

City of Gold



Lands in Shadow for Shadow of the Demon Lord

All gold flows from Kem, thus giving it the name “City of Gold.” No other city—no province or even kingdom, for that matter—can claim a level of wealth comparable to that possessed by Kem, and the infamous financial power known as the Vault based there. Kem’s influence reaches everywhere, from the Crusader States bounding the Desolation in the north to the holdfasts of Blötland in the far south. The City of Gold has lifted many nations up to the heights of power, and cast down into ruins any who crossed them. And so Kem moves on the world stage with unchecked might, an economic force without rival, whose financial influence translates easily into political and even military power.

This installment of the *Lands in Shadow* series follows other entries that detail the Confederacy of Nine Cities. As the most powerful and influential of the great city-states, Kem’s presence and power cannot be understated, and all fear displeasing the city’s leaders, as well as the Vault, who pulls their strings, lest they court economic ruin.

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As with the other installments in this series, the information presented here serves as a starting point for bringing the city to life in your game. The details provided are intended to spark your imagination for customizing the setting to your liking, and you should certainly change anything you see fit in order to make it your own.

A History of Riches

Of the city-states that make up today's Confederacy of the Nine, Kem lies the farthest south. Situated across an inlet from Balgrendia, it experiences a much colder climate than the other cities. The now-bustling City of Gold had a much humbler beginning as a small but prosperous fishing village settled by the Gren peoples, a sub-clan within the larger tribal nation of the same name. In addition to enjoying the plentiful fish available from the nearby ocean, the Gren discovered gold in the hills surrounding Kem, though they thought only to use it for the fashioning of jewelry.



However, when the great Edene wave of conquest swept south, the invaders noted the rich stores of gold the Gren possessed and took the village for themselves, putting everyone there to the sword. After the massacre, the Edene's sudden access to so much gold sparked violent, bloody in-fighting between various factions among the invaders, until the God-Queen Umessa herself traveled there to stop them, and established the Vault to assume control over both the gold in circulation and the mines from whence it came.

After the enforced peace brought by Umessa, the various Edene factions eventually evolved into mercantile clans, who used their fortunes to buy goods and invest in money-making ventures. Their trade routes expanded greatly over the years, and by the time the Witch-King conquered the Edene, Kem had become the most important city on the continent.

Freed from their political ties to the Edene by the Witch-King's invasion, the Vault became an independent entity, throwing its support behind any power that could create the stability it desired to preserve and grow its wealth. Rather than destroy them outright, the Witch-King saw the wisdom of having an organization such as the Vault operating to regulate the economy. And when the Witch-King was ascendant, they backed him; upon his downfall, they quickly switched sides and backed the newly established Empire—for the Vault, money always trumps loyalty.

The city has enjoyed great prosperity and economic power since. As all gold flows from Kem, the city greatly profits from the Vault's expanding influence and has enjoyed astonishing growth. Yet, the city's ruling elite also fell under the Vault's powerful sway. Those who run the Vault effectively control the autarch and the city's other would-be officials, deciding, for the most part, who will or will not hold leadership positions. For all intents and purposes, the Vault is the City of Gold's government.

Over the centuries, Kem has had little reason to ally itself with its neighboring city-states. An economic powerhouse, it has been able to maintain its independence. However, the ever-fluctuating power of the Empire and its internal strife, along with a major increase in pirate and jotun raids, have begun to hamper Kem's ability to easily conduct business. Thus, at the prodding of the Vault, the city rulers of Kem joined its neighbors in bending the knee to the Alabaster Throne in the hope of steering the Empire away from disaster.

But Kem's membership within the Empire did not last long. When several cities broke away from the Empire to form the Confederacy of the Nine, Kem initially wavered in joining them. Upon careful calculation, however, the Vault began to see the financial benefits of breaking away from the Empire, while still maintaining an alliance with the other city-states against the pirate and jotun raiders. The decision to join the Confederacy was made that much easier as the young Emperor Eras was proving himself to be wholly inept and ineffectual at the business of ruling. Despite its official break from the Empire, Kem retained strong financial ties to Caecras, heavily invested in maintaining the Empire's stability. After all, the Alabaster Throne owed the Vault vast sums, and any further weakening or withdrawal of support from the Empire could jeopardize its ability to service its debts.

Kem's efforts to guide the young emperor toward competence were effectively ended with the stroke a greatsword when the orc king Drudge beheaded the emperor, and claimed the Alabaster Throne as his own, sparking the great orc rebellion that has left the Empire ablaze. Surprisingly, unlike most other powers in the now-toppling Empire, Kem has welcomed the regime change. Although the death and chaos has been unfortunate—particularly in its impact on trade and commerce—in Drudge, the Vault sees a strong leader, and they aim to help him restore the Empire's once-great strength. The Vault has sent agents to Caecras offering gifts and bank credit to the orc usurper to finance his armies, an act that has angered the other city-states who wish to remain staunchly neutral in the conflict.

Politics

Since the days of the Vault's creation, the City of Gold has remained rock-steady as a political entity. To ensure this stability, the Vault foments discord and chaos within Kem as a way of keeping any potential rivals firmly under its thumb. And, of course, as with so many autarchs before, it backed the current autarch's rise to power, creating its own puppet ruler. In short, nothing much happens in Kem without the Vault having some indirect or even direct control.

The Vault

The Vault is both an organization and a building in Kem. As an edifice, the white granite, windowless structure stands apart from the city in a compound surrounded by ten walls. The Keepers, the Vault's highly trained and ever-vigilant guardsmen, walk each wall at all hours of the day, with each wall patrol supported by a powerful Lij-built golem.

As an institution, the Vault mints and circulates the coin of the imperial provinces. Its other duties include making loans and collecting on them, as well as setting trade prices for goods, and financing various investments and ventures. Its thirteen leaders hold all the power in Kem, and they guide the city's fate. As their interests also span the continent, the financial cabal also maintains a widespread network of agents and spies throughout Rûl such that they always know which way the social and political winds are blowing at any given time.

Currently, the Vault is backing the orc king Drudge's claim to the Alabaster Throne. They have sent an envoy to Caecras, with the intent of plying him with gifts and coin in order to influence him favorably, and perhaps ensnare him in the Vault's webs. For now, the Vault hopes to forestall the disastrous war everyone knows is coming—and, of course, obtain whatever advantage they can from him in order to enrich themselves. One can be sure, however, that once the Vault sees potential gain and profit in the great war breaking out, they will bend their powers in whatever way they can in order to make that happen.

Amelia the Exquisite, Autarch of Kem

Kem's transition from autarch to autarch has always run more smoothly than those of the City of Chains and the City of Death, where assassination and a subsequent payment to the Vault generally serves as the standard method of power transfer. In Kem, money opens doors, and the Vault controls a great deal of that money. Its leaders, therefore, have once again acquired an autarch of their own choosing, one they directly control without having to play any political or factional games with the city's ruling elite.



Amelia Roh is that Vault-backed autarch.

Amelia, called the Exquisite for her unmatched beauty, impeccable manners, and fashionable dress, is no stranger to the politics of Kem, and the Vault in particular. She served as a Council member in the city government for over ten years, and each of her parents also served in those positions for well over 30 years. Craving the lavish lifestyle of the autarch, she agreed to the Vault's attachment of political strings in exchange for the title and its numerous perks. Although a puppet ruler, she still possesses a great understanding of the political atmosphere in Kem and can play the charismatic leader or beguiling compatriot as needed to achieve whatever end she desires, which is almost always whatever the Vault desires.

Amelia is a comely red-haired woman in her early forties, though she appears much younger. She is always dressed in expensive gowns and jewelry, and allows herself to be generously showered with gifts by those seeking her favor and support, encouraging the givers' belief that they can sway her opinions on city and trade matters. Of course, the gifts only affect the outcome if what the supplicants seek aligns with the agendas of the Vault.

The Guilds

The various leaders of the city's Guilds serve on Kem's council and wield some power in the city, but they are so often busy with in-fighting, due to the chaos the Vault deliberately foments, that they are mostly ineffectual in pushing their weight around. Those who prove too headstrong to be affected by the Vault's machinations often succumb to tragic accidents or simply disappear. Because of their fear of the Vault, the guild leaders defer making any real decisions, often leaving it to the autarch to guide their votes.

The Coins

The Coins serve as Kem's law enforcement. For the most part, they are loyal to the City of Gold, but they regularly take bribes from the wealthy to turn a blind eye to the peccadillos and shenanigans engaged

in by the city's rich and powerful. Their Captain, Asonia Gloom (as **veteran** with **champion** role), is a woman from the city's tenements who worked her way up the Coins' ranks. Because of her impoverished background, she does not believe the rich should receive any special treatment. It rankles her, in fact, that her officers do not treat all citizens equally under the law, and she severely punishes, and sometimes dismisses, those Coins caught aiding and abetting the rich in their crimes or accepting their bribes.

To date, Captain Gloom's punishments have not stopped the Coins' unequal policing, but she refuses to give up her attempts to reform the organization. Unfortunately for her, her efforts to recruit Coins from the poor to contain the corruption backfired spectacularly, as many of her recruits were among the first to cave at the offers of money or assistance to their families. Strangely enough, her efforts to clean up corruption in Kem have not resulted in any backlash from the city's elite, despite her interference in their affairs—either they do not truly believe her to be a threat, or she has a highly placed protector looking out for her interests.

All Coins are expected to treat perpetrators with respect. Any Coins caught beating a suspect without reason receives a beating from Captain Gloom herself—unless they can convince her the suspect was violent and had to be subdued.

The Coins wear gray tabards and mail shirts. They carry swords, crossbows, saps, and nets. They generally work in teams of two. The newest Coins always start their days in West Ward, policing the poorest area of the City of Gold.

The Collectors are a special division of the Coins who protect important travelers to Kem from being accosted by thieves or thugs while entering the city. They wear red tabards trimmed in gold, and they keep their uniforms, armor, and weapons in pristine condition. Three squads of six work the docks, escorting wealthy visitors to and from their destinations.

COIN

DIFFICULTY 5

Size 1 human

Perception 11 (+1)
Defense 16 (mail, small shield); **Health** 23; **Insanity** 0; **Corruption** 0
Strength 12 (+2), **Agility** 10 (+0), **Intellect** 11 (+1), **Will** 10 (+0)
Speed 10

ATTACK OPTIONS

Sword (melee) +2 with 1 boon (1d6 + 2)
Small Shield (melee) +2 with 1 boon (1)

Captain Gloom

Captain Asonia Gloom is the human leader of the Coins. She grew up in Kem's poorest district and earned a spot on the Coins when, as a teenager, she

helped the Coins capture a wanted thief by tackling him just before he eluded his pursuers. Her act of bravery, which saved the money pouch of one of the leaders of the Vault, earned her a small reward and a job with the Coins.

That was fifteen years ago. Over the years, her patron in the Vault has seen to it that Asonia has been treated well in the Coins and provided the opportunity to rise to her current rank. They have even shielded her from harm from those among the city's elite who resent her crusade to rid the Coins of corruption. She has never learned her benefactor's name but knows that, because of their influence, few dare to give her trouble.

Asonia is an upright citizen who tries to do right by all those living in Kem. She cannot be bribed, though she knows her morals on this matter are hypocritical, since she owes her livelihood and security in her position to one of Kem's wealthiest individuals.

Asonia is a stout, muscular woman with dark hair that she keeps cut short. She has wide shoulders and a no-nonsense look upon her face. She is known as a fierce sword fighter.

CAPTAIN GLOOM

DIFFICULTY 25

Size 1 human

Perception 11 (+1)
Defense 17 (plate and mail); **Health** 33; **Insanity** 0; **Corruption** 0
Strength 13 (+3), **Agility** 11 (+1), **Intellect** 11 (+1), **Will** 12 (+2)
Speed 8

Incorruptible Gloom imposes 1 bane on attack rolls made to bestow on her the charmed or compelled afflictions and she makes challenge rolls to resist gaining or remove such afflictions with 1 boon.

ATTACK OPTIONS

Bastard Sword (melee) +3 with 1 boon (3d6)

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Double Attack Gloom makes two weapon attacks.

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Catch Your Breath Gloom can use an action, or a triggered action on her turn, to heal 8 damage.

The Golden Protectors

As the richest city in the Confederacy of the Nine, Kem maintains one of the larger standing armies, as protecting its wealth is of the utmost importance to the Vault's leaders. The military consists of 300 men and women of the highest training (**veterans**)—only Dis's 300 Chains are more formidable (see *City of Chains*). The soldiers are paid well for their loyalty, with the loan fees from the other eight cities of the Confederacy subsidizing their training and upkeep.

The army wears white tabards with three golden coins embroidered on their sleeves. They wear bronze-plated scale and golden-plumed bronze helmets. They carry polearms, small swords, and light crossbows.

The Maidens of Everlasting Life

Within the upper echelons of the city's elite exists a secret group of witches devoted to the Moon Maiden. Over the centuries, the members, who sometimes call themselves the "Everlasters" have spent time trying to concoct various elixirs to extend their beauty and lives. They have had some success, and their members often look at least 20 years younger, and sometimes more, than their true age.



The Promethean Club

Several guildsmen in Kem have clandestine ties to the harvesters in Dis, the City of Chains, and the alchemists and artificers in Lij. They have studied the process of how to make prometheans, and they secretly practice their creation in Kem. Several club members have prometheans in their homes, quietly purchasing the body parts secretly shipped in from Dis or brought into the Trades Ward via carts from the docks.

Relations

Kem's importance to nearly every nation in every corner of the continent cannot be overstated. When the City of Gold's economy booms, so does the Empire's; when Kem's economy stumbles, the Empire's crashes. For this reason, Kem works to maintain and exert its influence throughout Rûl, seeking to remain deeply entrenched in as many affairs as possible outside its borders.

Kem is content to play the role of counsel and moneylender to the other city-states in the Confederacy of the Nine, as well as the Empire and the independent kingdoms and freeholds. Autarch Roh has no interest in conquering the rival city-states or governing them directly, as her masters at the Vault prefer to siphon away the cities' riches and influence through the interest they pay on their loans. Additionally, Kem manipulates the trade markets, gathering a cut of all sales made in the Confederacy, for most every merchant owes something to Kem. And, despite the unsavory nature of doing so, the City of Gold also rakes in an especially lucrative profit from the slave trade in Dis, the City of Chains.

Wealth and Despair

Kem is a city of 35,000 people, mostly humans, though a few dwarfs and faerie people also dwell within the city. Several towers housing Golden Protectors are scattered about the city to maintain order and protect against raids. The autarch's palace is set in the center of the City of Gold, surrounded by the beautiful Seer's Park, along which many extravagant mansions are built. Just below the palace and park are the Municipal Council Hall, the Grand Playhouse, and the Dovian Gambling House. The City of Gold is a true cultural hub in the Confederacy, where skilled artists, architects, playwrights, poets, and performers are sponsored and sought after within its walls.

The elite here live luxurious lives, hedonistically spending their vast fortunes in the pursuit of various pleasures, including theatre, gambling, drugs, and sex. Essentially, every day is a party while the money flows in Kem, and very little is seen as taboo among those who hold the wealth. Most marriages are generally open, and it seems that everyone spends time at The Academy brothel in search of that next drug-induced high or sexual ecstasy.

On the peripheries of this opulent center, however, exist vast economic disparities. The city has a small population of tradesmen who, along with the soldiers, Coins, entertainers, and various craftsmen, constitute a middle class. Most everyone else in the city, however, falls on either extreme, either filthy rich or pathetically destitute.

The poor huddle in squalid tenements on the western side of the city, most eking out a meager living as laborers, fishermen, sailors, or beggars. The Temple of the New God sits just to the north of the tenements,

and the Cult's priests attempt to ensure that the children living in poverty receive the nourishment their parents can't afford. This has helped swell their faith's worshippers in the area, and many of the children have grown up to join the temple as novice priests and crusaders-in-training for the New God.

Faith in Kem

Despite its wealth and worldly ways, religion in Kem is strong. On the surface, many of the wealthiest citizens worship the New God. Many of the New God's priests here are not afraid to speak out against slavery, even though many of the city's elite own slaves. So far, the priests have yet to experience any open backlash from espousing their views on the subject. The temple has ties to the Hidden Road in Dis, and it funnels them money and sometimes assistance in freeing slaves. The temple also owns a few ships crewed by sailors who share the Cult's opposition to slavery and contribute to the cause by smuggling slaves to freedom.

Many in Kem still cling to the Old Gods, including the autarch herself. Other gods with temples in Kem include the Seer, the Maiden in the Moon, the World Mother, and Revel. The Seer, however, remains the most revered of the Old Gods here.

Exploring the City of Gold

Visitors to the city of Gold can find many interesting places to see and explore.

The Vault

The Vault's ten-walled compound sits just outside of the city to its east, with a dockyard to its south reserved for its own private navy. In effect, the Vault is a self-sufficient enclave in which only a few exit or enter.

The well-maintained Golden Road, a road of golden-colored bricks, exits the Vault's western gate, and runs through Kem, ending at the Municipal Council Hall.

The Eye of Kem

The architects who laid out Kem were staunch followers of the Seer, and they placed an eye in the center of the city from which to begin their overall municipal design. They believed this would allow the Seer a direct link to the city and would thus grant the Old God's favor to those therein.

The Kem River runs through the eye's center, splitting it roughly in half, and a bridge crosses perpendicular to the center as part of Autarch's Way, forming what the architects envisioned to be the god's iris, which is why it is called the Iris Bridge. Mansions of considerable size encircle the eye.

Interesting Sights in Kem

d20	Sight
1	Lavishly dressed men and women leaving equally lavish restaurants and entering carriages.
2	A squad of Golden Protectors marching through the streets.
3	A thief in stocks being publicly flogged.
4	Twenty slaves rushed into VanZent's Auction House.
5	A golden-sailed sloop of Kem's navy sailing in the bay.
6	A young boy selling drugs in front of a tavern.
7	A shop window displaying fine silk gowns.
8	A glimpse of the Exquisite entering the Municipal Council Hall with her Keeper guards.
9	Men and women in rags sweeping the Golden Road.
10	Workers expanding the Grand Playhouse.
11	A man with glowing green eyes passing you in the evening.
12	Priests of the New God proselytizing to the rich to share their wealth with the poor and redeem their souls.
13	Two merchants yelling at each other in the streets.
14	A swarm of rats running along the city's pristine streets.
15	A wagon carrying several bodies moving slowly down the street. Two well-armed men are sitting in the front.
16	Priests of the New God handing out food to the children of the poor.
17	High-priced courtesans walking Center City with their bodyguards.
18	A herald hawking the latest issue of Kem's weekly newspaper, The Golden Chronicle.
19	A reporter for The Golden Chronicle questioning several Coins about a crime.
20	The witch-prophet of the Seer screaming "The end is nigh!"

Autarch's Palace: The autarch's palace rests atop a hill at the end of Autarch's Way. The white marble structure towers over everything else in the city, and its golden-tipped spires are a beacon of beauty and extravagance that could only exist in such a wealthy city like Kem. Golden flags wave proudly atop its four spires.

The Vault provides a squad of Keepers to the autarch for use as her personal bodyguards and escorts.

Autarch's Way: This white-paved road runs north and south and over the Kem River. At the north end lies the Autarch's hillside palace. To the south, the road ends at the Municipal Council Hall. The autarch's well-guarded carriage can often be seen travelling the road and Iris Bridge to the Municipal Council Hall.

The Iris Bridge: The bridge is made of dark stone and arched high enough to allow small boats to pass beneath it.

Seer's Park: In the rough center of the city is a park dedicated to the Seer, which is bisected by the Kem River. Laborers keep the grounds immaculate, and a host of gardeners ensure the plants and trees remain healthy. Surrounding the park are the manor houses of most of the city's elite, whose frontages face the beautiful park.



Center City

Center City rests below the Seer's Park. The Autarch's Road leads directly to this district, as it is where the Municipal Council Hall resides. The Municipal Park rests in the center of the circle.

The Academy: The Academy is a high-end brothel and drug den for the city's elite and their guests. It is said that one can truly gain an education here, thus the owner's chosen name for it. Visitors to Kem are often taken aback when they enter in search of secular knowledge, only to find the Academy specializes in carnal knowledge—of all types and stripes.

The brothel caters to all sexes, and its owner boasts that several of its courtesans have been trained in the 96 ways of love in the best brothels in the City of Chains. In addition to providing sexual companions for the elite, the Academy often hosts grand balls and masquerades in its spectacularly decorated ballrooms. Its lower level also houses the best restaurant in Kem.

The Golden City Inn: The city's best inn lies in Center City. It is a three-story marble building with tall columns trimmed in gold. The inn serves excellent food and exotic spirits. The inn rents out several well-appointed suites to wealthy visitors from all over the continent.

Dovian's Gambling House: The Doviens are one of the oldest and wealthiest families in Kem. Howard and Kith Dovian, married first cousins, are the current owners of the extravagant gambling house. Their ten children help run the establishment.

VanZent's Auction House: Idigan VanZent, a distant relative of Intonious the Great and expatriate of Dis, owns the auction house, which brings in exotic goods from around the continent and nearby islands. Idigan holds a monthly slave auction when he manages to acquire some worthy flesh from Dis. Idigan can locate most anything of interest to his customers, and often has closed auctions for some of the more interesting items he locates.

The Grand Playhouse: The Grand Playhouse of Kem is known throughout the Confederacy of Nine Cities and the Empire. People of means travel to Kem to experience the wondrous works of Kem's city-sponsored playwrights: Shirra Kers, Dalek Yorch, Gibbson Huffs, and Zelda Fritzhin. All are human except Dalek Yorch, an unusual orc of slight features who has brought musical theatre to Kem. His current hit is called, "Don't Begrudge Drudge."

The Municipal Council Hall: The Council Hall sits at the bottom of the circle that is Center City, opposite the Autarch's Palace.

Headquarters of the Coins: The Coins operate out of a two-story building, and their jail is on a subterranean level below the basement.

Seaside

Seaside rests on the south side of the city and contains the shipyards, docks, and warehouses. It is also where the seedy, ramshackle taverns like *The Scurvy Dog*, *The Whale's Tale*, and *Tared's Torrent* can be found, as well as the cheaper brothels, such as *The Lusty Mermaid*, *Bent Over a Barrel*, *Captain's Choice*, and *Fisherman's Delight*.

The air here is heavy with the scent of fish, and the district bustles with sailors, laborers, fisherman, and debarking travelers. A special contingent of the Coins called the Collectors escorts all new arrivals, ensuring the locals do not attempt to rob or waylay people coming to the city, especially as many are guests of the Council or other members of the elite.

Trades Ward

On the eastern side of the city near the Vault Gate rests the Trades Ward. This area houses numerous barristers, scribes, cartographers, restaurants, and *The Golden Chronicle*. The Golden Road from the Vault cuts through this section of the city, ending at Center City.

Coffee House: All trading takes place in the Coffee House. The Coffee House opens before dawn and stays open until midnight. The place is loud and always bustling with customers. On the second level, a balcony oversees the common room, and an old, white-haired, one-eyed man can often be seen leaning over the rail as if listening to the various conversations. No one knows his name, but he is often present. Patrons believe he works for the Vault, though none ever discuss him while in the Coffee House as they are afraid he will overhear them.

The Golden Chronicle House: Kem takes full advantage of having printing presses. The Vault's

leaders have a specific interest in knowing about what goes on throughout the world, and in addition to having secret agents, they have reporters. The Vault, of course, controls *The Golden Chronicle* and its editor. They decide what is or is not permissible to be published, using their editorial control to sway or stoke public opinion.

Temple Ward

The Temple Ward houses many temples to the Old Faith and one to the New God. The Seer and the New God have the larger temples, with the New God's being the largest.

Temple of the New God:

This temple is a granite-walled complex with a gated entrance, though the gates always remain open. People come and go from the temple at all hours of the day and night, and the priests have a training ground in the back of the complex where crusader recruits receive training.

The Seer's Temple: This basilica is made of blue-painted brick with mosaics of eyes surrounding the structure. The witch-prophet Volis serves as the high priest. His forehead is marked with a tattoo of an eye, which has been said to look around when the priest speaks of the Seer. When preaching, Volis often enters trances in which he proclaims in an unearthly voice that the End Days are coming.

Market Ward

This area bustles with the stalls of fruits, vegetables, and common goods brought into Kem. Those desiring anything of a more expensive nature must purchase such in the Trades Ward or at VanZent's Auction House.

As the area caters to all travelers, taverns, inns, and brothels can be found in this ward, as well.

West Ward

West Ward is home to the Golden City's downtrodden and destitute. The streets here are filled with excrement, filth, and vermin, and contrasts completely with the beauty of the inner city. The poor live in tenement houses or in alleys, and crime runs rampant. The Coins patrol the area, but their squads do little to curtail the problems.



Adventure Ideas

The rich, bustling City of Gold is a place where coin constantly changes hands for many purposes, whether mundane or nefarious. As such, the characters can easily find work in Kem, and they might possibly stumble upon various mysteries in the process.

- Several aristocrats have been murdered and strung up on ropes outside their manors. Fear is running high among the rich, who don't know the reason for the attacks. Bodyguard jobs abound.
- Priests of the New God have been rounded up and imprisoned for treason.
- A merchant ship has gone missing. It was carrying something of importance to the autarch.
- A dark figure has been seen feeding on the poor.
- Random mobs have attacked carriages throughout the city.
- A spirit has begun haunting the Grand Playhouse.
- A cult of demon worshippers is stirring up the poor to revolt against the rich.

Characters from Kem

Characters who hail from Kem can use the following table in place of their ancestry background table to determine an important event from their past. Most of these backgrounds are appropriate for only humans. If you have another ancestry, you should adjust the event as needed to fit with your character.

Kem Background

d20	Background Element
1	You are the bastard child of a noble councilman and a renowned performer.
2	You were a member of the Golden Protectors at one time. Add soldier to your list of professions.
3	You spent time working on the merchant ships of Kem. Add sailor to your list of professions.
4	You were born in the tenements to destitute parents.
5	You were a slave of a wealthy family. Add slave to your list of professions.
6	You grew up performing for Kem's rich patrons. Add performer to your list of professions.
7	You were adopted by a priest of the Cult of the New God, and you've helped bring others into the congregation.
8	You have gathered bodies for the Promethean Club to experiment upon.
9	You were a pirate captive enslaved by Captain Ketterist of the Kem navy. You recently escaped. Add pirate to your list of professions.
10	You were a member of the Hidden Road from Dis. You sought to free slaves brought from the City of Chains to Kem; you helped free several, in fact.
11	You were born into a wealthy family who squandered their money. Your parents were murdered, and you have no fortune to rely upon.
12	Your family owed a great deal of money to someone in the Vault and promised you out to do favors for them ever since.
13	You were born to poverty, but you have fallen in (unrequited) love with a member of the aristocracy. You long to gain their attention.
14	Your parents serve the Vault as spies.
15	You were a member of a demon-worshipping cult and did some horrific things. Gain 1 Corruption.
16	You once served as a banker for the Vault. Add banker to your list of professions.
17	You were born inside the Vault's compound.
18	You know of a secret coven of witches who seek everlasting beauty and immortality.
19	You know the identity of one of Kem's spies.
20	Your family is a member of the Shipwrights Guild.