

‘Lorden’

A City Supplement for
Shadow of the Demon Lord

by Nat 20 Webb

Young Needles Games

Requires *Shadow of the Demon Lord* from Schwalb Entertainment

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Art-Free Version

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Soundtrack

Battle Beast	<i>Bringer of Pain</i>
Beast in Black	<i>Berserker</i>
Blind Guardian	<i>Beyond the Red Mirror</i>
Bloodbound	<i>Tabula Rasa</i>
Elvenking	<i>The Pagan Manifesto</i>
Faun	<i>Luna</i>
The Gathering	<i>Mandylion</i>
Ghost B.C.	<i>Meliora</i>
MaterDea	<i>Below the Mists, Above the Brambles</i>
Myrkur	<i>M</i>
Tyr	<i>Valkyrja</i>

Notes

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“Cold Wind to Valhalla” - The mighty berserker Thrah has been slain! Who killed him? Why? And... how?

“A Jester’s Tear” - The failing Vermillion Players have come to Lorden, bringing a rolling festival with them. But madness lurks at the heart of a playwright’s final masterpiece...

“The Temple of the King” - Captain Rutger Bloom, once known as the Pirate King of the River Gwaun, has returned from the grave to claim his throne.

“O’er Hell and Hide” - Three of Hell’s cruelest devils have driven factory boss Mordavius Kwister into an act of murder shocking even for jaded Lorden. Introducing the 0-10 campaign *A Wager in Hell*.

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Welcome to Lorden

The city of Lorden is falling apart. For generations uncounted it has occupied a prime location on the river Gwaun, getting rich off busy trade in both directions, but even the wealthiest city cannot resist forever the encroaching chaos of the Demon Lord's influence.

A full third of the city, the southern ward known as Beast's Landing, has been left to the degenerate hordes of beastmen who overran it, while the once-splendid manses of the city's great lords and merchants on the central Isle of Lorden now house gangs, drug addicts, and mercenary companies. The displaced of these two wards now huddle in Norwood on the northern shore of the Gwaun, factory workers rubbing shoulders with nobility in the only safe zone left.

Lorden was always far from the heart of the Empire, and after Beast's Landing fell, the Alabaster Throne decided the distant trade city simply wasn't worth saving. They cut off all support to their troops in Lorden as the orc uprising raged out of control, claiming the necessity of those supplies for soldiers closer to home. The city has continued on without their oversight—indeed some say they have benefited from the sudden lack of Imperial taxes—but the ancient edifices of tradition that support the city creak in the winds of change.

The Three Wards

Lorden is divided into three major wards: Norwood, the Isle of Lorden, and Beast's Landing. Each ward is comprised of many neighborhoods, each with its own personality. Norwood covers the northern shore of the river Gwaun; Beast's Landing is what's left of the city on the southern shore; and the Isle of Lorden sits in between, connected to Norwood by the Silk Bridge and to Beast's Landing by the Iron Bridge.

None of the wards is what it was in Lorden's heyday. In the last twenty years, Beast's Landing has been overrun by beastmen and other monsters from the south. Proximity to these creatures, and the occasional northward raid across the Iron Bridge, prompted the rich and powerful to flee the Isle of Lorden en masse for the safer northern shore, leaving the glorious mansions and wide avenues of the Isle for those too poor, crazy, or foolhardy to leave. The mercenaries and adventurers who live there now venture into the abandoned streets of Beast's Landing in search of forgotten treasures, while the merchants and nobles of Norwood try to keep on living as though the city hasn't changed.

Norwood

Norwood is where all the city's respectable citizens call home, but twenty years ago, it was Lorden's center of industry. Its traditional communities of factory workers and immigrants from the lands to the north haven't gone anywhere, and the struggle for the soul of Norwood plays out on its streets every day. Thus it has a conflicted character: new construction by elder brahmins rebuilding their favorite parks and squares from the Isle butts up against smoke-belching factories and massive blocks of worker housing.

The exodus of the powerful from the Isle of Lorden to Norwood was made official when the previous Lord Mayor moved his mansion to the border between Ghostchester and Bywater. The politically-minded now measure their influence in how many blocks their homes are from the mayor's.

Id20 Norwood Encounters

1	A desperate, starving mugger
2-4	Id6 filthy factory workers between shifts
5-7	Id6 drunken stevedores
8-10	Id6-1 guardsmen
11-12	Id6-1 swaggering noble youths
13-14	Id3 attention-starved street performers
15	Alendra Binswanger
16	Greasy
17	Old Mertrude
18	Red Runrig
19	Thorfin Thunderfingers
20	Tipton Downing

ALENDRA BINSWANGER, HUMAN GUARD

Alendra Binswanger, by all appearances a sober, self-serious, and effective lieutenant of the Guard, is actually the changeling Stick. Binswanger is hell-bent on catching Tipton Downing, but since Downing is also Stick, it's anyone's guess whether the changeling is playing a long con or a strange game—or perhaps has two totally dissociated identities.

She will hassle any apparent adventurers in the better neighborhoods of Norwood, trying to hustle them back to the Isle of Lorden.

GREASY, CLOCKWORK POLITICIAN

Mayor Lumsk's loyal right-hand clockwork spends his days running between the mayoral mansion and points throughout Norwood, making sure Lumsk's edicts are being followed. He is in a constant state of low-level campaigning on behalf of his boss.

Greasy is always happy to spend a moment making sure adventurers support Mayor Lumsk, especially if they look powerful or have developed a reputation.

OLD MERTRUDE, HUMAN DOWAGER

At first glance, Mertrude is a crazy old hag, though she is always friendly. Only those who get to know her better discover that she's actually the wealthy widow of a late shipping magnate.

She will tell long, boring stories about the good old days for as long as anyone will listen. She may even invite friendly characters back to her Ghostchester townhouse for tea.

RED RUNRIG, DWARVEN EX-MERCENARY

Red Runrig, retired, was once the captain of Red's Boys, a mercenary crew stationed on the Isle. Rumor has it that he found a valuable treasure in Beast's Landing. Now he frequents the cafes of Norwood, sipping coffee and holding court.

He loves giving advice to adventuring parties, on everything from how best to guard a doorway to the many uses of a ten-foot pole.

THORFIN THUNDERFINGERS, DWARVEN BARD

A rousing but very loud hand-drummer, Thorfinn is hustling to earn a spot in the house of a noble. He will play any gig he can get and is often seen rushing from one to another.

If he has the time to stop, Thorfin will try to make anybody with a hint of money into a patron. He can be very useful in getting introduced to the upper classes.

TIPTON DOWNING, HUMAN CRIMINAL

Tipton Downing is the consummate charming cat burglar, except that he's not. He's actually a changeling called Stick who often takes the shape of the dapper art thief. Nobody suspects a thing, and Downing moves easily in every class of society.

Considering himself the better sort of thief, Downing loves to discuss art criticism and fine wines, and will make thinly-veiled allusions to his criminal escapades.

Neighborhoods

BYWATER

Flat-bottomed party barges alight with many-colored lamps line Norwood's eastern shoreline, and music and laughter echo across the water from glittering mansions overlooking the river. As rich as those of Ghostchester, the denizens of Bywater care more about having a good time and impressing their friends than influencing politics. Hardly a night goes by without at least two parties in Bywater competing to be the social event of the evening.

GHOSTCHESTER

Ornate carriages clatter past each other on Ghostchester's broad, cobbled streets; in its great squares the wealthy take coffee and debate politics. More money has been poured into Ghostchester than any other neighborhood since the abandonment of Beast's Landing, and it shows. Entire blocks of worker housing have been converted into massive townhouses or torn down for parks, displacing the previous residents.

JADEGATE

Lorden's famed Jade Gate, which opens the city to traders from the north, has fallen into disrepair. Its green paint is faded and flaking, revealing crumbling gray stone beneath. The neighborhood around the gate hasn't seen the same infusion of gold as some other parts of Norwood, peopled as it is mostly by itinerant traders, immigrant settlers, and the dwarfs who work the great coal mine. Jadegate does, however, have the best food.

MARKET SQUARE

The heart of Norwood is the literally-named Market Square, which replaced the Isle's Street of Wonders as the city's primary marketplace. The Lord Mayor's office has begun selling space in the Square proper, so it features high-end goods; traders from far lands rub elbows with local artisans and farmers in the crowded lanes that snake out from the Square like arteries from a heart.

RAMUNDSVOLK

A few hundred years ago, settlers led by the hero Ramund came up from the wild south and settled outside Lorden's gates. They are now an established neighborhood, recreating their old sense of community in the city. There are no taverns or inns in Ramundsvolk, as Ramund's People famously welcome any and all to the boisterous parties they throw in their homes. You can drink, boast, hear old sagas, and even spend the night, as long as you're a gracious guest.

REDGLASS

A long-ago industrial accident flooded the streets of Redglass with liquid fire, fusing its streets into a slick red surface. Horses hate it here, but then again, so does everybody else, and the only permanent residents are the workers who cram into huge tenement complexes adjacent to the factories where they live and, often, die.

The Isle of Lorden

From their splendid houses here, the powerful once gazed out at the shipping on the Gwaun. This quickly changed when Beast's Landing fell. Everyone who could flee did, most to Norwood and some out of Lorden entirely. The Isle is now inhabited by those without the means to leave and those who choose to live on the lawless border between civilization and chaos.

A succession of mayors has been only too happy to give away land on the Isle to anyone brave or foolish enough to stand against the beastmen. Mercenaries and adventurers beyond count make their homes in the abandoned mansions of the Isle, and prostitutes, addicts, and pickpockets mingle in its marble squares. Many have come to win fame and fortune, fighting the beastmen on the Iron Bridge or daring Beast's Landing to loot the empty homes, shops, and temples there.

1d20 Isle Encounters

1	A well-organized mugging
2-4	1d6 members of an adventuring crew
5-7	1d6 prostitutes of all ancestries and genders
8-9	1d6 urchin pickpockets
10-11	1d6 bravos new to town
12	1d6-2 Doomslayers
13	1d6-1 Wolves of Glory
14	A dealer
15	A tavern's errand boy
16	Addle-Pated Old Gort
17	Heinrich the Clanless
18	Vesper Solati
19	Wiry Tom
20	Xander O'Shambles

ADDLE-PATED OLD GORT, GOBLIN PHILOSOPHER

When Old Gort was Young Gort, he was a promising member of the Wolves of Glory mercenary company. A powerful warrior for a goblin, Gort took one too many blows to the head and now wanders the streets spouting nonsense philosophy at passersby.

Old Gort's nonsense may contain obscure prophecy or hidden wisdom, or it may just be meaningless.

HEINRICH THE CLANLESS, DWARF WARRIOR(?)
Heinrich, a bald, beardless dwarf, is assumed to have once been a great warrior. Now he sits in the squares of the Isle giving his opinion on the current mercenary companies' activities to anyone who will listen.

Heinrich's willingness to gossip about mercenary politics makes him a good friend to novice adventurers. He's just glad someone is listening to him.

VESPER SOLATI, ELF ASSASSIN (PROBABLY)
Behold the mysterious fires that burn behind her eyes. Look at her easy, confident stride, moving with the grace of an apex predator. What instruments of death lurk under her stylish black cloak? Who will be her first, her last, her next victim? Surely Vesper Solati is an assassin— what else could she be?

If approached, Solati will stand about looking silently mysterious, then reference some undefined "important business" and stride away, swirling her cloak.

WIRY TOM, HUMAN BEGGAR

Wiry Tom is a well-connected old scam artist. He knows everyone on the Isle, and when someone is new, he beseeches them for donations to such causes as "The Slender Gentlemen's Retirement Fund."

He will always try to scam people he's never met before, but once a group earns his respect he's a useful source for the latest news on the Isle and opinions about its people.

XANDER O'SHAMBLES, HALFLING JUNKIE
The halflings' legendary love of creature comforts has reached its ultimate expression in poor Xander, who gets high and hallucinates about his home village when he can, and begs and scams for drug money when he must.

If Xander is encountered high (roll of 6 on a d6) he waxes rhapsodic about the colors of the grass and sky back home. Otherwise he shivers and begs for coin.

Neighborhoods

ALEHOUSE ROW

Such a collection of warriors and madmen as the Isle boasts requires a ready supply of food and drink. Taverns, bars, public houses, liquories, winesinks, and drinking holes crowd the long avenue that is Alehouse Row. The Row is neutral territory, and usually a place of respite from the turf wars and beefs between petty adventuring crews that plague the rest of the Isle. This has also made it a popular location for shops that service adventurers' needs.

BACKWASH

The poor and forgotten of the Isle live in Backwash along the high bluffs of the western shore. Years ago Backwash was what Norwood's Bywater neighborhood is today, but the mansions of yesteryear are slowly tumbling into the river as the bluffs erode. Squatters pick a new house each year, and often hold parties to watch their old home collapse down into the water.

THE IRON BRIDGE

Narrow and low, the mighty Iron Bridge between the Isle and Beast's Landing it was built to be defensible against incursions from the southern shore. That decision proved prescient, as squads of mercenaries and adventurers regularly lock shields against sorties made by beastmen attempting to reach the Isle. Now and again a lone monster even breaks through.

OLD MONEY

As the name suggests, this used to be the richest section of Lorden. At its heart is the Colossus of Downtown, a statue a hundred feet tall that has fallen with one hand outstretched towards the former Lord Mayor's mansion. Surrounding the Colossus are the homes of the few people on the Isle who still maintain some semblance of respectability.

THE STREET OF WONDERS

Once Lorden's premiere shopping district, the Street of Wonders has gotten even wilder since the fall of Beast's Landing. Hucksters and hedge wizards ply miracles alongside colorful sellers of clockwork toys and impractical weapons from far away, and not even business partners really trust each other.

TOOTHY TOWN

The erosion of the western shore began when a huge section of the Isle collapsed into the river overnight. A few hundred yards out from Backwash, fragments of land that remained from that collapse stick up from the river like monstrous teeth. A few structures cling precariously to these islands, home to Lorden's most desperate and devious criminals. For a few bits you can hire a coracle to take you to one, but you're as likely to get robbed on the trip as upon arrival.

THE SILK BRIDGE

The Silk Bridge connects the Isle of Lorden with Norwood on the northern shore. Tall enough for shipping to pass beneath, and wide enough for two carriages to pass each other, with walking paths overlooking the Gwaun on either side, the Silk Bridge was originally a lovely way for the wealthy to get home. Now a cluster of small shops has appeared on the shore end of the bridge as land in Norwood has become hard to find, and the shanty towns of the displaced reach farther out from the Isle end every month.

Beast's Landing

Generations ago, as Lorden first grew, a mayor named Bast built the Iron Bridge and pushed the city to expand to the southern shore of the Gwaun, and the new neighborhood was named Bast's Landing in her honor. Once it was overrun by beastmen from the south, the wags at the popular *Lorden Opinionator* broadsheet re-christened it "Beast's Landing," and the name stuck.

There are many riches to be found here, as it was abandoned in a hurry by merchant and beggar alike. The only trouble is that monsters of all sorts have made their homes in the tumbledown houses, shops, temples, sewers, outhouses, bath houses, and so on. The old divisions of Beast's Landing have mostly been forgotten, and its "neighborhoods" are all nicknames given to notorious areas of the ruin by adventurers lucky enough to make it out again.

Neighborhoods

THE BURN WARD

Recommended for novice characters

A massive fire eradicated block after block of wooden houses in what was once a middle-class residential neighborhood. Well picked over by adventurers, the Burn Ward has few valuables to offer, but its burnt-out houses and shops can be a good place to hide from roving beastmen as they also have no reason to come here. Sleepers should be wary, however, of a previously-unknown species of night vulture that has a taste for burned flesh but will eat the living in a pinch.

THE LABYRINTH

Recommended for master characters

This was once a massive temple-complex dedicated to the New God. Multiple small churches, offices, libraries, and outbuildings make up an imposing compound, but the real wonder is underground: an intricate series of service tunnels connect all the buildings in the complex, and are rumored to extend to a few other spots on the southern shore as well. One retired adventurer even claims he was held captive by a minotaur named Phobos who lives in the Labyrinth, and who only released him to warn others against going there, but nobody believes him.

THE PUDDING

Recommended for expert characters

The Pudding was the site of the last and largest battle between the soldiers of Lorden and the beastmen invaders before Beast's Landing was abandoned. Once a great public park and garden, the earth here was churned into a foul slurry of blood, shit, urine and mud as the two sides fought in a torrential rain. Twenty years later the ground hasn't recovered, and veteran adventurers speak of "sloggin' through the Pudding" to get to other areas of the Landing. The terrain isn't the only hazard, though, as monsters come here often to dine on its broad selection of corpses.

RAT ISLAND

Recommended for expert characters

The name says it all for Rat Island, a small, rocky outcropping connected to Beast's Landing by a rickety aerial cable car system that is inexplicably still running after all these years. Each of the six cars can fit four human-sized creatures comfortably, and cycles between Rat Island and the Safe Zone on the shore at about half an hour for a round trip. The island itself is overrun with rats of all sizes, who seem to be forming a society among the ruins of an old hermitage. How they've gained intelligence isn't clear, but they are certainly reproducing and mutating at an alarming rate.

THE SAFE ZONE

Recommended for novice characters

The nickname "Safe Zone" is used somewhat ironically, as nowhere in Beast's Landing is really safe; you'll often hear an adventurer say "We didn't even make it past the bloody Safe Zone before the damned beastmen scented us!" But as the section of the southern shore where the Iron Bridge lets out, the Safe Zone sees the highest number of adventurers, so the beastmen are more likely to avoid it than the other neighborhoods of the Landing. It's made up mostly of old shops and homes, with a few small parks set among the buildings.

SHITBURG

Recommended for master characters

Once a prosperous residential neighborhood called Bromberg, this area is known for having the densest population of the meanest, toughest beastmen. Their brutal kings make their homes here in a vile mockery of civilized life, and are attended by hordes of lesser monsters. Novice adventurers speak of the area with awe and fear; veterans dare each other to sorties "deep in the Shit" after heavy drinking, and agree only after a few drinks more.

Where Can I...

Buy

ADVENTURING GEAR

Scroungings on Mirt Street in Jadegate
Venturer's Needs on the Street of Wonders

CLOTHING AND ACCESSORIES

The Raffish Gentry on Coin Lane in Ghostchester
Resplendent Regalia on Long Lane in Market Square
Trephanie's on Aberforth Lane in Old Money

MOUNTS

The Caravanserai north of the city

SPECIALIZED TOOLS

The Esteemed Brotherhood of Alchemists on
 Philosopher's Lane in Ghostchester
Lord Seventhday's Arcanery on the Street of
 Wonders
The Speciality Shop on Coal Street in Market Square
Big Kwalish's Apparatus Rental on Triumphal Row in
 Jadegate

WEAPONS AND ARMOR

Steelheart's on Left-Hand Lane in Market Square
The Scrap King in Gelding Alley off Alehouse Row
The Sisters of Flame on the Street of Wonders

Eat & Drink

WELL

The Rutting Rooster on Coin Lane in Ghostchester
The Portable Kitchen on Greasy Street in Jadegate
Niccolo's on Guestright Street in Bywater

A LOT

The Lifted Gate Tavern on Alehouse Row
The Sabre & Torch on Alehouse Row
The Twisted Wrist on Alehouse Row

Learn

ABOUT THE ARCANE

The Sanctum Arcanum on Philosopher's Lane in
 Ghostchester

ABOUT FOLKLORE & CITY HISTORY

The Old Library on Learned Lane in Old Money

ABOUT HISTORY, ART, & CULTURE

The New Library on New Learned Lane in
 Ghostchester

ABOUT MONSTERS

The Hunter's Guild on Half-Crown Lane in Old
 Money

ABOUT DEMONS, DEVILS, & THE UNDEAD

The Temple Annex on Astrid Lane in Ghostchester

Recover

MAGICALLY

Golden Miracles on the Street of Wonders
The Azure Temple on Astrid Lane in Ghostchester

THE NATURAL WAY

The House of Healing on Mender's Way in
 Ghostchester
The Fleshweaver's on the Street of Wonders
Stitcher's on Seamstress Street in Backwash

Sell

ART & ARTIFACTS

Finster's on Crooked Lane in Old Money
Cristofer Rothery's in Market Square

GEMS & JEWELRY

Doogan the Gemwright on Bright Lane in Market
 Square
Old Squint-Eye's on the Street of Wonders

MONSTROUS REMAINS

The Society for Cladistics on Guild Street in Old
 Money
Indeterminate Delicacies on Greasy Street in
 Jadegate

Stay

COMFORTABLY

The Lovely Commons on Guestright Street in
 Bywater
Riverwatch Inn on the Silk Bridge

CHEAPLY

Mordek's in Bent Alley in Old Money
The Four Javelins Coaching Inn north of the city
The Beggar's Horse on Alehouse Row
Old Glory Boarding House on Triumphal Row in
 Jadegate

Worship

THE NEW GOD

The Azure Temple on Astrid Lane in Ghostchester
Commonweal Temple on Grey Street in Backwash
Antasso's Blessings on the Cheap on the Street of
 Wonders

THE OLD FAITH

The Stone Circle in Barrow Square in Ramundsvolk
The House of Revel on Alehouse Row
The Mysterium in Toothy Town
Antasso's Blessings on the Cheap on the Street of
 Wonders

Lorden Politics

Lorden is a shambles, but the machine of politics grinds on nonetheless, fueled by tradition and money. The City Guard patrols the streets (of Norwood at least), the Emperor of the Exchequer collects tariffs and bribes from the tradeboats that still ply the Gwaun, and mail even gets delivered some of the time.

The Office of Mayor

Lorden is ruled by the Lord Mayor, who is purportedly chosen by election, but the ancient city is so corrupt and dysfunctional that achieving the Mayorship generally takes a brutal power grab.

Elections are held on a rolling basis, under which the current Lord Mayor can call for an vote at any point— but any sense that there must be an election after 4 or 5 years is gone. Now any claimant to the Mayor's Seat must somehow force the current Mayor to call an election. This usually involves blackmail, threats, bribery, or plain old-fashioned violence. The would-be Mayor must then arrange public opinion so that he or she wins the election.

There is no council as such, but a wise Lord Mayor strives to keep the city's disparate factions happy, or at least those that make up that Mayor's particular coalition.

In return for all that trouble, the Lord Mayor receives a cut of all trade tariffs earned by the city. In recent years the office has gained extensive powers regarding the use and control of land. And of course, the Lord Mayor fills the City Offices, usually with cronies who are grateful for their sinecures.

A Sample of City Offices

Lorden has all the strange political offices, with their baroque names and unreasonable compensation, to be expected of an ancient and corrupt city. The GM should feel confident creating any ridiculous titles and offices she desires as necessary, but a sample of officers follows.

LORD MAYOR, Lumden Lumsk

The Lord Mayor seems to spend a lot of time in his mansion. He came to power following a brutal putsch against the supporters of the old mayor, but hasn't made much of his hard-won power yet. He is rumored to take council with demonologists and soothsayers.

POET-CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD, Jamewell Darling

Captain Darling's poetry is much better than his swordplay, but he has been an effective leader of the City Guard nonetheless. It was under his captaincy that the Guard all but officially retreated to Norwood. He is said to hate Mayor Lumsk, but is kept in line by some blackmail Lumsk holds over him.

LORD PROTECTOR OF LETTERS, Kingsley Orden

Kingsley Orden may be half dwarf, or he may just be a stocky man with a fabulous beard, but he is certainly loyal to Mayor Lumsk. He also derives a perverse pleasure from opening letters at random before they are delivered, assuming he doesn't choose to keep them.

THINKER OF THE CHILDREN, Meritricious Flahn

Someone has to do it, and that someone is Meritricious Flahn. Lumsk's most vicious footsoldier prior to his ascension to Lord Mayor, she has now turned her pale eyes to the welfare of the children of Lorden.

CAKEMASTER GENERAL, Rusko Devic

The immense Rusko Devic has done an excellent job of assuring that the food and drink of Lorden are relatively free of rot and foulness. He took the job mostly for the free samples, but has a famous resistance to poison and disease.

BURGOMEISTER, Tar H'jo

A holdover from Lorden's pre-Imperial days, the office of Burgomeister is now responsible for the defense of the city against outside forces. Naturally, Tar H'jo has had a hard time of it, but she is respected for her efforts nonetheless.

Political Factions

THE BARGEMEN'S UNION

Pirates? Businessmen? Lazy bastards? The Bargemen's Union has been called all three, and worse. Responsible for much of the trade that makes its way up and down the great river Gwaun, the Bargemen's Union doesn't take kindly to folks who undermine their near-monopoly. Of course, they can't go around leaning on their competitors, at least not openly. But the Bargemen have enough friends in the towns and cities up and down the Gwaun that they can get away with more than most decent folk would like to admit.

CELLADOR'S BATTLEPRIESTS

Some are drawn to the rot at the heart of the world, most try to ignore it, but a few have sworn to combat it. Led by Father Cellador, the self-styled Lord High Priest of Battle, the Battlepriests operate outside the bounds of even the Inquisition to take the fight to monsters, night haunts, and all those they deem wicked. Most folk respect them, but a few neighborhoods have welcomed the Battlepriests with open arms only to find their homes a smoking ruin after Cellador's men have left. Whatever their other feelings, only fools underestimate the Battlepriests.

THE DAUGHTERS OF ASMARA

During the Empire's wars of conquest, they laid waste to Asmara, the City of Silver Spires. The men and children of Asmara were slaughtered, and the women were taken by the Empire's mercenaries. Some escaped to Lorden, though, and formed the Daughters of Asmara, sworn to get vengeance on the Empire for the destruction of their city. The Daughters operated in guerilla fashion while the Empire was still ascendant, but have now become a more public, organized force, calling for the total destruction of any remnants of the Empire. They have an egalitarian power structure but their best-known advocate is currently Merali Andra, a priestess of the Old Faith.

THE DOOMSLAYERS

Mercenary companies and adventuring crews come and go on the Isle of Lorden, but few have had the meteoric rise of the Doomslayers. The Doomslayers are made up entirely of non-humans, and in recent months have had an impressive run of successful sorties to Beast's Landing, bringing back many artifacts, sacks of coin, and beastman heads. Many in Lorden are concerned about the growing power of these non-humans, especially the Wolves of Glory, whose preeminence on the Isle of Lorden is now challenged. The Doomslayers are led by one Grung the Notable, a mighty orc who is rumored to have walked out of the chaos of Caecras after the Orc King took the Alabaster Throne.

THE FREECOALERS

Many of the dwarfs in Lorden originally came here as indentured workers who were treated little better than slaves. When coal was discovered beneath the hills outside the then-boundaries of Norwood, enterprising merchants lured adventurous dwarfs to mine it with promises of riches, then worked them in 18-hour shifts and housed them in squalid barracks. Since those days, the city has expanded to surround the entrance to the coal mine, and the dwarfs have become its masters. They now work the black seam with the vigor of free men, and as they control the coal necessary for so many factories, they wield a great deal of influence in the city.

THE LAST REGIMENT

With the fall of the Empire, most of its soldiers in Lorden and its surrounding lands laid down arms or went rogue. Only the Last Regiment stayed loyal, but even this loyalty couldn't last through years of neglect and deceitful politics. Though they owe no allegiance to the Alabaster Throne, the Last Regiment see themselves as defenders of the old Empire's glory and tradition; as such, they hate most nobles and merchants, thinking them symbols of the corruption that brought down the Empire. The Last Regiment is stationed in Old Soldiers' Hall on the Isle of Lorden, one of the last bastions of law on the island.

THE NIGHT'S CHILDREN

Led by the mysterious, elusive Rat King, the Night's Children are spoken of in hushed voices throughout Lorden. Rumor says that they live in the sewers beneath the city, coming up only to kill and steal. Perhaps they are an organized band that can be hired for dirty work such as assassinations, or perhaps they live only to sow chaos in the ancient city, but whatever the case, they're widely feared when the sun goes down.

THE WOLVES OF GLORY

After the fall of the Empire, many of its soldiers broke off to seek their fortune as mercenaries. Chief among these splinter companies are the Wolves of Glory, a powerful band of hardened veterans who fight for anyone who can pay, but seem to take the most pleasure in jobs that pit them against the remnants of the Empire. They maintain a strong presence on the Isle of Lorden, and train up their junior members in sorties against the beastmen on the southern shore. The captain of the Wolves is Garrack the Old Wolf. He is a huge man, dour and humorless, who always wears a shaggy wolfskin cloak. If you'd been left to die by the Empire you'd be grouchy, too.

Player Characters from Lorden

As a river city, Lorden has always been home to countless transplants and refugees. Nowadays, the promise of riches won from Beast's Landing and advancement through the ranks of the mercenary companies and adventuring crews draw the bold and foolhardy like bugs to the killing flame.

Nonetheless, players may well want to roll up heroes native to the troubled metropolis. Many young adventurers still remember both better days and the tragedies of the recent past. Some fight for personal gain, but others ache to restore the proud city they knew as children.

An adventurer may start her career as any class of Lordener, from the lowest urchin or factory worker to a second child of nobility or merchant-house scion. A player's rolls on the Profession and Wealth tables are useful in guiding this choice. As well, a player may roll or choose from the Lorden Backgrounds table instead of the table associated with her character's ancestry.

1d20 Lorden Backgrounds

- 1 You were raised running packages for the Night's Children but have left that life behind.
- 2 You were raised a loyal member of the Bargemen's Union.
- 3 You were born in Beast's Landing and saw your family butchered by beastmen.
- 4 The home where you grew up on the Isle of Lorden is now lost.
- 5 You went looting in Beast's Landing and found a locket with a picture of a child.
- 6 You lost a finger working in the factories of Norwood.
- 7 You tried to unionize the workers at your factory but were put down.
- 8 A Bywater noble took a liking to you and always invites you to parties.
- 9 You fell in love with someone far above or below your station.
- 10 You served on the Iron Bridge pushing back beastmen.
- 11 You served as a noble's personal valet.
- 12 You grew up in an insular pocket neighborhood of just your ancestry.
- 13 You owned a stall on the Street of Wonders that was robbed.
- 14 You worked for the previous mayor in some capacity.
- 15 You killed a beastman that made it over the Iron Bridge to your neighborhood.
- 16 You almost drowned in the river Gwaun.
- 17 You were an Imperial soldier before they abandoned the city.
- 18 You were embroiled in a scandal that got your name mentioned in the *Opinionator*.
- 19 You left something important behind when your family fled Beast's Landing.
- 20 You served in the Guard but saw something that convinced you to quit.

Allies

Life in a city such as Lorden is a constant struggle for survival, and having friends you can trust may one day mean more than your skill with a blade or spell. To that end, player characters should begin with one ally rolled on the Lorden Allies table below. Players are encouraged to work with the GM to help develop these allies and their connections to the player characters. A character from Lorden may have grown up under the wing of his ally, while a newcomer to the city may only have a letter of introduction and a promise of aid.

Allies will come in handy when the players need help deciphering a mysterious clue or hiding out for a few days, but they are also tools for the GM to grease the wheels of adventure when things slow down.

If desired, players may roll a second time on this table to determine a starting enemy for their character. Repeated rolls may take some interpretation—perhaps the character is friends with one shopkeep and enemies with that merchant's rival—but having the same NPC act as an ally to one player and an enemy to another can be great fun.

2d6 Lorden Allies

- 2 A noble exiled from the Grand Duchy of the West, living in Ghostchester
- 3 A tough-talking dock boss of the Bargemen's Union
- 4 A veteran mercenary from the Wolves of Glory
- 5 A retired but well-connected merchant
- 6 A seasoned adventurer who's been to Beast's Landing a few times
- 7 A sharp-eyed shopkeep, bartender, or river trader
- 8 A petty magician who plies his trade on the Street of Wonder
- 9 A friendly old priest of the New God
- 10 A devout junior Battlepriest
- 11 An insightful woods-witch who aids the Ramundsvolk community
- 12 A respected lieutenant of the Last Regiment, with apartments in Old Soldiers' Hall

Locating Lorden in Rûl

Lorden is the oldest city in the world. At least, that's how I like it. It's a weird place full of weird people who follow strange traditions and hold ridiculous titles. It sits on the river Gwaun, a wide and old waterway that carries considerable shipping and sees its share of piracy.

Most importantly, it fits in the history of Rûl (the official setting of *Shadow of the Demon Lord*) in a general way, so you can use it there or in your own world. Mostly, Lorden is independent of the politics of Rûl, though it has plenty of internal politics keeping it busy.

Where is Lorden?

Short answer: anywhere you want.

Longer answer: Lorden wasn't part of the Empire for very long, and its history stretches far beyond its time at the edges of the Empire. This suggests a location in the south of Rûl. Balgrendia is a good choice, as it has a long pre-Imperial history and was never managed very closely by the Alabaster Throne. It also has a weak central authority in King Frederick, meaning the city of Lorden itself can act more or less autonomously. Lastly, Balgrendians are just weird. So that works.

Another possible location would be the March Lands, if we take Lorden to be more involved in the ongoing struggle against the beastmen coming from the Shield Mountains.

My favorite option is to place Lorden on the northern border of the Patchwork Lands-- just close enough to the March Lands and Balgrendia that the Empire could claim it, but also a part of the Patchwork tradition of independent petty states. I imagine the river Gwaun running east to the Auroral Ocean-- maybe it's even the border between the Patchwork Lands and the Empire-- and Lorden is just its own little kingdom, with some of the strange traditions of Balgrendia to the north, and only occasionally dragged into the little wars of the Patchwork Lands to the south.

THE CITY OF LORDEN



1. THE TEMPLE OF THE BIRD-MAN GARUDA
2. THE CARAVANSERAI
3. THE FOUR JAVELINS COACHING INN
4. THE STONE CIRCLE
5. SCROUNGINGS
6. THE PORTABLE KITCHEN
7. INDETERMINATE DELICACIES
8. OLD GLORY BOARDING HOUSE
9. BIG KWALISH'S APPARATUS RENTAL
10. THE AZURE TEMPLE
11. THE TEMPLE ANNEX
12. THE ESTEEMED BROTHERHOOD OF ALCHEMISTS
13. THE SANCTUM ARCANUM
14. THE NEW LIBRARY
15. STEELHEART'S

16. DOOGAN THE GEMWRIGHT
17. CRISTOFER ROTHERY'S
18. THE SPECIALTY SHOP
19. RESPLENDENT REGALIA
20. THE HOUSE OF HEALING
21. THE RAFFISH GENTRY
22. THE RUTTING ROOSTER
23. CITY HALL
24. LORD MAYOR'S MANSION
25. THE LOVELY COMMONS
26. NICCOLO'S
27. RIVERWATCH INN
28. FREECOALERS' HEADQUARTERS
29. THE SIGN OF THE GREEN BONES
30. THE SCRAP KING
31. STITCHER'S
32. THE BEGGAR'S HORSE
33. THE TWISTED WRIST
34. THE SABRE AND TORCH
35. THE LIFTED GATE TAVERN
36. THE HOUSE OF REVEL
37. THE MYSTERIUM

38. THE OLD LIBRARY
39. THE HUNTERS' GUILD
40. THE COLOSSUS OF DOWNTOWN
41. FINSTER'S
42. MORDEK'S
43. SOCIETY FOR CLADISTICS
44. TREPHANIE'S
45. COMMONWEAL TEMPLE
46. OLD SQUINTEYE'S
47. LORD SEVENTHDAY'S ARCANERY
48. VENTURER'S NEEDS
49. THE SISTERS OF FLAME
50. THE FLESHWEAVER'S
51. GOLDEN MIRACLES
52. ANTASSO'S BLESSINGS ON THE CHEAP