

Da, High Meadow, Kaiin, Lake Island, Lavrraki Real, Low Meadow, Manse of Mazirian, Miir, Modavna Moor, Octorus, the Omona Gap, the Place of Whispers, Porphiron Scar, Quanoq, Sanra Water, Sanreale Bay, Sfere, Tenebrosa Bay, Thamber Meadow, Thrume, the Ts River, Were Woods, Wheary Water and Wilda Water.



beneficial trading agreements evolve. It is likely that part of the reason why robber asms do not automatically slay their victims is in order to cultivate a relatively benign presence in a region and avoid evoking armed response or fearful avoidance – which would disrupt their business.

Robber asms may be enticed into regular conversation and clearly possess a different level of intelligence than their more bestial counterparts. In particular, the robber asm has a solid conviction that its presence and behavior in the world is part of the Law of Equivalence – in that its relative successes make up for the treatment and poor social condition of half-men the world over.

Even if a traveler has no ill intent, it is nevertheless wise to approach asms cautiously. Around their dens, asms may place deadfalls, spiked pits, branch-spear traps and the like. Some are designed to capture their foes, others to slay or disable. When exploring a likely area for prey, the asm also uses net-traps and

OPINION

Perhaps the most sophisticated part of our ancient world, Ascolais still has considerable areas of wilderness, from the empty hills to the south near **Fader's Waft**, to the sorcerer-haunted forests of the north. Be that as it may, when most civilized people use the term Ascolais, they tend to mean the **Scaum** Valley downstream of the junction of Scaum and **Ts**.

Volune Stinobric, Guardian of the Sacred Flowers of Falgunto Beloved Ascolais, my home, for return to which I have faced all the perils of journey from far **Mahaze**, crossing tundra and mountain and forest on foot that I might once again gaze on the beauty of white-walled Kaiin beneath high Porphiron Scar. In Ascolais, a poet may be a poet, a man a man, and if the inhabitants are somewhat listless and not universally cultured, they are at least rich in incident.

Mortiquan of Kaiin, Last Poet, Gold-Bearded Seer of Fair Ascolais, Thrice-Myrmalt

Asm

Creature; Pages 528, 530 ff.

CANON

The asm is a **demon**-insect cross. They are primarily black in color, humanoid with compound eyes and possessed of other insectoid features such as their grinding mandibles and bristling antennae. In many specimens several large fangs protrude from the mouth, with as many as eight being recorded. They are known in **Ombalique** and especially the **Plain of Standing Stones**. When full grown, asms are confident of victory in single combat against an armed opponent.

OPINION

Asms, who have spread into both Ascolais and Almerly from the **Land of the Falling Wall**, are sometimes capable of considerable understanding, including such concepts as symbolism and theology.

Members of the more intelligent subspecies of asm have unusually human sensibilities, and sometimes rob victims without killing and eating them as well. No one is sure why some asms behave in such a human-like way. Some not only covet goods and foodstuffs but also engage in smuggling and resale, and sometimes even fight with crude weapons. One imagines that at first their human accomplices were reluctant to trust their intentions; and only after recovering from their surprise at remaining undevoured did some kind of mutually



The asm is a demon-insect cross, primarily black in color, humanoid with compound eyes.



non-spiked pits – hoping to capture its victims alive. It is important to note, that as with all half-men, humans play only a small part of their diet (or virtually none in the case of the robber asm), and they mostly subsist on medium and small game animals.



Sakonity the Adamantine

RUMORS OF IMPENDING HAZARD

Dealing with Robber Asms

Travelers to **Cuirnif** have been routinely ambushed by robber asms. These creatures attack in groups of eight or more – lunging from concealment in ditches and wild hedgerows. Fortunately for the travelers, those that surrender are spared harm, and those that fight or flee are subdued with injuries whenever possible. Instead, the asms make off with all trade goods and valuables, including fashionable clothing. Even the most pedestrian authorities regard this as most unusual.

Only three days ago, Duke **Orbal's** daughter, Clarassa, was part of such a group returning from **Azenomei**. She was unhurt, but two of the guards fought back so fiercely that one was slain on the spot and another died later of injuries. Additionally,

one of the items taken was a gold amulet – an heirloom to Orbal's family, and the Duke has posted a staggering reward for the person who recovers it, before the asms can pass it on to their human contact. (A person about whom the Duke knows nothing, but is certain must exist.)

The asms are from the forest twenty miles to the east of Cuirnif, but range across the entire district between, using a variety of hideouts. Adventurers might pose as wealthy travelers, engage in an asm hunt, or trawl the curio shops of Cuirnif seeking trade items believed to have been stolen. The mastermind behind this venture is unscrupulous trader Antamara Gollip, who herself was a victim of the asms last year. Since then she has been supplying them with details of trading groups, and rewarding them with quantities of hallucinogenic herbs that she imports from **Val Ombrio**. The stolen goods she collects at pre-arranged drop-off points near Cuirnif on her regular trade expeditions between **Troon** and **Azenomei**.

The Bandit Trail

Through the mountains east of **Efred** is an ancient trail leading to certain ruins on the edge of the **Songan Sea**. This trail passes across stark hillsides, through primal forests, and sometimes through long rocky gullies between craggy peaks. Though the remains of the venerable roadway, and the shells of blockhouses that once provided nightly shelter, reflect better days, this trail is now fraught with hazard. Asms of the more dangerous and primitive kind wander this area in bands, hunting wild game, but are particularly eager for human prey.

These canny creatures know that human **magicians** and **wizards** can be dangerous quarry, and so set various ambushes and traps along the way. The asm leader is an aging yet powerful individual of unusual cunning, armed also with three stolen magical items that it has learned how to use. For adventurers unable to fly or teleport, this journey becomes a battle for survival. Even at their objective the humans are not safe, as the asms follow them into the ruins.



Assault Troops

Social Group; Page 658

CANON

These savage, unkempt, scalp-taking soldiers defeated the **Thousand Knights** and the **Twenty Legions**. Their battlefield tactics are described as “skulking, hiding, striking, feigning death, striking again, screaming in pain but never fear; the **Iron Dukes** had long before sated them full with fright.”

ASM

Persuade (Forthright) 1-[12], Rebuff (Wary) 1-[10], Attack (Ferocity) 1.5-[14], Defense (Dodge) 1-[8], Health 1.5-[10], Athletics 7, Concealment 3, Perception 4, Stealth 6, Tracking 3, Wherewithal 1-[8].

Special Rules

Victims take a levy of 1 on their Persuasion rolls unless they evidence interest in the anticipated culinary process.

Using Perception to spot a trap, as one moves across the terrain, requires a single die roll against the trap's Concealment rating. The GM assigns this rating as suits their campaign, depending on the PC ability levels and how well the asms have performed their jobs. Traps that the asms have had plenty of time to prepare should be extremely hard to spot. Typically a trap's Concealment rating should be assigned against the Perception ratings of the party, at somewhere in the range of 1- to 1.5-. Note that those PCs with high Perception may Wallop (*DERPG*, p33) this Concealment. This happens automatically if it is possible – even though the PC does not consciously act against the trap. Since “Living Rough” is said to embrace the habits of half-men (*DERPG*, p64), GMs might consider this as a valid alternative to Perception. Additionally, if any PC has been declared as using “Tracking” and this ability is higher than their Perception, it would be unnecessarily cruel to disallow it as a counter to the trap's Concealment.



ASSAULT TROOPS

Persuade (Intimidating) 10, Rebuff (Contrary) 10, Attack (Cunning) 15, Attack (Ferocity) 10, Defense (Vexation) 15, Defense (Misdirection) 10, Health 10, Athletics 12, Concealment 8, Stealth 8, Wherewithal 15.



which draws inhabitants from the entire Scaum valley. The fair, for which folk travel from across the region, is as old or older than the town itself. Beside the Xzan is the River Inn.

Azenomei is nine miles west of **Pergolo**, the manse of **Iucounu**, and its hinterland survives by farming the terraces that overlook the Xzan, and fishing in the river.



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Avventura

Conveyance; Page 448 & ff.

CANON

The "trim little ship" that **Cugel** steals from the harbor in **Port Perdusz**, and adds to **Varmous's** caravan.



Azenomei

Location M3 K04; Pages 133ff, 277ff

CANON

Azenomei, a town old beyond memory, lies at the junction of the **Xzan** and the **Scaum**. It is ancient and in decline and is of note now only for its fair,

OPINION

The Scaum Valley Gazetteer contains a detailed description of Azenomei, and there is a map available at dyingearth.com: select the violet cusps link.

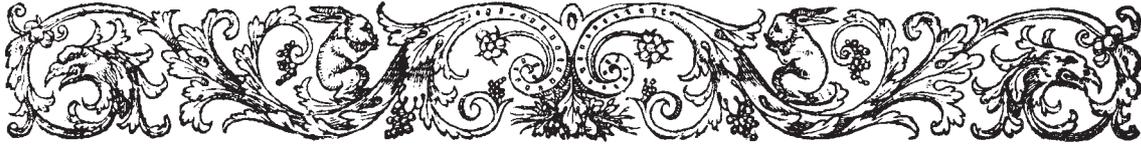
Editor

A town that seems to muse on the lost glories of her past. Here even the most dulled witted cannot fail to sense the air of solemn old time.

Mortiquan of Kaiin, Last Poet, Gold-Bearded Seer of Fair Ascolais, Thrice-Myrmalt



Azenomei, a town old beyond memory, lies at the junction of the Xzan and the Scaum.



Azenomei is perhaps the most civilized of towns; one can wander peacefully through quiet streets or sit on one of the stone benches watching the people pass and passing the time of day with one's neighbors. **Kaiin** is a dire necessity; Azenomei is unalloyed pleasure.



OPINION

It is true that the populace is avaricious and prone to making outrageous claims for recompense. In this they much resemble the folk of **Ascolais** in our own day.

Rhialto the Marvellous.

Volune Stinobric. Guardian of the sacred flowers of
Falgunto



Az-Khaf

Location; Page 683

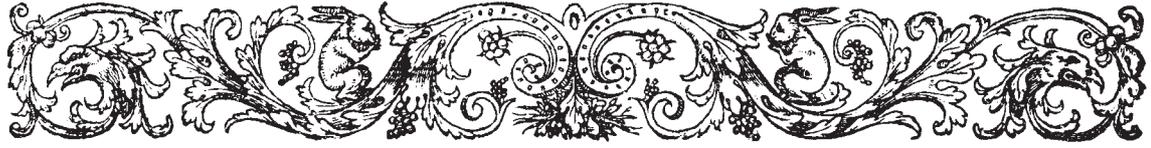
CANON

Az-Khaf thrived* in the 17th **Aeon**. An otherwise insignificant village, it entered history when Rhialto the Marvellous excavated there for the lost **Perciplex**. The village itself is neat, the houses stark white, but their tiled roofs may well be of different colors, blue being popular. A prevalent garden flower is the giant red sunflower.



...the houses stark white, but their tiled roofs may well be of different colors, blue being popular.

* A casual use of the term for which we apologize, but we felt "festered" to be both cliched and inelegant.



Baltanque of the Tall Towers

Location; Page 681

CANON

It is thought that the site of the city is many miles southwest of **Fader's Waft**. It grew to become a great city the second epoch of the 18th **Aeon** and survived until Isil Skilte the archveult captured it. Later in the 18th Aeon, the site was drowned when the sea once more returned.

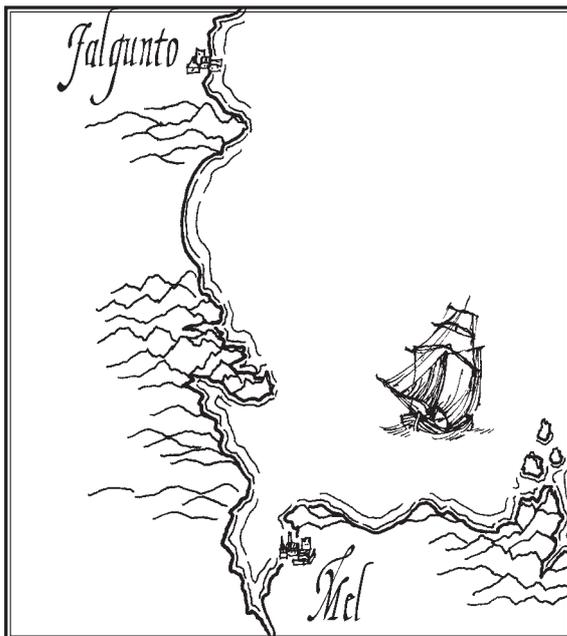
OPINION

If one estimates how fast a **flantic** can fly, it is obvious that **Rhialto** pursued it well over 400 miles. Baltanque of the Tall Towers is obviously a predecessor to **Mell**.

Parouc the Cartographer.

Anyone who bases their cartography on the after dinner stories of Rhialto the Marvelous is doomed to perplexity.

Ao of the Opals.



Baltanque of the Tall Towers is a predecessor to Mell.

Barbdriver

Device; Page 658

CANON

A vehicular weapon, mounted on a **war-wagon's** turret, the barbdriver is a projectile thrower.

OPINION

The barbdriver's game statistics appear under the war-wagon entry.

The Compendium



Barlig Township

Location M1 105; Page 231

CANON

All we know for sure is that it is situated north of **Erze Damath** and probably some distance up the **Asc River**. A dour individual called **Lodermulch** was provost of Barlig Township.

OPINION

Lodermulch I once met. I believe him to be typical of the people of the township, unpleasantly muscular and of acerbic disposition.

Eurias the Cartographer

RUMORS OF IMPENDING HAZARD

Barlig Township is built over an ancient graveyard. Dig down forty feet and you will find a solid layer of collapsed lead coffins. The lead mines of Barlig are the township's main resource and they work a seam seven feet thick. The lot of a leadminer is comparatively easy: all one has to do is hack almost-pure lead out of the ground; minor impurities are normally lost when the lead is cast into ingots.



The main hazard is that the previous inhabitants of the coffins, while no longer present in any physical sense*, are prone to haunting the workings and it has been estimated that even if one in one hundred did so, there would be upwards of ten million ghosts in the workings. These ghosts are rarely manifest as individual entities but instead the workings have a strong aura of gloom, hopelessness and despondency, and are generally unwelcoming. Miners overcome this by getting cheerfully intoxicated before going on-shift. Thus anyone in the workings who is sober not only has to cope with the all-pervading gloom, but his discomfiture is compounded by the sound of raucous drunken singing, drunken humor and the pranks of those intoxicated enough to think that watching someone fall flat on his face as he dodges a thrown pick is immensely humorous.



example of their acting in public, and merely shows that they have some unusually important vested interest in the proceedings.

Gersen the Rationalist

Mountain Basilisk: The Mountain Basilisk resembles its junior counterpart, but is slower, bulkier and more robust, and is only of animal intelligence. They travel singly or in small family groups with no fixed habitation – or dwell in rude caves.

Silvithos the Teamster

A Poisonous Creature: The dark-green skin of the Plains Basilisk oozes a mild poison. The Mountain Basilisk's poisonous exudation is of greater potency and can be projected towards its prey in a great gob of spittle.

Wakdun the Panderer

The township itself, above the ground, is a dour place; the atmosphere from the mines seems to leak to the surface, where it is augmented by the fact that most of the male population is hungover at any given time.



RUMORS OF IMPENDING HAZARD

Lizard Bandits

Though not seen in Almetry for centuries, a group of basilisks has started attacking travelers and small settlements. No one

Basilisk

Creature; Pages 188, 248

CANON

The only certain facts are that **Follinense** lists their plasm as a component of the **deodand**, and that a nameless witch-chaser mentions basilisks as existing in army-strength (they besiege the city of **Mar**). All else is conjecture.

OPINION

Basilisks are stocky reptilians, normally possessing dark-green or yellowy-green hide. It is unusual in the extreme for any meaningful interactions take place between a human and one of these devil-lizards. The basilisk is of near-human intelligence and typically lives in packs within small tunnel systems in the ground. All basilisks live exclusively in the wilds, hardly ever approaching a human settlement; and fortunately are rarely encountered at all.

Lesorix of Perne

Entities of Nature: Basilisks are neither alien nor vat-created, but are the results of the evolution of their species over the many Aeons, from common lizards to sentient humanoids. Most are of only average intelligence, but their leaders are possessed of high cunning, and the species has managed to survive in small colonies across the wilds for thousands of years without being noticed very often. The siege of Mar is a highly atypical

BASILISK

Persuade (Intimidating) 1-, Rebuff (Wary) 1-, Attack (Ferocity) 1.5-[14], Defense (Sure-Footedness) 1.25-[12], Health 1.5-[14], Magic (resistance) 5, Athletics 1.5-[15], Concealment 5, Perception 1.25-, Stealth 3, Wherewithal 2-[16].

Special Rules

Lesser Basilisks are unlikely to engage in any form of normal conversation, and the GM should feel free to apply levies to any Persuasion attempts directed against them (unless the would-be Persuader is clearly a powerful magician – or is posing as one).

The poison of the plains basilisk is unlikely to be a direct problem to adventurers at its source. (Since originally it was evolved to defend against attacks from the large insects of the creature's homeworld.) These beings routinely coat the tips of their spears in this venom, which acts in the same way as Creature Venom (*DERPG*, page 59). Mountain basilisk spit is calculated in the same way as regular missiles, though has only the range of a dagger. Unlike other poisons, its game effect is to directly reduce the Health pool of the target. (**Illustrious Success** –3, **Prosaic Success** –2, **Hair's Breadth Success** –1). When the target reaches 0 Health points, they collapse into a toxic coma, but recover (if they remain undevoured) after an hour or so. (On waking they have regained half of their Health points, but remain sickly as if injured, for a full day – or until healed.)

* Indeed their dust has crumbled to dust.