of sailor, wanderers, merchants, and those who derive a living from the sea. Decades of growth have changed this small hamlet to a thriving port city.

1. The Wharf Roach

Just south of the last dock looms a two story inn weathered by sea air. Music and boisterous shouts scare off many before they reach the door. Like its namesake, the Wharf Roach feeds of those who scavenge for a living. While the outside of the Roach looks decrepit, the inside is comfortable and clean. The owner, Fen Kava (NG Rogue/6), demands no less. Drinking, gambling, and the occasional fight mask the delicate negotiations upstairs. Perched on a set of barrels fashioned into chairs in the corner, Fen is always on the lookout for another game of Pitch or dice. Fortunately he’s charming and handsome enough to assuage most who lose—which is often.

Known as a safe haven for smugglers and thieves, Fen prides himself on being man who can get anything in the Port. He lives by a strict code refusing to traffic in some goods. Once drunk slavers found themselves with a scuttled ship and missing cargo in the morning. A fair number of new employees started work the next day.

Fen has information on privater’s ship that has some interesting cargo. Fen is searching for unknowns to help liberate the cargo and make a tidy profit.

2. Twilight Apotheke

The Twilight Apotheke never opens before sunset. As twilight approaches Lilith Brytsan, (CG Haunted Lore Oracle/7) wearing leather breeches and deep purple jerkin, lights the red lanterns outside her shop, with a kind smile. Her long red hair always seems to move as if disturbed by a draft. The Apotheke is more cluttered home than store. Pine shelves and bookcases create a labyrinth that draws visitors within. Scattered among dusty tomes lay her treasures a gold-tipped feather, a human skull with runes carved along its face, and a bent copper spoon.

Few pay Lilith coin. Instead she asks patrons to perform seemingly innocuous tasks—give a beggar an apple, play kick the rat with a child—which often have interesting outcomes. Uncompleted requests result in the item vanishing and returning to her shelves awaiting a worthier customer.
A recent acquisition—a petrified griffon feather quill—is causing problems. Every day Lilith awakens screaming, holding the quill, notes scattered around her written in a language she doesn’t understand. She knows the feather emits a faint divination aura and it’s waiting for someone. That person needs to take it to the old fishing hut south of town at midnight and “help.”

3. Luck and Lavender

Part theater, part brothel, always entertaining, the Luck and Lavender is one of the oldest buildings in the Port. Located along the edge of the town closer to the forest, the Lavender is run by the enigmatic Bogrim (Doppelganger Bard/10). Staffed by humans, nymphs, and satyrs, Bogrim and his people pride themselves on being able to cater to any whim.

Twin oaks grow alongside building, their branches entwining over the entrance. Bogrim carried this inside, carving the motif over the stage and bar. Offering live entertainment as well as some of the most delicious fish dishes in the Port, everyone finds their way to the Lavender. Information, rendezvous, and visiting nobility. Bogrim loves the flood of information and inspiration the Lavender allows.

Dark haired, brown eyes, and a perfect mustache, Bogrim can usually be found lending in with his patrons. This is the doppelganger’s favorite personality. The usual cheerful atmosphere of the bordello is subdued. Bogrim hasn’t been seen much these days. He’s been accused of robbing a young lady of the Pendergil house. He’s since been hiding as Lirett, a worker at the Lavender. Bogrim is innocent, but can’t prove it. He was someone else at the time.

4. D’Avelyn House

A greyed wooden cabin lies just east of the lighthouse. Sun faded blue shutters close around the windows. One hang slightly askew allowing a glimpse inside. Papers litter the floor along with broken pieces of wood while lines of white paint can just barely be seen against the dark walls. A letter written on ivory parchment nailed to the door asks for help. Edmund D’Avelyn (Alchemist/2) can’t bear to curate his brother Karvel’s estate, such as it was. He’s looking for anyone willing to help, and he’s willing to allow those who help to keep some of what they find. Edmund can be found most days milling around the
the Luck and Lavender or the Dyeing Prince’s Tavern.

The D’Averlyn house had been abandoned for years before Karveil purchased it, refurbished it, and allowed Edmund to move in. Karveil hasn’t been seen in Griffon Port in months and rumors swirl about his fate. Some say Karveil was searching for the remains of sunken schooner that crashed on the rocks near the Lotus Island. Others say he and his brother had a falling out over a young maid from Sandengrow manor. While others contend the two weren’t brothers at all, but lovers.

5. The Lighthouse

A marvel of modern engineering, the lighthouse on the northern point just above the Port shines as an example of what the people of Griffon Port can accomplish. Polished brass plates turn around a fire pit amplifying the light, shining it out into the bay. The Lamplighter’s Guild is responsible for maintain the flame allowing Lokas Shorne (Cleric/12) to live there as its Keeper. With his dusky skin and deep voice, Lokas cuts a handsome and robust figure with only his grey hair showing his age. He takes pride in keeping the flame burning bright. Lokas is always happy to show off the lighthouse or sit with company having tea. He loves the local gossip and seems to know a little about everything going on in the Port. Strange omens have made Lokas uneasy lately. The tide has taken on a green glow some nights as it crashes into the rocks below his home. The green wisps seem to form a young woman who reaches out with a thin hand before being sucked into the waters again. Lokas worries this could all be in his mind. His gut tells him to fear it portends something worse.

6. Lamplighters Guild

A large grey stone building surrounded by a wrought iron fence lies in the heart of the Port. Not a seat of power, it is home to the Lamplighter’s Guild. Among Griffon Port’s other unique offerings are the stained glass lanterns dotting streets and cross roads, providing light and safety for townsfolk. The Lamplighter’s are responsible for maintaining the lanterns.

Few pay attention to the guild members as they ply their trade, which is how they prefer it. Lead by Thurien Fanex (Paladin/6) the Lamplighter’s Guild does more than keep lanterns burning. They’re the only line of defense against the monsters of the night. Thurien, though young, has grown up in Griffon Port and knows the cost of failure. His predecessor vanished leading a routine patrol.

After years of fighting off vampires and ghosts from the sea, they face an old threat. Decades ago, the guild sealed a rift to the shadow plane in the caverns outside town. But like root of a tree, tendrils seem through. Crossroads are the weakest points, and where Lamplighter’s patrol heavily. Unable to find the cause, Thurien would welcome any who might help to stem the tide and finally lay the shadows to rest.

7. Misplaced Sprites

While Lotus Island has its own matron who cares for orphaned children, Phaedra Kava (Rogue/6) collects the "misplaced sprites", as she calls them, on the mainland. Phaedra knows the value of taking care of the young people of the Port—and what profits those can bring. Fair haired and lithe, Phaedra is the opposite of her brother Fen. She can often be seen leading the children around town for shopping or playing with them on the grounds of the orphanage. Located in the center of the Port, this three story home towers above the other. Looking like something straight from fairy tales, this homely building seems to be the perfect place to raise children.

Phaedra treats her charges well, guiding them from childhood to working age with loving purpose. She’s created a perfect network of spies and thieves that gather valuables as well as information for their dear Miss Phaedra. She’s helped her “sprites” get jobs in the Breaking Yard, nobles’ homes, and even glasswork apprenticeships. Her network is far reaching.

Phaedra offers the services of sprites for a small fee. Especially to those who seek revenge against someone who has left someone with a broken home or heart.

8. Orylupus Shop

Griffon Port is known for its animals and the Orylupus Shop in the center of the port is no exception. A modest cottage house seems out of place at first with the painted ivy and flowers climbing the side of the stone walls. A portrait of a strange rabbit like creature hangs on the wooden sign above the door.

Run by Efa (CN female huldra, Ranger 2) a huldra with a fox tail and strawberry blonde hair, she doesn’t conceal her race, but will charge extra for those mentioning her tail or back. Inside her shop bounce a half dozen orylupus pups. Roughly medium size dogs with rabbit legs, pointed ears, and a pushed in dog’s muzzle, these big eyed creatures pounce on balls of rope, waiting to find their new homes. Efa breeds the pups deep in the forest, bringing them to the shop for training. Prized for their cuteness, they come with
a warning. If threatened their mouths widen like a shark’s. They become whirling maws of teeth and claws. With a command, a well-trained pup can shift back.

Two of Efa’s pups have disappeared from her shop. They hadn’t finished training. She fears the thieves don’t understand what they might unleash.

9. Vicar’s Vambrace

Kerwacz’s shop is renowned as much for the armorer’s bad jokes as it is his armor. Few can miss his shop, with his raucous laughter drawing potential customers from yards away. Kerwacz (LG male dwarf, expert 12) loves a challenge, priding himself on being an artisan in steel and leather. While his shelves contain excellent mundane items, his real work lies in the back. Experimental materials brought in from the sea or forest interest him most. Always on the lookout for new designs, Kerwacz will offer custom works to those who test his latest creations. Most volunteers find reward outweighs the risk.

10. The Dying Prince

Run by Idessa and Falrin (CG identical twins, female elves, both alchemist 3), the Dying Prince is a comfortable tavern located along the Fort’s western edge. The sisters inherited the business from their father and have maintained its status as the most elegant bar in the town. Known for a wide selection of exotic wines, homemade cocktails, and goat cheeses, the Dying Prince enjoys a reputation as an establishment fit for royalty.

Idessa and Falrin feel those who come of the Prince deserve to be treated like guests in a home. Regardless of race, you are welcome to eat, drink, and stay as long as you like. Seating is communal at large round tables and sharing is encouraged. The dark haired sisters spend most of their time flitting from table to table offering new concoctions. Those who enter as strangers often leave as friends.

Recently they seem to be targeted by someone. A farmhand bringing their shipment of cheese was attacked. The dockside warehouse that stored their wine shipments was broken into, leaving all their bottles smashed. The elderberries for the signature drink, The Prince’s Tears, were poisoned causing Idessa to fall ill. Falrin is eager to cure her sister and find the saboteur.
The Char District

In the century since Lord Walran Pendergil led pioneers to hack and burn a wide clearing from the piney woods, The Char has grown into a sprawling industrial district that supplies Griffonport’s increasing demand for naval stores, charcoal, glass, iron, and timber. Smoky, dirty, and vulnerable to fires, the Char attracts few wealthy immigrants; instead drawing in runaway serfs, thieves, harlots, and deserters.

Adventurers find few luxuries besides the locally-distilled retsina, but the Char does offer cheap accommodations, ample henchmen for hire, and an excellent launching point for treasure-hunting expeditions aimed at the dungeons and ruins of the southern wilderness.

1. Pendergil House

This three story masonry and timber house rises atop a hill in the center of The Char, surrounded by the industrial properties of the Pendergil family. Smoke has stained the upper walls dark gray to match the slate roofing. Sections of the house show recent fire damage, and during the day workmen may be seen making repairs. Ivy clings to the sections not marked by fire. A greenhouse connects with the residence on the east face. Guards (LN human male, warrior 2) patrol the grounds. Visitors without invitations will be turned away.

A young widow, Lady Estrella Gaument-Pendergil (LG human female, aristocrat 2), controls all family properties on behalf of the heir, her younger brother Albinus. Estrella receives guests in her parlor, a somber room decorated with family portraits, a model of her deceased husband’s whaling ship, and stuffed rats. She always wears a black silk armband, a token of mourning that contrasts her fair skin and matches her sooty hair. She remains composed at most times, but works into a slow burn whenever discussing wrongs done to her family. Estrella entertains dark suspicions about the corrupt stewards she had to fight for control of the estate, which she made public during the legal hearings. If encountered outside Pendergil House, she will always be accompanied by a maid and at least two guards.

Estrella has learned that a copy of the Codex Rodemus Variatus, a fancy-rat breeding manual penned by her late mother, Jocasta Pendergil, was sold by the Curio Shop. She will pay adventurers to track down and get the copy, and for a thorough investigation if the manuscript turns out to be the original that was supposed to have been destroyed in the fire at Pendergil House.
2. THE SAWMILL

Like all the other major industries, expect charcoal burning, the sawmill forms part of the Pendergill family holdings. This barn-like building sits over sluggish, tainted stream that runs along the western fringe of the district. The stream provides some power for the mill, but the operation cannot keep up production without the muscle of convicts walking treadmills and pushing horizontal wheels. Free overseers (LN human male, commoner 2) walk the floor and clout any man who makes trouble. But conditions have improved somewhat since Lady Estrella took over the estate, and now the convicts get regular short breaks, better food, and one half mug of retsina at the end of each long work day. Trained sawyers work the machinery and move the timber, most pine, from wagons to cutting benches and back onto wagons. Mule-loggers from the piney woods may join in defense of the mill if it is attacked while they are present (CG human male, commoner 2).

Sawboss Adzok (NG dwarf male, expert 3) answers directly to Lady Estrella. Adzok arrived in Griffonport thirty years ago and entered the service of the Pendergills. The dwarf has never explained just left his homeland, even to his friends, only alluding to obscure religious controversies. Lord Pendergill used to interview him often about dwarf-lore. Adzok reminds friendly with Lady Estrella, and does not feel bound by human social conventions the way her other acquaintances in The Char do. He bristles when guards at Pendergill House ask to see his invitation. But security, that he understands.

Adzok worries about a spate of accidents that have injured several workers and slowed production. The men think the trouble comes from an evil spirit or poltergeist haunting the mill. But the dwarf remains skeptical. He suspects sabotage, perhaps by agents of the corrupt stewards his patroness and friend expelled from the estate. Unskilled in subtlety and detection, as well as too short-legged to chase down fleeing saboteurs, he may turn to outside help for solving the problem.

3. THE TARWORKS

The high fence that runs around this compound of several wood and brick buildings holds back the worst of the hot fumes and oily stench, but even on a windless day a visitor can still smell the tar works before reaching the gates. Guards from the Stockade herd pair ones here after dawn and return them before dark: the convicts provide the brute power to keep the operation going. Every year a few die from toxic fumes, burns, and other accidents. Skilled workers, all freemen, handle the more complex tasks.

Wagonloads of charcoal, resin, pine logs going in, and barrels of tar, pitch, and turpentine coming out. Only in winter does the work slow, with a shift to repairs and maintenance. The Pendergils sell the material made here to shipmasters, carpenters, ranchers, and alchemists.

Master Grotius (LE human male commoner 3) an obese man with dirty fingernails and bloodshot eyes, runs the Tar Works for Lady Estrella.

He started work here as a clerk. When Lady Estrella sacked the old boss, Grotius got the job. He speaks highly of his employer.

Grotius has a problem: lung spiders. These squirrel-sized vermin used to live only in the pine forest, sailing between treetops under their tubular kites of red, slimy silk. Now they’ve moved into the Tar Works, and poisoned several workers. The spiders have learned to trap exhaust from chimneys and use it as lift gas, making them harder to catch. Grotius loathes lung spiders, and he will pay adventurers to kill them before they stop work or spread further. While on the job, exterminators might look down from a rooftop and witness a crime in the streets below, or overhear part of a suspicious conversation through a chimney vent.

4. STOCKADE

A palisade with a stout gate separates this compound from the rest of The Char. Guards (N human male, warrior 2) patrol the grounds day and night. Wanted posters nailed to the gatepost advertise rewards for fugitives; sometimes these have been affixed upside down. None
are allowed inside without a pass, except of course the prisoners. In the morning and evening, prisoners march out through the gate under close supervision, going to or returning from their drudge jobs elsewhere in the district. At other times, the gate remains closed. The guards keep bloodhounds to pursue runners. Escapees and other troublemakers may expect whippings lashed to the blood-stained posts that stand in the open courtyard. Multiple offenders earn brandings such as R for runagate and M for mayhem-maker (anyone who has done serious harm to a guard). Branded men draw the harshest work details.

Visitors may encounter Kreeg (N human male, barbarian 1/rogue 1). This feral, ragged beggar spent seven years in the work camp system. After his release, he hung around the Stockade, sometimes vanishing for days but always returning. Kreeg never steals from the guards, and for their part the guards let Kreeg off with no more than cuffs and curses when they catch him stealing from prisoners or the storerooms. Sometimes they give Kreeg food in return for him running their errands, like fetching water and changing out the notices at the front gate.

Kreeg likes the funny axe drawn on one of the posters and has kept a copy for himself. He may show the notice to others. It offers a reward for recapture of The Griffinport Headsman (CE human male, commoner 2). This lunatic murderer went to the Stockade (instead of the capital to stand trial for his life) because of a clerical error. If the party goes after the axe maniac, Kreeg will tag along.

5. The Canteen

Waleran Pendergill, the father of Lady Estrella, built this two story timber tavern and shop to serve his workers during the construction of the Ironworks. The clerk and barkeep accept all Bryndell currency, and also Pendergill scrip (often used to pay free workers in lieu of cash). The ground floor Canteen serves retsina, applejack, small beer, and a greasy food. The walk up shop sells blankets, clothing, tools, rope, and other common items.

Keeper Faustibus (Human Commoner 3, NG) operates the Canteen, with his wife as the cook and his teenage son as the clerk in the General Store section. This tall, stopped man was employed in the Tar Works until an accident years ago smashed his left leg; he walks with a limp. Faustibus admires Lady Estrella, who gave him his current job. He mistrusts Boss Grotius. Twice a week he leaves scraps in a bucket by the back door, for Kreeg. The keeper knows many of the free workers in The Char.

On busy evenings, the Canteen fills with laughter, stories, jokes, and the occasional noisy brawl. But business has dropped of late, as mysterious tarry hand prints, with freakishly elongated digits, have appeared inside and outside the Canteen. The prints have reviewed local fears of the Black-Eyed Weeper. Then describe this monster, also called “Old Pitch”, as manlike but wrinkled and oozy-eyed with spidery black fingers that stick its prey fast. It haunts the pine barrens and carries off the unwary. If the monster really exists, what is it doing in town? Or is this a hoax? Cover for thefts? Faustibus cannot pay cash for a solution, but he will be grateful and will slip some free food, drinks, and tips about possible adventures to anyone who helps him.

6. Glassworks

Downhill from Pendergill House stands the Glassworks, a big block of brick walls and timber frame with green-paned windows set on all sides and three fluted chimneys sticking up from the tiled roof.

Master Juvenal (LN human male, expert 3) cousin to Boss Grotius operates the works for the owners, the Pendergils. The fat glassblower keeps his face shaved and his hair trimmed to avoid singeing while working. He has assigned bookkeeping to a clumsy but clever apprentice so he can spend more time making glass. Besides his craft, Juvenal enjoys food and drink, often visiting the Canteen, and wrangling dinner invitations to Pendergill House whenever he can manage. He never misses the annual Pie Contest at the Amber Tree Ranch.

A monster broke into the glassworks through a louvre and stole a fancy mirror ordered by a courtesan on the Isle of the Spring Lotus. Juvenal's terrified night watchman described the burglar as a "dead giant's head with a beard of serpents". When he tried to stop it, the monster called its own reflection out of the mirror and sent the twin crawling towards him. The guard crawled into a cold kiln to save himself. The master glazier wants the mirror found and the masterwork looking glass returned and the vile burglar dealt with. He will pay in glass art objects or cash. The creature left a Trail of broken glass from items it smashed in the shop.

Knowledge: Dungeoneering

DC 14: It sounds like a Decapus. These abominable creatures lair in the most tangled and lonely stretches of the pine barrens.

DC 19: The decapus is a fairly intelligent creature—an ambush predator that makes excellent use of its ability to weave magical visual illusions and to imitate the voices of other creatures it has heard speaking.
7. Iron-Works

This large stone and timber building rises from a shallow, stagnant pond. Algae coats the pool surface and drips from the lowest part of the walls. The water prevents fires started here from spreading into the rest of The Char, but it serves another purpose: a home for the chief smith.

Coldhammer (N lizardman male, expert 3) was once iron worker to a petty king of lizardman in the inland bogs of the deep pine barrens. He left after an evil cult took over the little kingdom. When he first arrived in The Char, people feared and avoided him, but after the Fendergils hired him as a worker, he began a slow process of integration. The iron-works fell into disuse during the mismanagement of the old stewards, suffering flood and fire. The iron supply nearest the city ran out. Cold hammer led an expedition that discovered a new source of bog iron. Lady Estrella named him master smith after the old master was sacked for selling stock and tools off the books.

The lizardman offers the best local source of information about the bog regions of the pine barrens. If he takes a liking to the PCs, he may tell them about a sunken ruin his expedition found in the wetlands.

8. Fane of the Grey Maiden

See Page 6 for details about the church.

9. Guild-House of the Charcoal Burners

The Guild house stands well apart from other buildings, on the southern outskirts of the district near the piney woods. The black-painted doors and leaden shutters of the long, low timber building remain locked most days. On nights of the full moon and of the new moon, pale lights gleam through the shutters and jambs of the house as the guildsmen gather for closed meetings. Four guildsmen (N human male, commoner 2) guard the house against intruders. Rumors flying around the Canteen and other gathering places mention traps and some kind of smoke-monster that strangles and chokes burglars.

Guild-Master Murillo (NE human male, 1/adept 2), a gaunt man with dark eyes and an easy smile, governs the Guild of Charcoal Burners. Few men whose fathers were not charcoal burners ever gain admission, and then only after taking part in loyalty oaths, tests, and clandestine nocturnal rituals. Murillo denied rumors that the Guild worships the Hell-Candle, laughing at the assertions.

A failed apprentice has spread the story that the guild plans a ceremony to summon Old Pitch, the Black Eyed Weeper. After the boy turns up dead in the street with no wounds, the friar declares it a case of smoke inhalation. Lady Estrella or Doctor Flaminus may hire investigators to look into his death and the story about the summoning ritual.
10. ACHEMIST

The Char’s resident alchemist lives in a two story house of lime-washed stucco and varnished timber, along the east side of the road to the lakeshore waterfront. Doctor Flamininus (N human male, alchemist 2/investigator 2) enjoys local fame as the man who distills the retsina sold at the Canteen. He also does much business with the Tar Works and the Glassworks. Lady Pendergil often dines with him, as he was an old friend of her late parents.

The alchemist has begun experiments with small gasbags and floating lanterns, inspired by the lung spiders he has observed drifting through the air over the Tar Works. He will display his small balloons to visitors, but he keeps his other project secret, even from his apprentices. In his private hours, he tinkers with a strange, broken machine that he bought from the Curio Shop. He knows it was dug up in the woods, but has not been able to learn exactly where.

The Doctor offers payment in cash and alchemical concoctions to an adventurer willing to drink a potion of diminution and go for a ride in a papier-mâché balloon, mapping sections of the forest from the air and conducting atmospheric tests with miniature instruments. Someone other than the alchemist will have to go along to hold the guy line; Flamininus fears the monsters of the deep woods. Encounters with lung spiders, a sudden storm, or other hazards could turn the aerial jaunt into a dangerous adventure. Flamininus thinks the information gathered will help him discover the origin, purpose, and missing components of the device he bought from the Twilight Apotheke.

The device:

The casing is an antique Dwarf coffer, carved with a silver, bejeweled cat’s head. Depressing the gemstones opens the coffer, exposing a bizarre composite device, dwarf-made gears joined to smooth gray metal-like tubes and boxes. Some of parts appear to be missing. Flamininus has been tinkering with the machine. He discovered a small, black, ice cold cylinder. It sloshes as if half full of fluid. Around the cylinder housing, he found lead panels covered in Aklo script. The inscription seems like gibberish, but the words traveler, stars, hues, and burn repeat. Neither the machine components nor the Dwarf coffer radiate magic.
THE BREAKING YARDS

When Griffonport was founded, these wild fertile lands were once the homes of monsters, that preyed on any daring to leave the city's gates. After generations of hard-fought, bloody feuds, the city's expansion meandered through these now tilled and worked lands. Each inch came at the cost of some hardship or another. It is here with such a history that some of the toughest horses and livestock are bred. Like hardened rock crushed into soil, the seeds are ready to harvest. The bounty is fresh, and plentiful. Now cut-up by wooden paddocks; the residents fight over prestige and animal rights instead of survival.

NOTABLE NPC'S

Annanaxia Hortenbrodder: A caring, open and generous individual Annanaxia (NG elf female, alchemist 2/empath 3) has always been around. Her kind heart and elven features are a stark contrast to the hard lives of the people of the breaking yards. She goes from ranch to ranch tending particularly harmed or ill animals beyond the estate’s abilities to mend. Often times she charges very little for her expert services. She’s a staple of the community, and many wouldn’t know how to handle it if such an expert animal healer left for some reason.

Indrig Eullogast: An angry and bitter widower, Ingrid is deeply intelligent (NE human female, transmuter 8) Ranch Owner and scholar. She is methodical and dedicated to her studies. Despite her older age, she manages working the ranch during the day hours with her farm-hands as any individual would. Her true calling is in animal husbandry; and it is common knowledge that she pays rather handsomely for rare and exotic animals to study and breed. Her widowed status and her wealth means she is often busy dodging courtiers; and nothing sets in her rage faster than when some young hopeful dares disturbs her work for such unwelcome calling.

Morton Hallowvale: An beautiful man with a winning smile. He owns the Amber Tree ranch. A ranch known for the massive semi-magical land mark. As a horse rancher and farmer (CG half-elf male, commoner 2/expert 1), the Amber tree brought his family much luck. He has many children he is proud of, and a wife that he takes care of. Despite being a horse rancher and a farmer, he leaves much of his land open so the folks of Griffonport can come to his estate’s namesake. Morton is not entirely altruistic, and uses the draw of such a land-mark to market some of the services, and horses as well as other merchandise for his own needs. To keep up his
appearance; Morton entertains in the Spring Lotus District, and does much business there.

**Daria Burdenfellow:** Daria BurdenFellow (LN human female, fighter 2/ranger 3) is a farmer living in the Meadowfield Villa. She is a tough, strong individual who is gleeful to meet strangers. Her hearty laugh can be heard across the fields she works. An infectious sense of adventure brings her to encouraging the young to wonder. She’s known for paying adventures to hear tales from far off lands, and daring do. Being a farmer wasn’t her only calling, she herself took up the spear to claim her wealth; and her wanderlust was sated she used her funds to buy the Meadowfield Villa from its previous owners. Her work-houses are open to any adventures who find themselves short of coin; as long as they trade a day’s labor for each night stayed.

**Hapton Amplefell:** A sad, quite blacksmith (LN dwarf male, expert 3). His demeanor is dour, but not off putting. His hammer rings from his forge in rhythmic droning; as if the very nature of the world reflects what he feels. Customers are always welcome in his shop; however, questions about why he does not work with his peers in the Ironworks are not. He will work on anything, but seems physically repulsed by the idea of even handling a weapon. Hapton works almost for free. He charges far too little for his repairs, typically only enough to cover materials. When work is lean, he is often seen in the Spring Lotus District drinking himself into a slump. During busy seasons he can be found slumped on top of his anvil when he inevitably is too tired to work further.

**Nurma Belladonna:** Nurma is an odd young woman. She is constantly shrouded, believing that should light touch her flesh, she’d burn. Her unique persona and odd belief have brought her something of a reputation as an odd witch. Though her calling isn’t necessarily arcane (N half-orc female, oracle 3) she is known for bringing peace to the dying, and mending the bones of the injured. She is often found either being bullied by those who find her strange demeanor uncomfortable; or walking the roads looking for those she can help.

**Nurma, can be seen**

patronizing the Twilight Apothecary when not meandering the countryside looking to help the wayward.

**Crispen Maplestar:** Crispen is a man of odd talents (N human male, druid 4). He is known for being close to animals. This closeness, and living in the yards made him valuable. His ability to seemingly talk to animals made him a natural fit for training. He took to it; and soon he found himself able to communicate with some in a more natural manner. Crispen spends his days training animals, and tending to livestock between ranches. Each ranch pays for his services, and rents him by the moon’s cycle. Few know that he helped develop griffen’s, and other ways to keep large predators at bay.

Few know that Crispen’s permanent residence is outside of town; and many suspect he lives in the Char when he isn’t renting his services.

**Notable Locations**

1. **The Bit and Bridle**
   
   This rustic tavern is the mainstay of the work force in the Breaking Yards. Many laborers find themselves here at the end of a long day, working fields. Some particularly unlucky individuals find themselves nursing wounds here, as they look for work they can do when a particularly rambunctious mare breaks their body and their spirits. Storytellers, gamblers, and musicians from Griffonport come here to peddle their various trades when other taverns aren’t so receptive.

2. **Eullogast Estate**
   
   The largest estate in the breaking yards. This fine manor produces approximately one third of the horses Griffonport breeds. The family that operates this estate has owned it for several generations. Some even say the hippogriph was bred here. The horses of House Eullogast
are some of the fastest in the region, and demand high prices.

3. Plow Shears

A blacksmith; that specifically refuses to work on weapons. Plow Shears’s proprietor has immense skill in crafting tools, and repairing armor. The facilities itself are an impressive series of forges and different sized anvils. It looks as if it could house several craftsmen, but only has one resident.

4. Amber Tree Ranch

A burgeoning ranch filled with exotic flowers, wheat, barley, and other grains and vegetables. The Amber Tree ranch produces a large amount of fresh food for Griffonport. Many end up spending more money here than they’d planned on, leading some to believe the goods are enchanted. The Amber Tree Ranch is often hosts public festivals, parades, and other large public events.

5. The Amber Tree

A large brilliant multi-hued tree. Twisted bark along its trunk chips away revealing a thick viscous sap of a roughly deep yellow. Though the central reason it’s called the Amber Tree is the brilliant red and yellow leaves that make up its canopy. It has evaded proper identification because of its various types of leaves. Druids whisper that the tree is possessed of many different spirits, with no true voice of its own.

6. The Stable’s Gate

This antiquated building has been recently renovated. It used to be a ranch house with a few side cabins for workers. They have been updated to house guests and the main building has been updated to accommodate special guests at any hour.

7. Saddle Bag Supply

This store is well used by the district. Many of the families and business use the Saddle-Bag Supply to move goods.

8. Gilded Stallion

The workhouse of the Gilded Stallion is a modern attempt to bring class and nobility to the wild and rough district. Mannequins display absurdly opulent hats, gowns, and suits fit for royal court. The small, two-story building, has an eccentric socialite of an owner and operator.

9. Manor Sadengrow

This large estate has some of Griffonport’s most very fertile lands. Primarily used to grow barley, hops, it also presents an onsite apiary. This manor has a winery and brewery; and is well known throughout Bryndell for the tastes it produces. Some spirits created by this family are fairly rare, and Sadengrow’s often gift select brews as rewards to those acting on behalf of the family.

10. Meadowfield Villa

Meadowfield Villa owns a little under one fifth of the ranch fields in the Breaking Yards. The Villa, as it is more commonly called, is a large series of plain buildings that house day-laborers in exchange for their work. They breed strong, capable horses; though they are widely regarded as a slower breed when it comes to travel. Weaker ones, and runts, are set aside to feed the regions griffon population.

Breaking Yards Rumors

The following rumors can be picked up with a successful Diplomacy Skill Check to Gather Information (DC 13).

1. Ingrid has a number of odd pets that you can only see at night.
2. Annanaxia sometimes works for livestock. No one knows what happens to the livestock she is given.
3. Sometimes on a full moon, some of the horses act really erratically.
4. Rumor has it that the Amber Tree will drop a leaf to indicate your true destiny.
5. Rumor has it that the Amber Tree will whisper the name of your true love.
6. The Gilded Stallion knows how to tread an outfit entirely out of gold, that’s how it got its name.
7. The Saddle-Bag Supply has a stash of hard to find valuables for the discerning eye.
8. The blacksmith of the Plow Shears used to make absolutely fantastic weapons... before the accident.
9. The hippocroft was created in the breaking yards.
**Spring Lotus District**

This small island off the coast of Griffonport serves as yet another chapter enclave of The Court of the Spring Lotus, and it gleams like the full moon on still water, with intricately carved buildings all crafted of iridescent steel, silvery marble, and inky obsidian stone.

**Notable NPC’s**

**Ambassador Aelynara:** Aelynara (CG elan [appears elven] female, dimensional wayfarer 12/ sorcerer [Celestial] 8) is the epitome of the Spring Lotus Enclave: stunningly beautiful, incredibly alluring, hauntingly alien, mysteriously distant. Some believe she is a member of the long-thought-lost race of Celestial Elves. The Ambassador deflects any such inquiries with a small and gracious smile before changing the subject. As the leader of the Court she oversees every aspect from the most mundane to the most intricate. She is both the resounding voice of her people and the open hand of her Embassy. Any who would visit the island do so only with her permission—some with her blessing, and only between dawn and dusk.

**Antiquarian Thanatis:** Thanatis, Master of Scrolls, resides in The Hall of Whispering Winds, which serves as the enclave’s local library and is but a small segment of the entire Court’s repository of earthly knowledge. Thanatis (N android male, eldritch antiquarian 12) appears as an athletic human, perhaps in his early 50s. He sports a perfectly trimmed, white goatee and has piercing blue eyes. Often regarded as aloof and coldly distant, he is genuinely more interested in the facts presented than the speaker presenting them. His primary task is to increase the Hall’s holdings, and to that end he often enlists those willing to pursue missions that Thanatis believes will lead to some lost bit of knowledge being discovered or reclaimed—whatever the cost to those involved.

**Matron Helvanna:** A remarkably attractive woman of indeterminate years (LG assimiri female, bard 12), Helvanna oversees the Hall of the Rising Sun, which serves as both a theater and opera house as well as a banquet hall for large soirees and social gatherings. As Matron, Helvanna is not only the senior member of the acting troupe, but she is the Master of Ceremonies at any official Court event. Unbeknownst to all but the most carefully selected, Matron Helvanna also oversees the Hall of the Fallen Moon, the under-parlor that mirrors the Hall above, only buried deep beneath Rising Sun’s lowest level.
None who are not members of enclave, or their very special guests, ever gain access to the Fallen Moon, and it is not known to the public.

Geodesist Kynsarra: More than a mere cartographer, Kynsarra has an intensity about her acquisition of terrestrial data that belies her thin and willowy frame. Kynsarra (LN sylph female, expert 3/Investigator 9) is often smudged with ink, from her long fingers all the way up to her silver-hued glass goggles. While often intensely restless when not moving amongst the wonders of the world, she does find an overwhelming serenity within her maps and charts. Similar to Thanatis, she often will contact and hire or barter travelers for specific pieces of information. She appears young, but her eyes have seen a great many facets of the world beyond Griffonport, and she’s often willing to exchange her maps for contracts to acquire missing data. She also holds many deeds, writs, and titles to parcels of land both nearby and far, far away—and she’s always after more.

Originator Nuxxon: A seemingly younger version of Thanatis, with a shiny brown beard in place of a goatee, but with the same steely blue eyes, and a similar coolly distant demeanor. Nuxxon is exceedingly practical in all matters, and crafts the most intricate devices, specializing in watches, clocks, compasses, and mechanical toys. While he is a more than capable smith, he has little to no interest in crafting weapons—unless they are massive armaments of war like assault towers and siege engines; the exception being very fine daggers and stilettoes, aerial combat lances and harpoons, or the very rare, nearly impossible to obtain, repeating crossbow. Typically, Nuxxon, (NE android male, vivisectionist 6/rogue {transmuter} 3/wizard {transmuter} 3) is quite content to stick to his Hall of Curiosities and his various tiny constructs. He will only offer his engineering services if ordered to do so by the Ambassador—and always for very lofty consulting and construction fees. His work is decidedly not cheap, but all his clients are extremely satisfied.

Enforcer Karviss: Karviss serves as First Commander of the Watch, and head of the enclave’s detachment of the 10th Legion, which provides the Court’s security forces (LN  orad male, fighter 12/ranger 3). For most people, Kardiss is a towering bulwark of black plate armor, and little else. He does not go out in
public unless fully armed and armored, and outside of his role as security, he never attends social events. He does his job calmly and effectively, with a priority on efficiency. As the Court is its own political entity, Karviss may serve as Judge, Jury, and Executioner if the Ambassador is unable to perform those roles. He is brusque, curt, and factual, but he is never rude nor does he succumb to insults. He is the paragon of lawfulness. As such, he often limits his interactions with Valarian, as the two will invariably quarrel over the necessity of tolerance.

**Wildspeaker Ista:** Ista (changeling female, hunter 9) is often fully hooded and cloaked in greens and tans, and will proclaim her love of all things wild, and her distaste for all things not. She is the caretaker for the Hall of Fluttering Wings, and guardian of a great many beasts both within the Hall and roaming the lands of and around Griffonport. Ista never sells any animal, she homes them with people who will care for and tend to them as if they were her own. By contract and right they are always hers, and she may demand their return if ever mistreated. Those who have scoffed at this, and have broken her faith, have had an odd way of turning up partially eaten and left to rot in the woods.

**Nightkeeper Valarian:** Valarian (dhaipr male, slayer 12) has been tasked by the Ambassador to tend to the Outlanders who visit, and occasionally linger, in the Hall of Starry Nights. While he does not enjoy this seemingly menial and somewhat unpalatable duty, and he loathes the requirement to mingle with the unwashed and uninitiated, Valarian does very much enjoy prying secrets and tidbits of information from both the willingly drunk and boisterous, and the taciturn and silent.

## Notable Locations

Opulent and bold, this striking building is second only in size to the Great House of the Court itself. A large stage is set deep within, with seating for all who can afford to buy a ticket (and have a reservation for the show), and there is one large balcony with a small serving area, and numerous private balconies. No matter where you sit the acoustics are perfect. The shell of the Hall also houses a largish dining area, and several small, private parlors. Plays, concerts, and all manner of events happen here, and all eyes are as equally upon you as they are the stage.

### 2. The Hall of Starry Nights

Black obsidian flecked with radiant crystal, this tall, thin, and long building serves its patrons as an upscale spa, with saunas and full bathhouse, fine eatery with exotic food and drink, and, if standing around or swimming in the large saltwater pool on the second floor when the roof is opened, a stunningly gorgeous solarium or nightly planetarium. However, it is best known for its many secluded and private rooms, where all manner of business and pleasure are rumored to occur.

### 3. The Hall of Fluttering Wings

Unlike a traditional stable or zoo, this hall, wrought primarily of intertwining steel bars and open lattice, is home to numerous exotic animals, from areas near and far, of legend and myth, or from the woods surrounding Griffonport. Ista cares for it all as if she were the matron of a large family of adoptive children, and while visitors may make arrangements to come to the Hall, admittance is granted only if allowed by two intricately carved stone lions, Justice and Honor, who guard the entrance and decide who is permitted within.

### 4. The Hall of Watchfulness

More barracks or small fort than a hall, the 10th Legion is stationed here. On rare occasion, summons are held and justice is dispensed. While the stout building is more than capable of repelling raiders, it could not withstand a siege for long.

### 5. The Hall of Curiosities

Starkly different than anything in Griffonport, the Hall of Curiosities is constructed entirely of what appears to be various types of metal panels, all seemingly fused together without windows or even an obvious door. Some of the panels are resistant to all elements, and stay brilliant all year. Others show weathering and oxidation, turning rust-colored even if not truly rusted. A large, green, crystalline orb stands upon a skeletal metallic arm, upthrust from the ground near the Hall. If you have an appointment, approach the orb, place your hand upon it, speak your bidding, and if Nuxxon wishes it, you will be granted entrance and a portal will appear—even though it may not be the same one twice.
6. THE HALL OF FORMATION

Sitting across from, and serving as counterpoint to, the Hall of Formation counters the Hall of Curiosities’ brilliance with an earthly dullness. Formed of hewn rock and stones, shaped and crafted with care, but by hands, this Hall is seemingly embedded in, and part of, the very earth itself. Once ushered inside, guests are greeted by stacks of candle-less lights that appear as glowing marbles of stone, each one a different hue. Given the fragility of the contents of the Hall, no flames of any kind are ever permitted, as the towering shelves and open tables are covered with ancient scrolls, detailed maps, the odd globe, or metallic celestial apparatus.

7. THE HALL OF WHISPERING WINDS

Cold and rational in layout, this Hall serves as both grand library and relic bank. The interior is floor-to-ceiling shelving that form a maze of narrow passages between them. All space is dedicated to storage and cataloguing, and nothing is left for comfort of those who toil within or those who visit. Ambient light from a diffuse source saturates the Hall, but nowhere is a place of emission visible.

8. THE SILVER HALL

Part of the “Silver Quarter”—the area where visitor and patrons are allowed to mingle, shop, and even stay without a dedicated escort or Guide, the Silver Hall is the
primary meeting area for guests. It combines merchant areas with food stands and small, cloth-covered tables. While everything here is inspected by the Court, and the Court takes its share of the profits, the items brought in are not of the Court itself.

9. The Silver House

A steadfast, sturdy, and exceptionally clean merchant inn. It has solid walls both inside and out, firm, clean beds, solid metal doors with individual locks, small private baths within each room, and a large tavern area downstairs, complete with a small stage and hearth surrounded by numerous tables both small and large.

10. The Great House of the Spring Lotus

Crown jewel of the enclave, the Great House is a towering edifice of grandeur and stands imposingly at the far end of the Great Walk. Shaped of shimmering steel, obsidian, and pure white marble it gleams year round with an almost tangible glow. The Great House is where the Ambassador and her staff reside, and none else gain entrance past the front stunningly elaborate, sky-decorated, dome-roofed foyer.

Spring Lotus District Rumors

The following rumors can be picked up with a successful Diplomacy Skill Check to gather information (DC 15).

1. The Court of the Spring Lotus is an alien/otherworldly invasion.
2. Matron Helvanna is a doppelganger.
3. The stars visible from the open roof of the Hall of Starry Nights are not the stars of this world.
4. Thanatis is said to never age, and does not bleed.
5. There are labyrinthine tunnels that lead to a perfect mirror under-city beneath the island.
6. The Silver Quarter is full of spies for the Court, from the stable boys to the innkeepers.
7. Originator Nuxxon has a torture chamber in a deep corner of his Hall.
8. Wildspeaker Ista is a dragon in human form, and the animals are her servants
FESTIVALS AND FRIVOLITIES

FESTIVAL OF THE LOTUS

This Festival is held every three months, with a theme fitting to the season it occurs in. No two festivals are alike, but each one is highly anticipated, as only a handful of applicants are accepted to attend. During the Festival, only attendees are allowed within the enclave, all others are turned away. While attendees are sworn to secrecy, the one thing they all say is that it is a truly transcendent experience, and each one longs to return—if permitted.

TALONSPAR

Talonspar is a game that many hard-working citizens of Griffonport play whenever possible. To play Talonspar, a player must have a sap, a net, or an approximate weapon; and an old sick horse. The goal of Talonspar is to capture or lure a large flying creature.

The rules of Talonspar are simple. You may place the sick horse anywhere in an open field. You may hide any way you find possible. Killing your quarry disqualifies the catch. Each Capture is worth points; based on the size and the danger the creature possesses. Saving the bait-horse doubles the value of your capture. The play time is a single season. You may have any number of players on your team, but you lose a single point for each person that helps.

Winning a game of Talonspar is a great honor for the team. Besides the honor; the prize is the largest animal that each participating team captured. This results in a fierce competition; as such creatures sell at a high price to the local ranches.

It isn't uncommon for ranches to lease some property to other teams to make a little income on these games. Unfortunately, some estates can't take part because of manpower, funds or other reasons. This leasing allows each land-owner some ability to engage, and still earn capital. Even better, the game allows some families to sell sick or wounded work animals. This seasonal cycle helps finance the livestock trade even further.

Talonspar teams often form among the young, the bold, and sometimes the fool hearty. Creatures that fly are often intelligent on some level. The predatory nature of the quarry often means that they are dangerous. This level of danger and intelligent often ends with many injuries. Teams who have a few extra coins and underhanded often hire passing adventurers. Many would be adventures get a start in this sport; acquiring a taste for danger and renown.

The crowning jewel of the Talonspar competition is the capture of a large adult female griffin. Such a catch is so desirable point wise; some teams only work towards catching one. Then they sell one to the highest bidder.

RUNAWAY

Runaway is a board game for two players. It is played on a wooden board with specially painted squares in the center, and a carved horse, and 3 wranglers for each player; and a single horse. The board is painted into squares; some squares have dark outlines around a few sides. Two opposite sides of the board have 3 yellow painted squares.

The game is played with the horse piece placed in the middle, and the 3 Wrangler pieces placed in the yellow squares closest to the controlling player. The Players take turns moving any wrangler piece 1 square in any direction. When the Wrangler is moved, the horse moves in the same direction. The goal is to get the horse into the yellow squares on your side of the board. The horse may not move over thick lines, but may pass any soft line with ease.

Individuals who feel like they have a strong understanding of strategy play this game. The goal of the game is acquiring a valuable resource after all. The game is prized among those who feel they are intellectually superior, and don't believe such a game is a layman's game. However, it is common enough to find through the breaking yards that people who keep such notions are looked upon as absurd.

SAILOR'S HAVEN FESTIVAL

At the end of every sailing season, there is a time of jubilation. The waters of Griffon’s Bay have long brought the city prosperity. At the end of each summer citizens celebrate a year of plenty, or mourn a year of loss.

The three day long celebration occurs at the water’s edge. Cuttlefish, Lamprey, and Mermaid’s Purse-cooked by the finest chefs- punctuate the joy-filled atmosphere. Harvested Sea-flowers decorate the dockside buildings. Tradition dictates that lovers decorate themselves in radiant sea anemones, and shells to honor the sea-goddess. Some older sailors whisper that adorning oneself with the shells symbolize Krokaar’s failed romance of Amaura.

A regatta capstones the celebrations, with the longboats painted to resemble krakens and other marine life. The winner of the race wins the Sailor’s Haven Horn and the envy of the other competitors.
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