

Azenomei to Taun Tassel & The Valley of Graven Tombs

In which increasing numbers of rogues frequent the outskirts of civilisation.

Azenomei

Azenomei lies at the confluence of the Xzan and the Scaum rivers. It is approximately five days march to Osier and about seven days march to Kaiin. Terraces overlook the river. It is ancient and in decline and is of note now only for its fair which draws inhabitants from the entire Scaum valley.

There is a wharf and a tumbled down hut, which serves, inadequately, to protect those waiting from the elements. After Val Ombrio, the town is the second city of Almery, rivaling Kaiin and regarded by some as rather the more civilized. Perhaps more ruinous than Kaiin and with no signs of any city walls most of the dwellings lie further from the river, across a broad field encompassed by a decrepit wicker palisade that accommodates the regular fair.

The River Inn

With its outstanding view across the Xzan, the River Inn is the finest Azenomei has to offer, serving local dishes such as spiced sausages with green wine. Well-heeled merchants and collectors of curios share the common room with lucky gamblers.

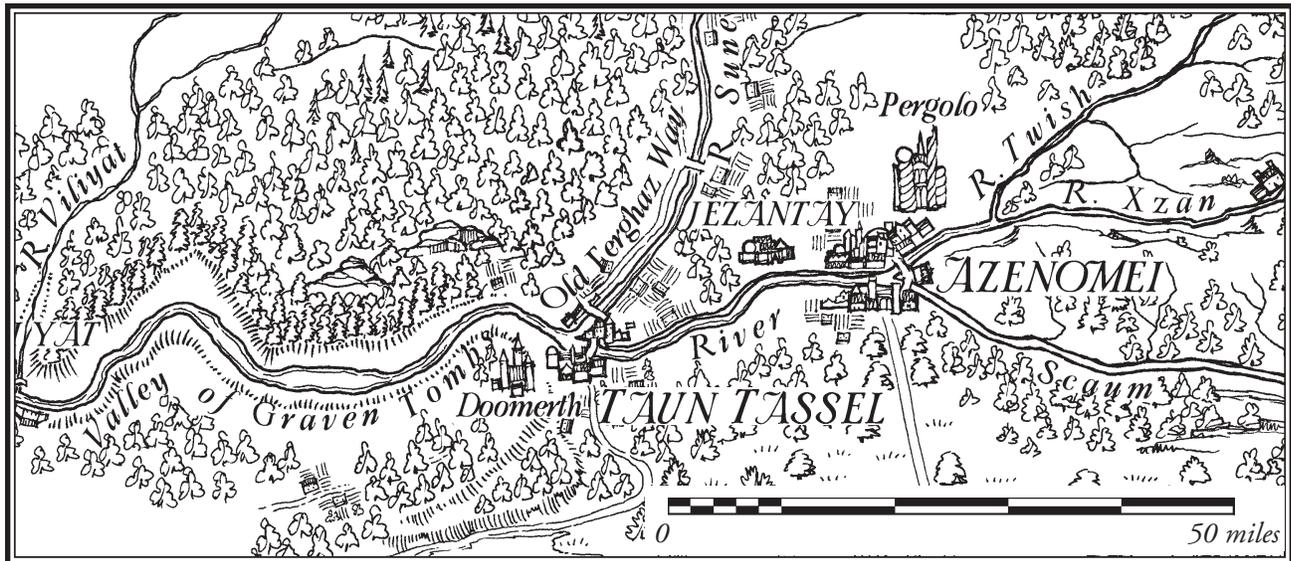
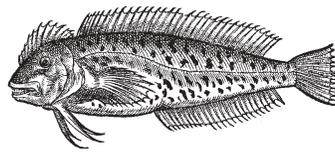
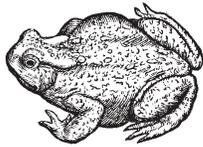
This Night's Patrons...

Gusswig Melodis, his sister Idora and his five dancing girls chat amiably. Anyone spending an evening with them will have an entertaining time. After listening to Gusswig talk at any length anyone can bluff non-dancers about dance in general. Idora smiles, sews sequins and listens to her brother. Gusswig enjoys singing bawdy ballads and encourages everyone else to. He enjoys himself hugely, has a fine voice and a wide and scurrilous repertoire.

Aside from Sar'ais, the girls curl themselves around his chair, and hang on his every word. Sar'ais stands behind him, that he cannot see her yawning. Observant PCs might notice that she and Idora make eye contact often. If asked, Sar'ais will agree to leave the common room with a rakish PC, but this might not end well. She and Idora find that men on their own in the dark are easier to rob than any other kind. PCs who are engrossed by Melodis' badinage will find it easy to fall in with the other dancers, because of their evident respect for the master.

Gusswig Melodis, choreographer and dance troupe leader

*"My desire to better my lot does not extend to
procurement."*



Gusswig is a large man, portly if not actually fat, with a jolly disposition. Melodis manages a five dancing girls, Sar'ain, Sar'ais, Limenel, Torla and Corla, whom he trained himself. He is proud of his art, always insisting that he trains dancers; he does not buy or sell them. Despite his trust that the sun will go out soon, he nevertheless attempts to assure his protégées future, by managing their social lives to their best material advantage. Two ways to offend him are to call him a procurer or a slaver.† Unusually for a hefty man, he moves with a casual grace.

Ratings: Persuade (Charming) -, Rebuff (Contrary) 6, Attack (Finesse) 6, Defense (Misdirection) 7, Athletics 6, Craftsmanship 4, Etiquette 10, Health 7, Pedantry 5, Perception 9, Stewardship 8,

Idora, retired dancer

“The fee is twenty terces – the double coppola cannot be danced half-heartedly.”

Gusswig's brother Idora is a lithe brunette. She is slightly younger than him and is, like him, a retired dancer. In spite of rumors to the contrary, she is his sister, has her own room and earns her living by making the costumes for the troupe. She is actually the more intelligent of the pair and handles all the money. She deplores lecherous men and will connive with Sar'ais to rob them. She knows a couple of cantraps, which she would

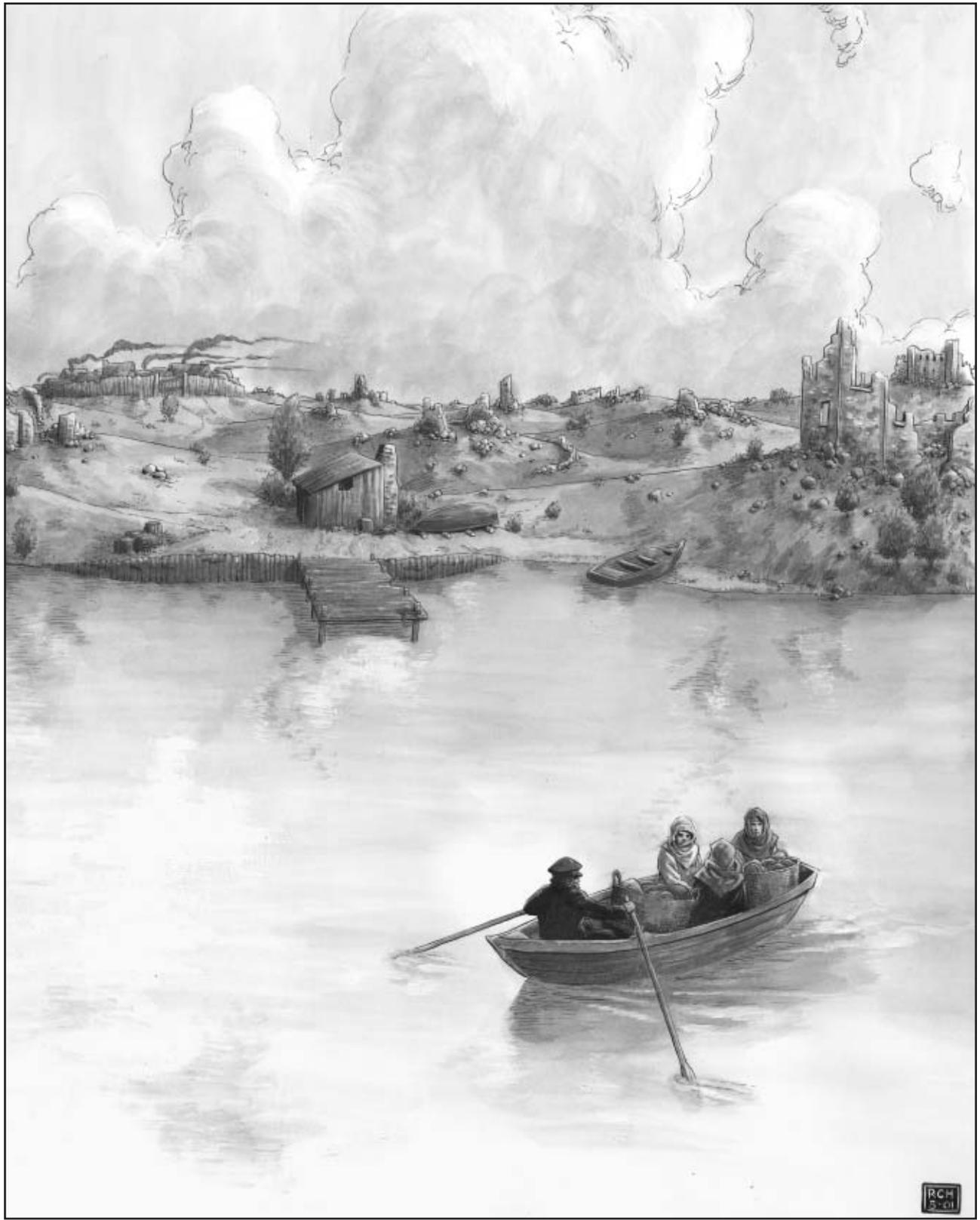
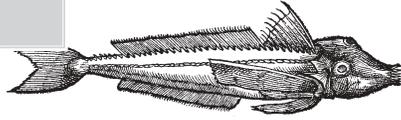
happily teach anyone who wanted to learn them. One means you can always thread a needle first time while the other makes sure that the best of the available light shines on the needle. Idora uses her magic to aid her when picking locks; other uses may occur to the PCs.

Ratings: Persuade (Eloquent) 8, Rebuff (Penetrating) 6, Attack (Speed) 6, Defense (Dodge) 8, Health 8, Athletics 9, Craftsmanship 10, Etiquette 12, Perception 9, Physician 8, Scuttlebutt 5

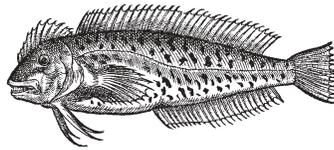
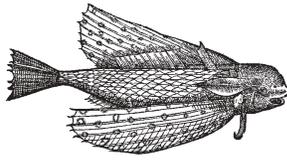


† The truth hurts.

Azenomeil



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5-01



Sar'ain, Sar'ais, Limenel, Torla and Corla, dancers

"The move you suggest would require a contortionist, not a choreographer."

All but Sar'ain are in thrall to Gusswig, and will not be persuaded of anything without his permission whilst he is in sight. They are used to improper suggestions, and no longer blush. They will artlessly repeat any such suggestions to Gusswig.

Ratings: Persuade (Glib) 8, Rebuff (Pure-Hearted) 6, Attack (Speed) 2, Defense (Misdirection) 3, Health 8, Athletics 8, Etiquette 6, Perception 5, Scuttlebutt 3, Seduction 4

The Doughty One

The landlady, Desmuria, is proud of the high standard of cleanliness that she maintains. Certainly the rooms are well appointed and the tariff reasonable. She sets a reasonable table, specializing in fish dishes such as Goby in Latakia sauce and Loin of Manatee on a bed of neaps. The establishment is patronised by the more prosperous merchants. At the other extreme is ...

The Lorn Meropidan

This is positively run down and squalid. There are no beds or even an upstairs, patrons are expected to sleep on the floor or on the tables in the common room, or if they pay two terces more they can share a palliasse with one of the landlord's slatternly daughters or even less presentable son. Food consists of stew. Patrons are politely requested to refrain from making detailed enquiries as to its original provenance. The clientele are generally as unattractive as the establishment and most seem to cope with the situation by drinking as much as possible of the cheap sour ale and sprawling unconscious in or around the pools of sundry spillages which so regularly decorate the common room floor.

Most of the patrons seem to be human, at least they remember to walk upright without prompting. Some of them make a living 'hunting' for 'meat' which they sell to the landlord or by scavenging amongst deserted and long forgotten dwellings in the near by forest. For an investigator with a strong stomach and a need for knowledge about the darker side of the forest the common room of The Lorn Meropidan is a useful meeting place.

The Landlord, Teedmain is unctuous in the extreme in the presence of law officers. He is no better than his patrons, however, and those sleeping in his common room must be prepared to have their goods rifled.



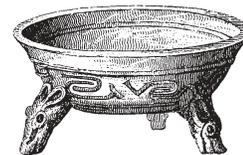
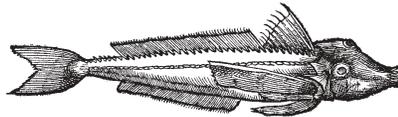
The rest of the town consists of a couple of extremely long and winding streets, Scaumside and Xzanside, of mainly detached houses in varying states of repair and occupation. It is apparent that the town was once larger because in the fields around it are low mounds, unploughed, which were obviously once houses. Interspersed among the houses are plots, which consist of rubble or occasionally, vegetable gardens, clearly the site of long forgotten blocks of dwellings. Some of the houses, especially those that flank the fairground and market place are definitely palaces and most of these are still occupied. As for services made available to the busy traveler, there is a blacksmith who also does a lot of heavy fabrication and is generally considered competent to fix stream engines, together with a wheelwright, several tailors and potter or two as well as the more normal goldsmiths, silversmiths, coiners, traders in ephemera, purveyors of assorted condiments including salt and no less than three cobblers, one of whom specializes in clogs. Several of the houses have flourishing gardens as well as handy fields and they often have produce on a table near the door for passers-by to purchase.

A genuine find for the hungry traveler is the house of Gilsan Char. A master pastry-cook, his front door is always open and the smell of cooking hangs enticingly in the still air. Every day his wife and three children tour the town with trays containing fresh bread and meat pies as well as sweet pasties and sugar mice. On fair days, he sets up a stall on the fair ground where he sells his wares to all comers.

The Fair

Azenomei is most notable for its fair. Merchandise on offer includes the produce of the entire valley, talismans of dubious efficacy, grave goods, librams and pickled homunculi. There is always plenty of room, unfortunately some of what appear to be the best sites are actually on the site of the Old Gibbet and are regarded as ill omened. The New Gibbet is not on the fairground itself, but is on the riverbank half a mile down stream of the landing place. The stallholders can

Azenomei



be split into three groups. The most prosperous merchants hire permanent booths have wagons with their wares next to the booth and stay in The River Inn or The Doughty One, booking their room for the next fair when they vacate it after this one. The booths themselves are of stalwart wooden construction with a roof over the stall and a lockable back room so that a trader's goods are protected from both weather and thieves. Then come the honest peddlers. They have a modest stall, often merely an old door laid across trestles under which they sleep. They eat together round the communal cooking pots, which are set up after the fair closes its gates to trade at sunset. The third class sprawls on the grass with their offerings spread in front of them on a blanket and spend the night in The Lorn Meropidan.

Fianosther, rogue and prosperous merchant

"My price is a modest twelve thousand terces."

The crafty Fianosther[†] has a well-stocked booth protected by a chained erb. He offers "Dazzles, displays, marvels beyond worth, as well as charms, puissances and elixirs." He has access to suppliers as far away as old Karkod, from where he gains sealed caskets. Their contents are various and usually of modest value, for example calcified fish-bones used as a purgative in the time of Grand Motholam. Fianosther makes the most implausible schemes a matter of certain benefit to his victims. He once persuaded Cugel the Clever to rob the fearsome Iuconou, although not in so many words.

Ratings: Persuade (Eloquent) 11, Rebuff (Wary) 12, Attack (Cunning) 9, Defense (Dodge) 13, Health 8, Magic (Devious) 9, Appraisal 10, Athletics 5, Concealment 6, Driving 5, Etiquette 4, Gambling 7, Living Rough 5, Pedantry 6, Perception 7, Quick Fingers 4, Riding 4, Scuttlebutt 5, Seduction 4, Stealth 4, Stewardship 8, Tracking 2, Wealth 10, Wherewithal 7

Selitan the Gorgeous, prosperous tailor

"I say nothing, my friend. I let the quality of my wares speak for themselves."

Selitan has an estate somewhere on the coast of Sanreal Bay north of Kaiin. He produces his own cotton fabrics and keeps a manufactory where specially trained women take his plain garments

and cover them with intricate embroidery. He has a fine selection of gowns, cloaks, hats, tunics, britches, and nether garments in all styles and colors.

Ratings: Persuade (Glib) 10, Rebuff (Penetrating) 6, Attack (Finesse) 3, Defense (Vexation) 4, Health 5, Athletics 8, Appraisal 10, Craftsmanship 12, Stewardship 10

Hesnin Bulopin, prosperous supplier of relishes and fancies

"Come my friend, tempt your jaded palate. Live for now, what call for terces when the sun flickers out?"

He specializes in preserved foods and pickles. He has two wagons backed up to his booth, loaded with decumanus smoked over willow bark, and pickled smolt served in sour chestnut sauce, exotic sun-dried vegetables and conserved meats of every description. He has a winning smile, undermined by sharp, yellow teeth. He is most proud of his pickled smolt – a potentially lethal delicacy. He is aware of the danger.

Ratings: Persuade (Charming) 8, Rebuff (Contrary) 7, Attack (Caution) 6, Defense (Parry) 8, Health 8, Athletics 3, Craftsmanship 6, Stewardship 5

Smolt Infestation

Smolt is the egg sack of a rapacious stomach parasite, the smolt worm, which inhabits the intestinal tracts of the keak. They resemble small, succulent sausages. Pickling does not kill the eggs, and any PC consuming pickled smolt will suffer the effects.

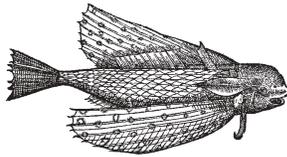
Potency: Levy 2

Interval: Two days

Effect: The victim must make a Health roll with a limit of zero. On a Failure the smolt larvae attack the brain of the victim, who then develops a prodigious appetite and attempts to migrate down stream by the most expeditious means available. On a Success, the victim merely suffers from wind at times of stress.

Cure: If the victim is clothed in a keak's stomach the worms will head for the victim's orifices. Other cures may suggest themselves...

[†] Fianosther is mentioned as a source of magical folios in the adventure *The Twins* on p62. If a GM wishes to run this adventure, we suggest that mention be made of the folio at this stage.



Mino the Limber, peddler

“Come, sample the finest sausage from Kaiin to Cutz. Try them now before my competitors buy up my entire stock to save their own reputations.”

A peddler with a considerable local following he makes and sells his own sausages, which he cooks over a fire by his stall. He also has several other different sorts of blood pudding and haggis. His son and business partner Young Mino is a hunter and supplies the raw material for his father’s business. They also sell joints of meat but mainly direct to such people as Desmuria (see p53).

Ratings: Persuade (Glib) 10, Rebuff (Contrary) 6, Attack (Strength) 6, Defense (Vexation) 6, Health 5, Athletics 8, Stewardship 6

Wyst, purveyor of curios

“Fate has made me a philosopher, my friends. For this reason I am unable to extend credit to travellers.”

Wyst is renowned for delving into strange corners and forgotten ruins. He regularly appears at fairs the length of the Scaum with strange artifacts. Currently, he has a collection of fine and eminently serviceable porcelain which is all 20th Aeon, some 19th Aeon cutlery made from an unknown metal and a selection of interestingly shaped bottles and containers. He also has a few books to sell, among which is Rustoppen’s *Ritual Artifacts and major Thaumaturgical Items of the Derna-Scaum basin*, the rarely seen 19th Aeon Azard-il Joru’s *Tribes of Almerie, Kaulchiquie and Xardoon* and the 20th Aeon *Letters from Cutz* which details the foibles of northerners from the perspective of a minor diplomat.

Ratings: Persuade (Eloquent) 10, Rebuff (Lawyerly) 10, Attack (Finesse) 7, Defense (Sure-footedness) 6, Health 10, Appraisal 10, Etiquette 6, Pedantry 8, Stealth 10

Broggiss, skin and bone man

“Suits you better than its original wearer, Sir. Trust you wear it in better health.”

This uncouth frontiersman’s wares consist of assorted beast skins, all reasonably well tanned and useable. For discerning customers, he also has an assortment of bones and organs, which are reputed to be useful in both magic and herbal medicine.

Ratings: Persuade (Forthright) 10, Rebuff

(Obtuse) 4, Attack (Ferocity) 6, Defense (Misdirection) 5, Health 8, Athletics 5, Appraisal 6, Pedantry 4, Wherewithal 7

Asenbait, robber and re-seller

“At this price you don’t need to ask questions.”

Asnebait is a large, fearsome block of a man with a heavy nose and forced smile. Asenbait supplies second hand clothes and personal effects. There is more than a suspicion that these are what he has taken from victims waylaid in the forest.

Ratings: Persuade (Intimidating) -, Rebuff (Obtuse) 8, Attack (Strength) 1.5-, Defense (Misdirection) 7, Health 6, Appraisal 4, Stealth 8, Tracking 6

The Healer Mercurius

“You should have had these seen to earlier. Yet for persons of solid worth I should be able to do something to alleviate the problem.”

Mercurius, wanders the fair, hawking his healing salves and potions. He has a boy with him carrying a cloth-wrapped parcel, which appears to contain various medical instruments and supplies. Mercurius will extract teeth and set bones. He has tonics and salves for many things but offers no miracle cures. He attends the fair regularly and does do repeat business.

Local opinion is that he is competent and generally respected. This is a fallacy; in fact most of his treatments work by means of a spell, *Yasbane’s Displacement of Woe*. This treatment transfers the ailment or injury to a nearby person, who will contract its effects within the hour, no doubt providing more customers for Mercurius.

Ratings: Persuade (Forthright) 10, Rebuff (Wary) 10, Attack (Cunning) 5, Defense (Intuition) 6, Magic (Devious) 7, Appraisal 4, Physician 10



Yasbane’s Displacement of Woe

Range: Near

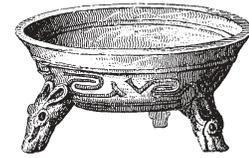
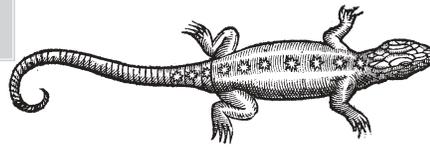
Duration: Instant

Difficulty: Straightforward

A spell of only three subtle syllables, it can be cast surreptitiously. It transfers an ailment or disease to



Iucounu's Manse



another nearby person. It cannot heal injuries caused by traumatic blows such as those received in combat. The transferee will only notice that something is amiss if they roll an Illustrious Success on Perception. They can only make such a roll if they are not distracted by conversation.



Iucounu's Manse

Perched on the heights above the river Xzan some three leagues from Azenomei stands Pergolo, the manse of Iucounu the Laughing Magician. The approach, a road paved with brown tiles winds past a dozen stone huts inhabited by those who tend the river terraces and navigate the river, up a steep hill and into a courtyard. The front door is a heavy panel with a carved face in a rictus of despair. It is a complex structure, topped with three transparent green towers; an ancient castle in which circular stairs sweep into an astounding great hall, filled with cases of curios, books and a maze of glass to trap the unwary.

Jince and Skivvee, his comely stewardesses, serve him. Ettis, a short-legged animal with black button eyes and long fur acts as his companion. Iucounu dines on a novel cuisine of his own devising with strange condiments and unsettling juxtapositions of flavors.

Iucounu the Laughing Magician

Iucounu's details are given on page 157 of DERPG.

Jince, comely stewardess

"My contractual obligations do not extend to exchanging pleasantries with the unwashed."

Only large quantities of terces make life with Iucounu bearable, and then only briefly. Jince, a former priestess of Dangott, has saved nearly enough to leave his service – but what will Iucounu's reaction be when she states her intentions?

Ratings: Persuade (Forthright) 10, Rebuff (Contrary) 8, Attack (Finesse) 6, Defense (Misdirection) 6, Health 7, Athletics 6, Etiquette 8, Pedantry 7, Seduction 6, Wherewithal 4

Skivvee, another comely stewardess

"A request for condiments is a notable slight to your host."

An unkind person might think that her cold demeanor and willingness to work for the yellow magician implies that she is construct. Skivvee is alert to any social error, and she will rebuke any visitor who steps outside her rigid boundaries. Even her rudeness is circumscribed by Chumberwal's *Tenets of Polite Discourse*.

Ratings: Persuade (Eloquent) 7, Rebuff (Wary) 7, Attack (Cunning) 6, Defense (Parry) 6, Health 6, Athletics 6, Etiquette 6, Stewardship 8

Iucounu's Collection

Put a spade in the ground in the Dying Earth and you will hit the detritus of a previous civilization. For this reason, the best collectors have a discerning eye and forthright approach when discarding the imperfect. Even by these standards, Iucounu has an extraordinary collection of curios, antiques and enchanted objects.

In his surreptitious inventory of Iucounu's manse, Cugel discovered the wine Angelius from Quantique; a small pot with antlers, which emits remarkable gases when the prongs are tweaked; a grave casket from Korkod (sealed); an ivory horn through which could be heard voices from the past; a small stage with imp players; a cluster of crystal grapes through which could be seen a blurred view of various demon-worlds; a baton sprouting sweetmeats; tomes bound in purple; Phandaal's color; a miniature carousel with a dozen dolls imbued with vitality; Thief-taker (a rope woven of wasp legs, which binds the unwary); and a crystal maze in which he was trapped.

The twk-men's Colossus

In a clearing in the woods a few miles inland from Azenomei is a giant statue of a twk-man. That is to say that it stands a full four ells tall from toes to eyes, a great crested helmet makes it taller still. This statue has been created by local twk-men, who have built it over the years out of woven spiders' silk suspended from a skeleton built up of discarded dragon-fly skin. Glusdithipman, at one time king of the local twk-men, struck a bargain with the mage Hyoldelops. The twk-men would
