
GUILD OF THIEVES

By Andrew Wright

"In a world of thieves, the only final sin is stupidity", HST, 1971

Guild of Thieves is a fantasy gamebook adventure in which YOU play the role of a thief guildmaster, plotting, conniving and manipulating your way to the top so that your band of rogues becomes the pre-eminent criminal power of the cityport of Darkstrand Town.

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Short Gamebook Fiction**

Rules

Creating your Guild of Thieves

Creating your guild of thieves is simple. You start with 5 points and you need to split these between two scores: your guild's Power and your Strongbox. Each score needs to start at a minimum of 1. Write down your choice on the Power and Strongbox sections of your Guild Sheet.

Power: This represents how powerful a guild or faction is; the higher the score, the mightier the faction. It can have a value of 1 to 5. If it ever reaches zero, then the faction has been destroyed.

Strongbox: This represents how much Gold your Guild currently has held in reserve. This number can go below zero and into negative numbers but you will have to pay it all back and increase it to above zero if you wish to spend any Gold.

While playing *Guild of Thieves* your guild will recruit factions that control one area of the city. These factions have other abilities as follows:

Income: This represents how much Gold a faction collects each day.

Codeword: Some factions have codewords which need to be noted down for gameplay reasons.

Testing your Guild's capability

Sometimes your guild will be required to conduct a specific activity such as rob a well-guarded treasure vault or infiltrate a heavily-guarded safe-house. To determine whether your guild is successful or not, roll one die:

A roll of 1 is always a success.

A roll of 6 is always a failure.

Otherwise, if you rolled under your guild's Power score, they have succeeded at the task.

If you roll equal to or over your guild's Power score, they have failed at the task.

Fighting other Factions

Occasionally your guild or faction will be involved in a series of running street battles with another faction in order to establish dominance over a particular location within Darkstrand Town. To determine the outcome of such a conflict, follow these steps:

1. Roll one die and add your guild's Power score. This is your Battle Total.
2. Roll one die and add the enemy faction's Power score. This is the enemy's Battle Total.
3. If the Battle Totals are equal, the battle is a stalemate. Return to step 1 and start again.
4. If your Battle Total is higher than your enemy's Battle Total, your forces have prevailed momentarily. Deduct 1 from your enemy's Power score.
5. If the enemy's Battle Total is higher than your Battle Total, the enemy's forces have prevailed momentarily. Deduct 1 from your own Power score.

6. If your Power score is now zero (or less), you have lost the battle. Turn to the appropriate paragraph indicated at the section you are currently on.
7. If the enemy's Power score is now zero (or less), you have won the battle! Turn to the appropriate paragraph indicated at the section you are currently on.
8. If both you and the enemy's Power totals are greater than zero, the battle continues! Return to step 1.

Fleeing a Battle

If a battle is going badly for your guild or faction, you will sometimes have the option of Fleeing. If you wish to do this, and assuming your guild or faction's Power score is 2 or more, deduct 1 from the Power score, and turn to the paragraph number indicated for the Flee option.

Using the Guild Sheet

The Guild Sheet is used to record details of your guild and the factions they are allied with. Codewords are particularly important so take careful of when you need to write these down or erase them. You may also find special or magical items during your adventures in Darkstrand Town, and there is space to record the details of these as well.

Your Guild Sheet

Guild Power:

Guild Strongbox:

Factions you control

1:	Area:	Power:	Income:	Codeword:
2:	Area:	Power:	Income:	Codeword:
3:	Area:	Power:	Income:	Codeword:
4:	Area:	Power:	Income:	Codeword:
5:	Area:	Power:	Income:	Codeword:
6:	Area:	Power:	Income:	Codeword:
7:	Area:	Power:	Income:	Codeword:

Other Codewords:

Items:

The Story So Far

'Tell me again, what did the prisoner say?'

'He said he was heading north to Tuskerland, to recruit some Dwarfs for a clean-up operation.'

'And there were other messengers as well?'

'At least one other escaped. According to our prisoner he was riding east to the Lowlands to recruit the Doom Battalion. Also for helping in the clean-up.'

'Curses! Mercenaries! What does it mean?'

'I believe Lord Razaar is recruiting external help to rid this city of criminal elements. He wishes to re-exert control over Darkstrand Town and sees destroying the thieves as the first step.'

'Well, then, we will pre-empt him. We will propose an alliance with the other rogues and cutthroats of this city and show him the true might of the underworld. How much time have we got?'

'Seven days.'

'It's doable. Assemble the guild, we skulk out at once!'

YOU are the guild-master of the thieves of Darkstrand Town, fighting for your survival against the city's overlord. You and your right-hand man Dourmane, a tall nimble thief with long dark hair, have seven days to unite the criminals of the city and show Lord Razaar the full power of a GUILD OF THIEVES...

1

Put a tick in one of the boxes above. If all the boxes are now ticked, turn to 55. If not, read on.

Darkstrand Town is an old and decrepit city that squats at the mouth of the Hagfish River like a diseased toad. Once a mighty trading power that sent ships off across the ocean and merchant caravans to distant lands, it now wallows in its own fetid pit of decay and corruption. The Town Watch are cruel and capricious, dividing the city up into feuding fiefdoms ruled by different guard units, and Lord Razaar rules over all through benign neglect and indifference.

Your second-in-command Dourmane advises there are seven main districts of the city that are worth exploring in terms of creating alliances with other factions of criminals. Each day, you can only visit one district, and you can only visit each district once. When you choose a place to visit, tick the box by the district's name below to show you have visited it, and turn to the section indicated.

Which part of Darkstrand Town would you and your thieves like to venture into?

- | | |
|--|------------|
| The Poor Quarter <input type="checkbox"/> | Turn to 60 |
| Market Square <input type="checkbox"/> | Turn to 30 |
| The Temple District <input type="checkbox"/> | Turn to 70 |
| Golden Hill <input type="checkbox"/> | Turn to 20 |
| The Docks <input type="checkbox"/> | Turn to 90 |
| Troll Street <input type="checkbox"/> | Turn to 40 |
| The Plaza of Caravans <input type="checkbox"/> | Turn to 80 |

2

It is a close game. After several hands however, Dourmane commits a terrible error and plays the Ace of Onagers too soon. Lune immediately counters with the Two of Camels, and then plays a hand of Triples, which Bristleweed and Fu contribute enthusiastically to. Dourmane is unable to get back into play and loses spectacularly. In addition, not only has he lost the game, but also a considerable sum of gold. Deduct 1 Gold from the Strongbox total on your Guild Sheet.

'Oh, bad luck,' says Lune sympathetically. 'The run of the cards simply was not with Dourmane on this occasion. Unfortunately, we cannot possibly be associated with losers such as yourselves, so this good-bye to you sir, and good luck on your quest.'

It is a distinctly second-rate end to the day. The Market Square now lies beyond the reach of your guild. Your poor and impoverished thieves, their pouches noticeably lighter after lending gold to Dourmane, begin the dusty slog back to headquarters. Turn to 25.

3

Such is the fury of the mob that they annihilate their hated oppressors, stringing up corpses from lamp-posts and burning down taverns, safe-houses, and other known haunts of their former criminal overlords. Seeing as your guild was not active in the area, the more militant elements among the mob petition to join you as a faction. Note the following details of this new faction on your Guild Sheet:

Angry Mob, Poor Quarter, Power: 1, Income: 0, Codeword: *Lemming*

These details will apply immediately, so that you will be able to collect income this day from the Poor Quarter. With a rousing cheer of "Down with the oppressors, long live the revolution!" the mob instigators swagger off to plunder their newly-won territory. Turn to 50.

4

The Messiah's followers are fanatical zealots, and for each mad-person your thieves hack down, two more pop up to take their place. You give the order to retreat and flee Speaker's Corner, under a barrage of hurled stones and jeering insults. Krislein is rather less than impressed.

'You disgrace what little honour thieves have!' she snarls. 'Beaten by crazy people! Get out of my

sight and do not venture near here again. The Dark Stars will never ally with a group that is so weak and pathetic!

That was something of a bitter blow. The Poor Quarter now lies beyond the reach of your guild. Your bruised and mildly-concussed thieves begin the long walk back to headquarters. Turn to **25**.

5

The Enchanters' Guild of Darkstrand becomes alarmed by the increasing militancy of the thieves under your command. They summon a demonic assassin that arrives stalking through the streets to slay you and your comrades. The thing stands two metres tall, black as shadow, with tattered wings and venomous claws. It is so powerful it will attempt to slaughter your entire guild. With a wordless howl, the monster scythes through the massed ranks of your thieves in a desperate bid to tear out your throat. You must use your guild faction for this battle.

DEMON-ASSASSIN Power 2

The demon-assassin's claws are poisonous and cause 2 points of Power damage per successful hit instead of 1. If you have the codeword *Raven* you can deduct 1 from the demon-assassin's die roll every turn. If the demon-assassin defeats your guild, turn to **13**. If your guild defeats the demon-assassin, turn to **39**. You cannot Flee from this battle as the demon will track you down wherever you hide and destroy you!

6

You find Wrolgar the Wretched, leader of the Beggars' Guild, in a ruined building near the Market Square, presiding over the induction of some new members: 'Right, we got to even-up the disfigurements otherwise the authorities get suspicious. I need volunteers for two dismemberments, one partial blinding, and three pox-afflictions. Any takers? Oh, hello. Thieves? What are you lot doing here, then?'

You explain about requiring new allies to strengthen the hold of the Thieves' Guild of Darkstrand Town.

'We'd be delighted,' says Wrolgar in a reasonable tone of voice. 'That's the nicest thing anyone's ever said to us. One thing, though. We need your skills promptly, like.'

'Why?'

'Those blasted Shield-Maidens of Mercy are always sticking their beaks in where they don't belong. They went and confiscated all our more virulent diseases we use, so instead of red plague, typhus, and foul-pox, we're down to minor dysentery and skin boils. If you could break into their abbey and steal them back for us that would be splendid!'

The abbey of the Shield-Maidens of Mercy is a fortified complex of white-stucco with green-glass windows, on the edge of the Street of Gods. Breaking in could prove tricky. To test whether your thieves are up to the task, roll one die and add 1, and test your guild's Power score. If you roll under your guild's Power score, turn to **33**. If you roll equal or over your Guild's Power score, turn to **14**.

7

Your thieves instigate a street battle against the mercenaries by cornering them in Gallows Square, and launching hit-and-run tactics on their outriders under cover of the numerous alleyways in this part of the city. The Doom Battalion is an experienced band of warriors however, and do not commit their forces whole-heartedly to chasing down lost causes. This will be a cagey battle of attrition!

THE DOOM BATTALION Power 5

For this battle, you may nominate any faction to attack the mercenaries. If your faction defeats the mercenaries, turn to **32**. If the mercenaries defeat your faction, it is destroyed, but you may then

nominate another faction to fight. If all your factions are destroyed, you must nominate your guild to fight. If your guild defeats the mercenaries, turn to **32**. If the mercenaries defeat all your factions and your guild, turn to **13**. You cannot Flee from this battle.

8

The burglars that work for Vambrace can be found in the backroom of a well-heeled tavern called the Silver Florin. Vambrace himself is a broad-shouldered man with a luxuriant mustache, clad ermine-trimmed robes, sipping on a crystal goblet of sherry.

'We'll ally with your good folk,' he says. 'But we need some help first. There's a horrible group of assassin riff-raff that have taken up in Golden Hill of late, bumping off our clientele and so forth. Call themselves the Order of Shadows; terribly bad for business, of course. We need you to raid their headquarters and steal all their paperwork. Once we have that in hand, we can apply some pressure to get them kicked out of the area.'

The lair of the assassins turns out to be a rooftop garret overlooking a small square, with an unimpeded view of the surroundings. Infiltrating this hideout will not be easy. To test whether your thieves are up to the task, roll one die and add 1, and test your guild's Power score. If you roll under your guild's Power score, turn to **36**. If you roll equal or over your Guild's Power score, turn to **17**.

9

Your thieves are debating the right amount of tension to apply the internal triggers of the Murder Sphere. It needs to be sensitive enough to explode on impact, but robust enough not to self-detonate when jostled about in an assassin's pocket or belt pouch. The consequences of an unintentional detonation could be disastrous. Fortunately, your thieves discover a correct setting that seems to please the Half-Gorks.

'Much appreciated!' says Grool, nonchalantly juggling several Murder Spheres in the air. 'Now that this is sorted we can be top-class assassins here in Darkstrand Town. And we can work alongside you lot, and learn all your tricks and skills, right?'

The Half-Gork Mob is as follows:

Half-Gork Mob, Troll Street, Power: 1, Income: 1, Codeword: *Crocodile*

In addition, Grool gives you a Murder Sphere to try out. 'With compliments from the Half-Gorks,' he says:

Murder Sphere: This can be used at the start of a battle to reduce the Power score of your enemy by 1 point. It can be used for one battle only, after which you must cross it off your Guild Sheet.

Once you have finished adding the details of this new faction and the item to your Guild Sheet, turn to **25**.

10

Erase the codeword *Pig* if you had it.

Your thieves break into Watch House 13 through the service entrance, but don't do a good enough job at taking out the kitchen staff. One of the cooks, bleeding from a head wound, escapes the kitchen and starts screaming for help. Immediately, a horde of guards pours out into the corridors of the watch house.

'Look here, lads!' laughs one of them. 'Some street scum on a valiant mission to save one of their own. And to think we thought there was no honour among thieves.'

'There'll be no thieves at all once we finish with this lot!' grunts another.

The guards wear studded leather armour and are armed with spiked clubs. Like all bullies, they are cowards however, and a determined show of strength will scare them off.

PRECINCT THIRTEEN Power 3

If the Town Watch defeat your guild, turn to **13**. If your guild defeats the Town Watch, turn to **68**. If you decide to give the whole thing up as a job gone wrong and Flee, turn to **25**.

11

The Town Watch storm into the Poor Quarter, beating anyone caught out on the street. You cannot stand by and watch your people suffer at the hands of Lord Razaar's merciless cronies. Giving the order, your followers pour out of their hiding places to attack their corrupt and dastardly oppressors!

DARKSTRAND TOWN WATCH Power 4

For this battle, you may nominate only your Poor Quarter faction (if you have one), to attack the guards. If your faction defeats the guards, turn to **64**. If the guards defeat your faction, it is destroyed, and you must then use your guild to fight. If your guild defeats the guards, turn to **64**. If the guards defeat your Poor Quarter faction and your guild, turn to **13**. You cannot Flee from this battle.

12

Today marks the holy day of a minor founding saint of Darkstrand Town. The area of their patronage throngs with food-sellers, entertainers, fortune-tellers and people simply enjoying the religious fair. Roll one die to determine the nature of the holy day.

Roll 1-2 The holy day of St. Spirullagan, patron saint of mollusc-sellers. If you control the Docks area, you may collect double the normal income from this area on this day.

Roll 3-4 The holy day of St. Benegutine, patron saint of small shrines. If you control the Temple District area, you may collect double the normal income from this area on this day.

Roll 5-6 The holy day of St. Oberjine, patron saint of marrow-farmers. If you control the Market Square area, you may collect double the normal income from this area on this day.

Once you have determined what area is affected by the religious festivities, turn to **50**.

13

You and your guild of thieves are almost certainly dead or dying; joining the long list of victims who have suffered misfortune within the walls of Darkstrand Town. Assuming you are not keeping a record of your failed would-be guild-masters, erase all their details from your Guild Sheet (or print out a new sheet), and start again. If you dare...

14

You manage to get into the abbey without difficulty but one of your thieves knocks over a large ceremonial vase and the place is instantly filled with heavily-armoured Shield-Maidens.

'Death to the intruders!' they scream. 'They have desecrated the sanctuary of Mercy!'

The Shield-Maidens wear chain-mail tabards and are armed with short-swords and crossbows. Although they are not especially numerous, this will still be a tough fight.

SHIELD-MAIDENS OF MERCY Power 3

If the Shield-Maidens defeat your guild, turn to **13**. If your guild defeats the Shield-Maidens, turn to **33**. If you decide to give the whole thing up as a job gone wrong and Flee, turn to **25**.

15

Your thieves become embroiled in an epic conflict with the mightiest heroes of Darkstrand Town. But for every thief cut down by Belanthe's vorpal blade; for every rogue whose skull is smashed by Munctus' iron morning star; for every varlet who is blasted by Selorielle's flaming sorceries; two more criminals rise up to take their place. Who will win the battle of Golden Hill?

MIGHTY HEROES OF DARKSTRAND Power 5

For this battle, you may nominate any faction to attack the heroes. If your faction defeats the heroes, turn to 28. If the heroes defeat your faction, it is destroyed, but you may then nominate another faction to fight. If all your factions are destroyed, you must nominate your guild to fight. If your guild defeats the heroes, turn to 28. If the heroes defeat all your factions and your guild, turn to 13. You cannot Flee from this battle.

16

Your faction traps the mob leaders in a burning storehouse, and viciously cuts down those who flee. After a while, order is restored and many former members of the mob switch sides and flock to join your guild. Add 1 to the Power score of whatever faction of yours currently controls the Poor Quarter. The streets are tense, but marginally more peaceful. Turn to 50.

17

Your thieves manage to clamber up the walls and ease your way into the assassin's lair via a back window. The place is heavily booby-trapped, with tripwires and pressure plates well-placed throughout the chambers. Unfortunately, one of your thieves slips and sets one off. Immediately, an alarm sounds and the rooms fill with choking clouds of poisonous purple gas! Your thieves flee back out the window and down to the streets below, to the jeers of assassins with breathing masks who taunt you from their rooftop eyrie.

Vambrace is less than enchanted when he hears the bad news.

'It's a damn shame!' he rants, slapping the table-top with a leather glove. 'Lads! Break out the weapons, I have a feeling those shadow-loving cretins will soon be paying us a visit. And as for you lot, how can you call yourselves thieves? Vacate these premises immediately!'

It is a sad and sorry end to the day. Golden Hill now lies beyond the reach of your guild. Your ill and pale-faced thieves, some still coughing and retching, begin the long walk back to headquarters. Turn to 25.

18

Your thieves infiltrate the pie-eating contest, which is not difficult, given that the Spotted Lion Tavern is absolutely full of customers and spectators. Unfortunately, they are too liberal in applying the poison and manage to kill off a considerable number of all three street gangs plus some innocent independent competitors as well! In the ensuing power vacuum however, your guild has the opportunity to step seamlessly into the role of leadership.

You are the new masters of the Poor Quarter, if you choose. In order to do so, you need to deduct at least 1 point from your Guild's Power score (down to a minimum of 1) in order to create a new faction as follows:

Nameless Thieves, Poor Quarter, Power: 1 (or more, depending on how many point you invest), Income: 1, Codeword: *Worm*

You can also collect the rest of the bottle of Mandrake Blood that Derros had. It is a powerful poison, so you must use it carefully:

Bottle of Mandrake Blood: This will allow your guild or faction to cause 2 Power points damage per strike instead of 1 during a battle, for one battle only, after which you must cross it off your Guild Sheet.

Once you have finished adding the details of this new faction and its treasure to your Guild Sheet, or not, turn to **25**.

19

You and your thieves try to escape from the Death Stalker, but you're stuck at the bottom of the pit and Acidnose and his Troll cronies show no interest in stopping the fight anytime soon.

'Be a shame to stop the fight now!' says Acidnose. 'Got a lot of money riding on the outcome of this battle!'

If you haven't already done so, deduct 1 point of Power from your guild for your Flee penalty as the Death Stalker feasts upon your thieves. Then continue the battle!

DEATH STALKER Power (Previous score)

The Death Stalker's fangs are poisonous and cause 2 points of Power damage per successful hit instead of 1. If the Death Stalker devours your guild, turn to **13**. If your guild slays the Death Stalker, turn to **74**.

20

Golden Hill is where the wealthy folk of Darkstrand Town dwell, in well-appointed mansions on wide, elm-lined avenues that lead up to the Lord's Citadel. Town Watch patrols are regular and alert, but the district also has numerous menial staff to serve the affluent and prosperous folk who live here. With all of you in disguise and dressed as minor factotums and general dog's bodies, Dourmane counts off the two factions that operate in this well-heeled realm.

'There's an irregular group of Burglars who follow some chap named Vambrace. Very good at what they do apparently.'

'Skilled burglars are always an asset, to be sure.'

'The others are assassins called the Order of Shadows. Fairly respectable and not too scruffy, used mainly for contract killings and the like.'

Which faction will you approach to join you? The Burglars of Vambrace (turn to **8**), or the Order of Shadows (turn to **31**)?

21

The peasants are revolting! An angry mob arises in the Poor Quarter, disgusted by the antics of the street gangs that operate there. If you do not have the codeword *Serpent*, *Spider*, *Scorpion*, *Worm* or *Lemming*, turn to **3**. Otherwise, read on.

The mob goes on a rampage and inevitably this culminates in a running street battle with whichever faction you control in the Poor Quarter. You must fight!

ANGRY MOB Power 2

If the mob defeats your faction, turn to **34**. If your faction defeats the mob, turn to **16**. Your faction cannot Flee from this battle.

22

You meet up with the desert tribesmen in a cushion-filled shisha-bar on the edge of the plaza. Their leader Skrabdur the Insane, a tall bearded man swathed in white robes, regards you inscrutably while he smokes on the mouthpiece of a brass water-pipe.

'My friend,' he says, when you have finished explaining your proposal. 'That is a very interesting idea. We would be delighted to join your brotherhood, but there is just one small question for you to answer. What's in it for us?'

Dourmane shrugs his shoulders and looks at you.

What will you decide? Will you offer the tribesmen more men (turn to **67**), or more gold (turn to **93**)?

23

Fortunately, your contacts among the Grifters of Market Square know many back-alleys and secret doors that offer discrete entrances into the citadel. Lune assembles a unit of bodyguards who lead a small strike-force through these portals to assault the enemy from within, even as the rest of your forces attack from outside the walls.

The Knights of the Citadel wear full-face helmets, and grey tunics over chain-mail, while brandishing longswords and kite shields. They stream through the chambers of the citadel and scythe into your forces like a wave of razor-sharp steel. This will be a battle to the death!

KNIGHTS OF RAZAAR Power 4

For this battle, you may nominate any faction to attack the knights. If your faction defeats the knights, turn to **100**. If the knights defeat your faction, it is destroyed, but you may then nominate another faction to fight. If all your factions are destroyed, you must nominate your guild to fight. If your guild defeats the knights, turn to **100**. If the knights defeat all your factions and your guild, turn to **13**. You cannot Flee from this battle.

24

The leader of the Grifters is a mysterious masked courtesan called Lune, who operates out of a house of ill-repute named Darkness and Dawn. She explains in a whisper that the Grifters are not really an organisation as such, but are keen on affiliation with your guild to provide an added layer of protection for their various activities.

Still, in order to convince them to join, you'll need to beat them in a high stakes card game of Yalamon Sevens. The location is a seedy backroom in the Darkness and Dawn, and, along with your nominated champion Dourmane, the other players are Lune herself, an Easterner called Four-Finger Fu, and a renegade Elf named Bristleweed who hails from Doomwood Forest .

To test whether Dourmane's card-skills are up to the task, roll one die, and test your guild's Power score. If you roll under your guild's Power score, turn to **48**. If you roll equal or over your Guild's Power score, turn to **2**.

25

Darkstrand Town is a thriving settlement at the mouth of the Hagfish River and there is always a tumult of activity constantly happening throughout the city, as the townsfolk go about their daily business. Most of it has little to do with the nebulous criminal underworld that your guild inhabits, but every now and again something occurs with direct repercussions for both you and your fellow thieves. Roll two dice and turn to the paragraph indicated to discover what event has transpired today...

Roll 2	Turn to 44
Roll 3	Turn to 37
Roll 4	Turn to 5
Roll 5	Turn to 94
Roll 6	Turn to 21
Roll 7	Turn to 63

Roll 8	Turn to 79
Roll 9	Turn to 58 <input type="checkbox"/>
Roll 10	Turn to 86 <input type="checkbox"/>
Roll 11	Turn to 12
Roll 12	Turn to 41

Two of the options have tick boxes and are encountered once only. The first time you roll either 9 or 10, tick the box and turn to the number indicated. Any subsequent time you roll 9 or 10, and the box is already ticked, roll again until you get a different number.

26

You find the Half-Gork Mob in an abandoned series of blackened tenements, full of piles of rubble that reek of sulphur. Their leader is a scrawny individual called Grool, whose tattered purple cloak fails to conceal an impressive arsenal of home-made incendiary devices.

'Given up on the usual suspects,' he proudly proclaims. 'We nicked some bang-powder recipes from the Dwarfs and have been making our own weapons. It's the future, don't you know?'

You nod weakly as the thought of Half-Gorks messing about with explosives is not a pleasant one.

'Here, you can help us,' says Grool. 'We're trying to perfect this thing called a Murder Sphere, but it keeps backfiring. Maybe you can figure out what's wrong with it.'

You are led into a work-room whose walls are studded with a frightening amount of blood-stained razor-sharp shrapnel. The Murder Spheres are small fragile globes stuffed full of spikes and barbs, and designed to explode on impact. Your thieves' job is to perfect the Half-Gorks' problematic prototypes. To test whether your thieves are up to the task, roll one die, and test your guild's Power score. If you roll under your guild's Power score, turn to **9**. If you roll equal or over your Guild's Power score, turn to **45**.

27

The gang of Dark Stars is instantly recognizable thanks to their shaven skulls and the large black pentagrams tattooed on each gang-member's forehead. Their leader is a lithe, muscular girl called Krislein, who spins a brass knuckle-duster incessantly around her fingers while listening to your speech on uniting the thieves of Darkstrand Town.

'Really?' she says in a bored tone of voice when you have finished. 'Anyone would think we got you running scared. See, we control the Poor Quarter, not you, no matter what you think. You want us to help? You need to help us consolidate.'

'How? Destroy the other gangs?'

'Don't be daft! We need them as scapegoats for when things go wrong. No, there's a rabble-rousing demagogue out there in the gutters who keeps trying to raise a mob. We need you to teach him a lesson.'

The demagogue is a reedy, bearded man at the Speaker's Corner, and he has amassed a decent number of ragged followers, all claiming he is "The Messiah". On seeing your armed mob of thieves, they chant 'Death to those who threaten the Messiah!', and charge forward to defend their leader, armed with stones and clubs.

FOLLOWERS OF THE MESSIAH Power 3

If the followers of the Messiah defeat your guild, turn to **13**. If your guild defeats the Messiah's followers, turn to **38**. If you decide to Flee, turn to **4**.

28

Incredibly, it has come to this. Your ragged thieves stand before the citadel of Lord Razaar, ready to end his rule over Darkstrand Town. His retinue of household knights, safe upon the high walls of the fortress, looks down upon your forces with scorn and contempt. Even though the citadel was never built to defend itself from attacks within the city, it will still be a difficult redoubt to storm. Readying the thieves for the final charge against insurmountable odds, you raise your weapon and prepare to issue the irrevocable order...

If you have the codeword *Rat*, turn to **95**.

If you have the codeword *Fox*, turn to **23**.

If you have neither of these codewords, turn to **89**.

29

The forged papers are a big success and before the day is out your guild has managed to perpetrate a series of financial scams across the city. Roll 1 die and consult the following table; this is the amount of Gold you gain from the successful forgery attempt.

Roll 1-3	1 Gold
Roll 4-5	2 Gold
Roll 6	3 Gold

Add this to the Strongbox on your Guild Sheet. Meanwhile, the forger goes into self-imposed hiding, lying low until the blowback from the inevitable discovery of the scam boils over. Turn to **50**.

30

Market Square is the busiest area of Darkstrand Town, where all manner of goods are bought and sold amid a riotous tumble of stalls, barrows, and carts. Taverns cluster at the edges of the market, and a variety of beggars, fakirs and hard-luck merchants accost passersby for coins. Consequently, as Dourmane informs you, there are several factions jostling for criminal supremacy in this area of the city.

'First up are the Beggars' Guild,' says Dourmane. 'Their deformed and dismembered adherents see and hear all that goes on in the market. Then you've got the Grifters, a loose collection of tricksters, card-sharks, and scam-artists who lurk in the taverns seeking to separate fools from their gold.'

'And the last?'

'A bunch of pickpockets and pouch-slashers. Waifs and urchins mainly, organised by some rogue called Brycia.'

Which faction will you approach to join you? The Beggars' Guild (turn to **6**), the Grifters (turn to **24**), or Brycia's Pickpockets (turn to **51**)?

31

You meet with the assassins in a safehouse that is little more than a cellar with steps leading up to a small nameless square in the Golden Hill area. The leader of the Order of Shadows is a small and intense woman known as Grisel the Grey, whose ash-coloured tunic is adorned with a multitude of death-dealing weapons.

'Right. Bunch of burglars here. Total scum. Need you to off them quick as, like,' she tells you. 'Find them at the Silver Florin tavern. Destroy the lot. Good riddance I say. Keep whatever else you find.'

You make it to the Silver Florin but Vambrace and his Burglars are evidently very well-liked and an enormous tavern brawl erupts, spilling out into the street. Your thieves must fight!

TAVERN BRAWLERS Power 3

If the Burglars and their friends defeat your guild, turn to **13**. If your guild defeats the Burglars' cronies, turn to **42**. If you decide to Flee, turn to **56**.

32

Once word gets out that the mercenaries have been destroyed, an edict is immediately ordered from the Lord's Citadel to arrest any and all members of your guild and factions. Squads of Town Watch, wearing studded leather armour and brandishing spiked clubs, patrol the streets, harassing all and sundry. Inevitably, the guards decide to storm the Poor Quarter and attack your headquarters.

If you have the codeword *Lemming*, turn to 87.

If you have the codeword *Pig*, turn to 46.

If you have neither of these codewords, turn to 11.

33

Having got into the abbey, your thieves hurriedly search the place and find a stench-laden room containing clay jars full of indescribable filth. With all of you covering your faces you somehow cradle the jars out of the abbey and into a crate in a back alley that you drag back to the market.

'Thank you greatly for that, kind sir!' says Wrolgar, carefully supervising the unpacking of the jars. 'Now we can have some proper disfigurements around here and get more offerings from the public. You can consider us honorary thieves now!

You leave hurriedly, to the sounds of the screams and retchings of the new inductees. The Beggars' Guild is as follows:

Beggars' Guild, Market Square, Power: 1, Income: 1, Codeword: *Flea*

Once you have finished adding the details of this new faction to your Guild Sheet, turn to 25.

34

Your faction is comprehensively defeated by the mob. Feelings run high: there are lynchings, beatings, and taverns and traders perceived to be loyal to your guild are ransacked for loot and then torched. Cross the faction off from your Guild Sheet, including any codeword associated with them. You cannot collect anymore Income from this faction. Turn to 50.

35

The sorry remnants of the Steel Fist gang hang around a muddy patch of wasteland on the edge of the Poor Quarter, the iron gauntlets that gave them their name now spotted with rust. Their leader, a skulking, rat-nosed young man called Derros claims to have something that will even the playing field and reunite the Steel Fist with their former glories.

'There's a pie-eating contest today at the Spotted Lion,' he says. 'Each gang traditionally nominates a champion to see who the biggest glutton in the district is.'

'So?'

Derros produces a green bottle containing a dark and unpleasant-looking liquid.

'This here is blood from a Mandrake which is a deadly poison,' he continues. 'We need you to add it surreptitiously to the pies and kill off the best of each other gang. We'll do the rest.'

To test whether your thieves are up to the task, roll one die and test your guild's Power score. If you roll under your guild's Power score, turn to 47. If you roll equal or over your Guild's Power score, turn to 18.

36

Your thieves clamber up the walls and ease your way into the assassin's lair via a back window. The place is heavily booby-trapped, with tripwires and pressure plates well-placed throughout the chambers. Many of the assassins, all wearing some sort of breathing mask, are sleeping off a rough night on the booze, and fail to stir at your entrance. You find all the paperwork in a sheaf of scrolls on the leader's desk, and flee soundlessly back out the window, your objective in hand.

Vambrace is overjoyed to get his hands on the paperwork that details the inner workings of the

Order of Shadows.

'Jolly good show all round, lads!' he exclaims. 'With this in hand we can put some pressure on the appropriate authorities and get that lot kicked out of here quicker than you can say "Strategic blackmail"! We'd be very happy to join your guild and help in anyway possible.'

Vambrace's gang of Burglars is as follows:

Burglars of Vambrace, Golden Hill, Power: 2, Income: 2, Codeword: *Weasel*

Once you have finished adding the details of this new faction to your Guild Sheet, or not, turn to **25**.

37

Your guild comes into contact with a wandering forger, who agrees to work for you for one day in exchange for "protection". He will attempt to forge a series of bogus identification papers and letters of credit to allow your guild greater access to alternative series of income. Roll one die and test your guild's Power score. Deduct 1 from the die roll if you have the codeword *Fox*. If you roll under your guild's Power score, turn to **29**. If you roll equal or over your Guild's Power score, turn to **43**.

38

Your thieves defeat the followers of the Messiah, and the survivors drop their weapons and flee into the maze-like warren of alley-ways that makes up much of the Poor Quarter. The Messiah himself is captured, and, protesting heavily, dragged off to be crucified by several of the Dark Stars. Their leader Krislein must be happy because you actually see her smiling.

'That was excellent work,' says Krislein. 'With the Messiah vanquished we should be free to really stamp our mark all over the Poor Quarter! With your help, of course!'

The Dark Stars street gang is as follows:

The Dark Stars, Poor Quarter, Power: 2, Income: 1, Codeword: *Serpent*

Once you have finished adding the details of this new faction to your Guild Sheet, turn to **25**.

39

Somehow your desperate band of thieves prevails against the dread power of the demon-assassin. Its shadowy form torn to tatters by the weapons of your men, the creature utters a frightful howl and a flash of light temporarily blinds everybody in the immediate vicinity. When their vision returns they see the floor where the demon stood has been scorched black by the blast. In the exact centre of the blast zone is a snow-white gemstone, whose details you may copy to your Guild Sheet:

Gem of Annihilation: This can be used at the start of a battle to utterly destroy your foe by instantly reducing their Power score to zero. It can be used for one battle only, after which you must cross it off your Guild Sheet.

Your men succeed in cleaning up the site where the demon-assassin dematerialized, though a sulphurous stench still taints the air. Turn to **50**.

40

Troll Street is where most of the inhumans live in Darkstrand Town: Trolls, Gorks (including halfbreeds), Yobbos, and the odd Elf, Dwarf or Gnome who cannot afford a better class of lodging. It's a lively area of brawling monsters, shrines to indecipherable gods, and food-sellers hawking unmentionable produce. Covering his mouth and nose with his hand, Dourmane elaborates on the area's two factions.

'Bunch of Troll bodyguards calls themselves the Strongarm Collective. Good solid hired muscle but

not too much going on in the brains department.'

Unwilling to speak, and thus open your mouth, you motion him to continue.

'The others are a ragtag mob of Half-Gorks. Wear dark robes, fool around with knives and poison. Think they're assassins, but they're really just street thugs.'

Which faction will you approach to join you? The Troll Strongarm Collective (turn to 53), or the Half-Gork Mob (turn to 26)?

41

Word of the daring deeds carried out by the thieves of your guild is starting to spread far and wide. Fresh recruits, many of them barely into their teens, arrive at your headquarters, eager to join your guild and begin their career as rogues and thieves. Roll 1 die and consult the following table:

Roll 1-3	1 Power
Roll 4-5	2 Power
Roll 6	3 Power

The result is the amount of Power you may add to either your guild or the factions you control, free of charge. Note that you cannot add more than 1 point to any individual guild or faction (so if you roll 6, you must split 3 points between 3 guilds and factions). Also, if you have less guilds and factions than the number of Power points rolled, any excess Power points are lost. Lastly, no guild or faction can have a Power score of more than 5. Turn to 50.

42

The brawl goes well for your thieves. Most of the burglars are cut down where they stand and the rest of the tavern patrons flee into the night. Vambrace himself limps off into the darkness, swearing empty threats of bloody vengeance against both your guild and the Order of Shadows.

You loot the bodies before the Town Watch show up, and find the following (roll 1 die to determine what):

Roll 1-3	1 Gold worth of treasure to add to your Strongbox
Roll 4-5	2 Gold worth of treasure to add to your Strongbox
Roll 6	Fool's Gold: This allows you to successfully bribe the Town Watch without deducting any Gold from your Strongbox, after which you must cross it off your Guild Sheet.

An assassin who was watching the battle leads you back to the lair of Grisel the Grey.

'Nice work!' she says admiringly. 'No more problems from that lot. Vambrace good as dead. Happy to work with you. Consider this a strong alliance. Tally ho!'

Grisel's gang of assassins is as follows:

Order of Shadows, Golden Hill, Power: 2, Income: 1, Codeword: *Panther*

Once you have finished adding the details of this new faction to your Guild Sheet, or not, turn to 25.

43

The forgeries are too amateurish in quality, and your thieves are too quick and greedy in using their new papers. The scam is rapidly discovered and outraged creditors begin banging at the doors of known guild hideouts, demanding restitution. You are resigned to paying them off in order to avoid the heat. Deduct 2 from the Strongbox total on your Guild Sheet. In addition, if you control the Golden Hill area, you cannot collect any Income from it for this day. Meanwhile, the forger "vanishes" into the harbour, a boulder manacled to their feet. Turn to 50.

44

A large convoy of merchants and traders from Yalamon arrives in the city, bringing much wealth from the Southlands and distant Asantia, including jars of sandalwood incense, bronze idols with jewelled eyes, obsidian mirrors and the pelts of strange jungle creatures. There is of course plenty of opportunity for theft! If you control any factions in Market Square or the Plaza of Caravans, you may add 1 each per area to the amount of Income you collect from these places for today only. Turn to 50.

45

Your thieves are debating the right amount of tension to apply the internal triggers of the Murder Sphere. It needs to be sensitive enough to explode on impact, but robust enough not to self-detonate when jostled about in an assassin's pocket or belt pouch. The consequences of an unintentional detonation could be disastrous. Unfortunately, your thieves discover this first hand, when a Murder Sphere goes off in the work-room, shredding its contents with a hail of steel shards. Both thieves and Half-Gorks collapse screaming, gurgling blood and clutching at new and frightful wounds.

Deduct 1 point from your Guild's Power score. If this reduces it to zero, turn immediately to 13.

If not, you round up whatever thieves are still fit to walk. Most of the Half-Gorks, including Grool, have been slain by the exploding Murder Sphere, so you decide to cut your losses and slink out of both the tenements and the area.

It is a bitter and bloody end to the day. Troll Street now lies beyond the reach of your guild. Your cut and scarred thieves, some still picking splinters of steel from out of their skin, begin the long stroll back to headquarters. Turn to 25.

46

Fortunately, you still have a corrupt Watch Sergeant on the payroll. For every Gold you spend, up to a maximum of 3, you can reduce the Power value of the Town Watch by 1 (so if you spent 2 Gold, their Power would be reduced by 2). This represents gaps in the rosters, unexplained absences, mysterious illnesses, and so on and so forth.

The remainder of the Town Watch storm into the Poor Quarter, beating anyone caught out on the street. You cannot stand by and watch your people suffer at the hands of Lord Razaar's merciless cronies. Giving the order, your followers pour out of their hiding places to attack their corrupt and dastardly oppressors!

DARKSTRAND TOWN WATCH Power 4 (minus those you bribed)

For this battle, you may nominate only your Poor Quarter faction (if you have one), to attack the guards. If your faction defeats the guards, turn to 64. If the guards defeat your faction, it is destroyed, and you must then use your guild to fight. If your guild defeats the guards, turn to 64. If the guards defeat your Poor Quarter faction and your guild, turn to 13. You cannot Flee from this battle.

47

Your thieves infiltrate the pie-eating contest, which is not difficult, given that the Spotted Tavern is absolutely full of customers and spectators. They get the dosage just right and after applying the poison manage to kill off a considerable number of both the Dark Star and Red Flag street gangs! In the ensuing power vacuum, the Steel Fist step up and establish control over the Poor Quarter, sliding seamlessly into the role of leadership.

'That was absolutely fabulous' says Derros, eating an un-poisoned pie. 'Now both that lot is out the way, we can concentrate on making this place our own. With your help, of course!'

The Steel Fist street gang is as follows:

The Steel Fist, Poor Quarter, Power: 1, Income: 1, Codeword: *Spider*

Once you have finished adding the details of this new faction to your Guild Sheet, turn to 25.

48

It is a close game. After several hands however, Fu makes a mistake and leads with the Four of Elephants. Bristleweed trumps that with a long suit of Llama cards, only for Dourmane to play two Jesters and lay waste to all. Not only has he won the game, but also a considerable sum of gold. Add 1 Gold to the Strongbox total on your Guild Sheet.

'Well played indeed,' says Lune appreciatively. 'We may have to ask Dourmane back at some stage for a rematch. For now, rest assured we will ally with your guild and help you in any way possible.'

The Grifters over which Lune presides are as follows:

The Grifters, Market Square, Power: 1, Income: 2, Codeword: *Fox*

Once you have finished adding the details of this new faction to your Guild Sheet, turn to 25.

49

You and your thieves try to escape from the Zombies, but of course the cellar entrance is locked and barred by an iron grille.

'I'm sorry we can't let you out of there,' says the Death Priest in a sinister yet reasonable tone. 'Whatever the outcome of this fight, Zarg the Death God will be satisfied.'

If you haven't already done so, deduct 1 point of Power from your guild as your Flee penalty, and add it to the Zombies' current Power score. Then continue the battle!

ZOMBIES Power (Previous score plus 1)

The Zombies are plague carriers. For every point of Power your Guild loses, add 1 Point to the Zombie's Power score, as your dead thieves are reborn as ravenous flesh-eating Zombies! If the Zombies defeat your guild, turn to 13. If your guild defeats the Zombies, turn to 62.

50

Extortion time! This is when your guild, and the various factions that you may control, collect their daily income from the general population of Darkstrand Town. To do this, consult your Guild Sheet and add up all the Income values of the factions you control. The result is the amount of Gold you collect on this day, and you may add this total to your Strongbox. Don't forget to take into account any penalties or bonuses to your Income from whatever event your guild or factions may have just experienced. Once you have done this, turn to 75.

51

Brycia turns out to be a sixteen year-old girl with close-cropped black hair and twin stilettos strapped to her belt. She is surrounded by a mob of scruffy street-children who cluster around her protectively.

'So, big fish come down here to tell the little fish what to do, have they?' she sneers at you. 'Or have you forgotten the basics of thieving and need a reminder?'

'Hardly. We'd like to know if you want join our guild as associates.'

'What? Little old us? Come on, pull the other one, there's bells on it.'

'No, really. We're serious. These are serious times.'

'Okay, and we're serious too. My wingman Jesugo was unlucky and got caught thieving by the filth. They took him to Watch House 13. You break him out of there, and we'll do a deal.'

Watch House 13 is one of the newest precincts of the Town Watch, between Market Square and the Poor Quarter. Its blackstone walls have a poor reputation for swallowing up the penniless and the destitute and not spitting them back out again. The guards here are brutal and uncompromising. To test whether your thieves are up to the task, roll one die and add 1, and test your guild's Power score. If you roll under your guild's Power score, turn to 68. If you roll equal or over your Guild's Power score, turn to 10.

52

Your thieves incredibly defeat the Dark Stars, and the few survivors fade away into the Poor Quarter before they can be spotted by vengeful members from rival gangs. Of Krislein, there is no trace; the gang leader has apparently vanished into thin air. The Red Flags do not appear too concerned however, given they now control the Poor Quarter!

'Nice work!' says Gothring admiringly. 'I must admit I thought you'd fail. Few tangle with the Dark Stars and come out on top. Nevertheless, a deal is a deal. We'd be delighted to ally with a gang so powerful as yourselves!'

The Red Flags street gang is as follows:

The Red Flags, Poor Quarter, Power: 2, Income: 1, Codeword: *Scorpion*

Once you have finished adding the details of this new faction to your Guild Sheet, turn to 25.

53

The Troll Strongarm Collective meet in a collapsed cellar that is overgrown with moss and fungi. Their leader, a heavily disfigured beast called Acidnose, regards you contemptuously from his perch atop a throne carved from a giant mushroom.

'Right, you lot want us to join, yeah?' he says. 'So you gotta do what we say. Prove you're tough enough to ally with Trolls!'

So saying, he pulls a lever and the floor collapses, dumping you and your thieves into a slimy pit. A portcullis is raised, allowing a hideous reptilian creature to enter the pit; all green scales, flashing eyes, and venomous fangs. It is a Death Stalker from the jungles of Asantia, and your thieves must defeat it in combat!

DEATH STALKER Power 2

The Death Stalker's fangs are poisonous and cause 2 points of Power damage per successful hit instead of 1. If the Death Stalker devours your guild, turn to 13. If your guild slays the Death Stalker, turn to 74. If you decide to Flee, turn to 19.

54

The Cult of Zarg is to be found in an abandoned building in the back alleys behind the Street of Gods. Their symbol is a gigantic black skull painted on a wall as a crude altar. Zarg is a death god, and their leader is simply called the Death Priest; a gaunt, bald man whose teeth have been filed to sharp points. His ragged followers are all similar to him in appearance, and the makeshift temple smells like a charnel-house. A low thumping and moaning sound comes from somewhere below ground.

'We will join your thieves,' says the Death Priest, in a low monotonous voice. 'But we have a problem that needs solving. Beneath us is a cellar of less-fortunate cultists who have become zombies. Their numbers need culling and that is your job.'

If you wish to opt out now and approach the Brotherhood instead, turn to 83. If not, read on.

You are led down a torch-lit staircase to a cellar that is guarded by an iron grille, and locked inside. Soon, foul creatures, little more than rotten corpses, begin to slither out from the dark corners of cellar and attack your thieves with toothy jaws and dirt-smearred talons!

ZOMBIES Power 2

The Zombies are plague carriers. For every point of Power your Guild loses, add 1 Point to the Zombie's Power score, as your dead thieves are reborn as ravenous flesh-eating Zombies! If the Zombies defeat your guild, turn to 13. If your guild defeats the Zombies, turn to 62. If you decide to Flee, turn to 49.

55

Your seven days are up! The forces that Lord Razaar has secretly ordered to journey to Darkstrand Town have arrived! First to show up are an experienced band of mercenaries that call themselves the Doom Battalion. Storming into the city riding black stallions, these warriors are clad in scale-mail hauberks and armed with broadswords. Their shields bear the device of a yellow skull splintered by an iron spike atop a sable field. They are a formidable presence, and the citizenry of Darkstrand Town cower before them.

If you have the codeword *Hyena*, turn to **85**.

If you have the codeword *Jackal*, turn to **92**.

If you have neither of these codewords, turn to **7**.

56

The brawl goes poorly for your thieves. One of them collapses as a clay pint-mug smashes down on his skull, and another screams when a carving knife whizzes through the air and embeds itself in his shoulder. Dourmane looks askingly at you and you give the order to retreat.

'That's right! Flee back to the poorhouses like the mangy dogs you are!' shouts Vambrace, the Burglars' leader.

You do not bother to report back to Grisel the Grey. Her foul temper is legendary, and in any case a lone assassin who was watching the battle has no doubt slipped away to report to the head of the Order of Shadows on its less than satisfactory outcome.

It is a sad and sorry end to the day. Golden Hill now lies beyond the reach of your guild. Your bruised and injured thieves, some missing fingers, ears and other minor body parts, begin the long walk back to headquarters. Turn to **25**.

57

The Deep Ones are too numerous and know the sewers too well. You give the order to retreat and leave these stench-laden tunnels that wind their way beneath Darkstrand Town.

'By the whiskers of Myus!' snorts Grimlark, on seeing you flee the sewers. 'Beaten by a bunch of mutated goldfish. Oh, the ignominy!'

Things could have gone better. The Docks and their sewers now lie beyond the reach of your guild. Your battered and foul-smelling thieves begin the long walk back to headquarters. Turn to **25**.

58

Your attempts to unite the various criminal factions of Darkstrand Town have not gone unnoticed. A rival group, calling themselves the Red Hand Guild, arises amidst a nameless shantytown on the northern banks of the Hagfish River. Mustering a small force of renegade thieves and beggars, they launch an all-out assault on your guild headquarters in an epic struggle for supremacy over who will control the criminal underworld of Darkstrand Town!

RED HAND GUILD Power 3

If the Red Hand Guild defeats your guild, turn to **13**. If your guild defeats the Red Hand Guild, turn to **65**. Your guild cannot Flee from this battle.

59

The Watch Sergeant is disappointed with your selfishness, and his men glower darkly as they leave your headquarters.

'I think you'll find you've made a grave error of judgment,' he says in a calm yet threatening tone of voice. 'I foresee big problems ahead...'

Sure enough, over the course of the day, the activities of your thieves are continually interrupted by meddling Watchmen citing obscure passages of law and arresting your men on the flimsiest of

evidence. When you calculate the income in Gold that you gain this day, you must divide the total result by 2, rounding fractions down. The result is the actual income you receive, reflecting the constant disruption to your thieves while working, and the fact that deductions have to be made to bribe the release of anyone arrested by the Town Watch.

It has not been a good day. Turn to **50**.

60

If you have the codeword *Lemming* you already control the Poor Quarter and can turn to **25**. If not, read on.

The Poor Quarter of Darkstrand Town is a large, run-down area of crumbling tenements, dilapidated drinking houses, and patches of barren, scrubby ground that have been converted into flea markets. While your guild has its headquarters here, actual events on the street are controlled by no less than three separate street gangs of local toughs. Dourmane gives you the lowdown on the current state of play.

'The Dark Stars are the biggest and strongest gang by far,' he says. 'Almost rivaling us in size, which is a bit of a worry. Their bitter enemies are the Red Flags, who used to be the most powerful but have fallen away in recent times.'

'And the last?'

'The Steel Fist. Their day is done, but they still keep hanging on, dreaming of the big score that will be the game changer.'

Which street gang will you approach to join you? The Dark Stars (turn to **27**), the Red Flags (turn to **76**), or the Steel Fist (turn to **35**)?

61

The largest group of Smugglers is led by an ex-pirate called Shearwater Jack, who can be found in a well-appointed harbour-side inn called the Purple Crab. He regards you balefully with his single remaining eye and spits: 'I will not lie; I'm not keen on the idea. However, maybe you can help us. The Harbourmaster has confiscated one of our shipments, a large haul of black lotus from distant Asantia. If you can break into his customs-house and retrieve our shipment, we're all yours.'

The customs-house is a well-guarded building that has been converted from an old river-fort that dates to Darkstrand's earlier days. Breaking in and out again with the contraband will not be an easy task. To test whether your thieves are up to the task, roll one die and add 1, and test your guild's Power score. If you roll under your guild's Power score, turn to **77**. If you roll equal or over your Guild's Power score, turn to **99**.

62

Your thieves are exhausted after such a dangerous battle, and more than a little annoyed at the Death Priest and his cruel and callous ways. He heads off your criticism immediately with an apparently sincere apology.

'We are sorry for the severity of the task,' he says. 'Zarg demands we show allegiance to only the best, and by your victory you have proven this to be true. We will be delighted to ally to your guild.'

The Cult of Zarg is as follows:

Cult of Zarg, Temple District, Power: 2, Income: 1, Codeword: *Raven*

In addition, the death cultists have an artifact to present to you. 'We found it in a long-forgotten crypt beneath the city,' says the Death Priest. 'We believe it belongs to you.'

He gives you a casket containing a golden circlet set with beads of onyx. This is the crown of the legendary Miskelmaas the Quick, first Guildmaster of the Darkstrand Town thieves! It is a powerful treasure indeed:

Crown of Thieves: Whenever you test your guild's Power score, you may deduct 1 from the die roll.

Once you have finished adding the details of this new faction and its treasure to your Guild Sheet, or not, turn to **25**.

63

'Hullo, hullo,' say members of the Darkstrand Town Watch as they decide to "drop in" on your headquarters and charge an impromptu levy on the activities of your guild.

'It's not extortion or bribery,' explains the Watch Sergeant in a reasonable tone of voice. 'It's just a little insurance to ensure you lot can carry out your business with the peace of mind that you won't be interrupted.'

Roll 1 die and consult the following table:

Roll 1-3	1 Gold
Roll 4-5	2 Gold
Roll 6	3 Gold

The result is the amount of Gold you have to pay from your Strongbox to ensure the 'co-operation' of the Town Watch. If you wish to pay, deduct the amount indicated from the Strongbox total on your Guild Sheet and turn to **81**. If you do not wish to pay, turn to **59**.

64

Now that the Town Watch is out of the way, law and order are trampled underfoot. A movement to wrest control of the city from Lord Razaar and his coterie has begun to coalesce into being, with your thieves at the forefront of this revolution for change. Naturally, when the looting starts, most scavengers head for Golden Hill, the bastion of the hated and affluent aristocracy. In response, several of Darkstrand Town's legendary heroes and adventurers strap on their armour and come out of retirement to defend themselves and their neighbours from the great unwashed hordes.

You face Munctus the Mighty, who braved the Labyrinth of Azorg beneath Smokeypeak Mountain; Belanthe Brightblade, slave-freer of Skull Island; Selorielle the Enchantress, who ensorcelled Malthus Fire; and many others. This will not be an easy battle!

If you have the codeword *Panther*, turn to **97**.

If you have the codeword *Tiger*, turn to **82**.

If you have neither of these codewords, turn to **15**.

65

The thieves of your guild are victorious against the usurpers, whose dead and dying bodies lie slumped about your headquarters, each recognizable due to their red-dyed left hand. Barrow-boys are summoned to cart the corpses down to the river. Roll one to see what you gain from the clean-up operation:

Roll 1-3	1 Gold worth of treasure to add to your Strongbox
Roll 4-6	1 Power worth of survivors who will join your guild (up to a maximum Power of 5)

The Red Hand Guild is no more! Well, for the moment, at least... When you have finished amending your Guild Sheet, turn to **50**.

66

The race across the rooftops is a close-run thing. Your thieves are in the lead heading towards the gong of Mobos, but then one of them slides screaming down the golden dome of Pokkachum, the God of Trade, and has to be rescued. By the time they make it back to the starting point, the Brethren have

long since beaten them.

'My apologies,' says Kantana sadly. 'It appears you are not of the requisite quality for us to form an alliance with. We will escort you from the temple and you are never to return here upon pain of death!'

That was an unfortunate turn of events. The Temple District now lies beyond the reach of your guild. Your bruised and tired thieves begin the long journey back to headquarters. Turn to **25**.

67

You propose offering the tribesmen more men from your guild, to round out their numbers and give them more presence, and thus influence, as the main faction operating out of the Plaza of Caravans.

'Excellent,' says Skrabdur, clapping his hands together. 'More thieves here are definitely what we need. How many people are you prepared to give us to work with?'

To create an alliance with the Tribesmen of Bone, you need to deduct at least 1 point from your Guild's Power score (down to a minimum of 1) and add to their faction as follows:

Tribesmen of Bone, Plaza of Caravans, Power: 1 (plus however many points you invest), Income: 1, Codeword: *Jackal*

Once you have finished adding the details of this new faction to your Guild Sheet, turn to **25**.

However, if you are unable or unwilling to deduct any Power from your Guild's score, the tribesmen quickly get angry. Skrabdur calls you "a traitorous viper!" and a brawl rapidly develops. Turn to **96**.

68

Having got into Watch House 13, your thieves hurriedly search the place and find a cell where Jesugo is tied to the wall, and two drunken guards take turns in trying to miss him with hurled throwing knives. They aren't doing a very good job. You defeat the guards easily, while Dourmane grabs Jesugo, who is bleeding from a hundred cuts, before fleeing.

Later, back near the Market Square, Brycia thanks you for rescuing a now patched-up Jesugo. 'Not a bad job,' she says, with some admiration. 'And all for a bunch of purse-snatching sproglings. Things must be serious! We'll help you for sure, and you can count on us when you need to!'

The Pickpockets of Brycia are as follows:

Brycia's Pickpockets, Market Square, Power: 1, Income: 1, Codeword: *Mouse*

Once you have finished adding the details of this new faction to your Guild Sheet, turn to **25**.

69

The Tribesmen of Bone are scattered by your thieves, and their chief Skrabdur is slain while defending a valiant rearguard action. The Town Watch is nowhere to be seen, and once the battle has ended, the merchants and traders cautiously return to the square. You are the new masters of the Plaza of Caravans, if you choose. In order to do so, you need to deduct at least 1 point from your Guild's Power score (down to a minimum of 1) in order to create a new faction as follows:

Convoy Thieves, Plaza of Caravans, Power: 1 (or more, depending on how many points you invest), Income: 1

Once you have finished adding the details of this new faction to your Guild Sheet, or not, turn to **25**.

70

The Temple District comprises one main thoroughfare, called the Street of Gods, lined with elaborate houses of worship made from blocks of marble, basalt and red laterite. The smell of incense and the sounds of gongs and bells prevail. Most sects would have little to do with thieves, but Dourmane claims there are two worth considering.

'There's the Cult of Zarg,' he says. 'Death-worshippers with a nasty tendency to kidnap lone wayfarers, but certainly stealthy and brave.'

'Interesting, but perhaps a little too dark for our purposes...'

'The others are from distant eastern lands. Call themselves the Brotherhood of Nin-Jaku-Za. Like to wear a lot of black but don't know much else about them.'

Which faction will you approach to join you? The Cult of Zarg (turn to **54**), or the Brotherhood of Nin-Jaku-Za (turn to **83**)?

71

Your thieves and bodyguards finally prevail, and The Claw is cut down mere metres from the room where you stand, counting the loot in your strongbox. It is a narrow escape. Still, she has done considerable damage to your forces and numerous corpses lie scattered about your headquarters, poisoned daggers protruding from their lifeless forms. Deduct 1 point from your guild's Power score, unless it is already 1, in which case there is no effect. However, The Claw was carrying copious vials of antidote and you may add the following to your Guild Sheet:

Vials of Antidote: These will allow your guild to ignore any instruction where you have to deduct 2 Power points instead of 1 during a battle, for one battle only, after which you must cross them off your Guild Sheet.

Your thieves begin the thankless task of cleaning up the resultant carnage. Turn to **50**.

72

The Guild of Rat-Catchers holds court in a backstreet tavern of the Docks, called the Small and Vicious Dog. Their leader is a lanky individual named Grimlark whose back is permanently crooked from perpetually bending over while stalking through the sewers that are his workplace.

He eyes you warily over a drink of grog and says: 'Aye, we'll join your guild, but first you'll have to help us clear an infestation of Deep Ones from sewers that are preventing us from carrying out our jobs.'

So saying, his gang leads your thieves to a large sewer entrance built into the dock-wall that leads to a bewildering series of foul-smelling tunnels beneath the city. Suddenly you are attacked on all-sides by trident-wielding Deep Ones; scaly, fish-like beings with unblinking eyes and finned heads. You must fight!

DEEP ONES Power 3

If the Deep Ones defeat your guild, turn to **13**. If your guild defeats the Deep Ones, turn to **84**. If you decide to Flee, turn to **57**.

73

Your faction is rooted out and destroyed by the adventuring band, to the cheers of traders and merchants who have suffered the ruthless depredations of your guild. Cross the faction off from your Guild Sheet, including any codeword associated with them. You cannot collect any more Income from this faction. Turn to **50**.

74

Your thieves are drained after battling such a formidable opponent, and rather angry at Acidnose and his vicious test of strength. The Troll, for his part, is completely unapologetic.

'Look, if you want muscle, you gotta prove to us you're strong enough to deal with it.' he says. 'With great power comes great irresponsibility, or something like that. Anyway, you did well, and we're on your side now, so everything's smashing, right?'

The Troll Strongarm Collective is as follows:

Troll Strongarm Collective, Troll Street, Power: 2, Income: 1, Codeword: *Hyena*

Once you have finished adding the details of this new faction to your Guild Sheet, turn to 25.

75

Having collected income from various areas of the city, you now have an opportunity to spend it on recruiting more thieves to the cause, either to join your guild or the various factions you control.

If the total amount of Gold in your Strongbox is either zero, or a negative number, you are unable to spend anything as your guild is currently broke or in debt. Turn to 1.

If you have at least 1 Gold in your Strongbox, you are able to spend it on recruitment. For each Gold you cross off your Strongbox, you can add 1 point to either the Power value of your guild, or the Power value of one of your factions. You cannot spend more than 1 Gold on each faction or your guild however. So, if you had 3 Gold to spend, you cannot spend it all on your guild, but you could spend it on your guild and two factions.

Note that the individual Power value of your guild and factions can never go above 5.

In addition, recruiting thieves is not a straightforward process. For every Gold you spend, roll one die. On a roll of a 6, the new recruits simply take the Gold and vanish into the streets of Darkstrand Town. **In this case you must cross off the Gold from your Strongbox, but you do not gain an increase in the Power value of your guild or factions.** Such are the perils of recruiting new thieves!

You can also spend your gold on magical trinkets if you like:

A Vial of Philosophers' Stone: This will double the income of any one faction's area for one day, after which you must cross it off your Guild Sheet.

Several Cloaks of Shadow: These will allow a faction or guild to Flee one battle without suffering the loss of one point of Power, after which you must cross them off your Guild Sheet.

A Bag of Yobbo Teeth. These can be used once before any battle to create a horde of green-skinned Yobbos:

YOBBO HORDE Power 2

If the Yobbos win the battle, they disappear in a cloud of magical smoke. If they lose the battle, you must take over with any appropriate guild or faction. Regardless of the result, cross the item off your Guild Sheet.

Each item(s) costs 3 Gold, and you can only buy one of each per day. If you buy some, deduct the Gold from your Strongbox and note the item(s)'s details down on your Guild Sheet.

Lastly, you do not have to spend all your gold; you may save it in your Strongbox if you wish.

When you have finished here, turn to 1.

76

The gang known as the Red Flags is distinguished by the four vertical red bars tattooed onto their upper arms. They wear sleeveless tunics of crimson-dyed leather, and their leader is a broad-shouldered and brutal slab of a young man called Gothring, who eyes you moodily while cleaning his fingernails with a knife.

'Listen here,' he says. 'We used to be the bosses around here, but those Dark Star scumbags have stolen our thunder. You get rid of them for us, and we'll join you, understand?'

It's very easy to chance upon several of the Dark Stars as they patrol their turf, and even easier to start a fight with them, which of course brings a whole host of reinforcements out onto the streets. Your thieves face the most powerful street gang of Darkstrand Town, all of whom are armed to the teeth with daggers, throwing stars, machetes, and studded flails. Their leader, an imposing girl called Krislein screams a battle-cry and the tattooed horde of thugs attack!

DARK STAR GANG Power 3

If the Dark Star gang defeats your guild, turn to **13**. If your guild defeats the Dark Star gang, turn to **52**. If you decide to Flee, turn to **98**.

77

Your thieves manage to break into the customs-house easily enough; distracting the guards and picking the locks on a privy entrance out the back. Given the legendary potency of black lotus fumes, everyone's face is masked with wet rags to avoid breathing in the powerful narcotic while moving it out of the building.

Shearwater Jack is delighted to recover his shipment.

'That's a capital job and no mistake!' he says. 'We'd be delighted to join your guild and help in anyway possible.'

The Smugglers are as follows:

Smugglers, The Docks, Power: 2, Income: 2, Codeword: *Shark*

Once you have finished adding the details of this new faction to your Guild Sheet, or not, turn to **25**.

78

Your thieves quickly evacuate the plaza, dragging your wounded with you. Shouts of derision and insults from the desert tribesmen ring in your ears.

'Your mothers were donkeys,' rants their chief Skrabdur the Insane. 'And your fathers were all blind camels! Make the gods of the desert crack your bones and use the pieces as dice!'

That didn't go too well. Obviously, the Plaza of Caravans now lies beyond the reach of your guild. Your wounded and motley group of rogues begins the long trek back to headquarters. Turn to **25**.

79

There is a large disturbance in one of the market-places of Darkstrand Town. Roll one die to determine what happens:

Roll 1-3 A captive Snow Panther from Tuskerland escapes in the Plaza of Caravans and begins hunting down riding beasts and pack-animals. It takes all day to subdue the creature. If you control this area you cannot collect any income from it on this day.

Roll 4-6 A shipment of amphibious Hagfish from upriver smash their way out of a crate in Market Square and begin attacking the populace who flee screaming in flight. It takes all day for the Town Watch to hunt down the Hagfish and destroy them. If you control this area you cannot collect

any income from it on this day.

Once you have determined what has happened, turn to 50.

80

The Plaza of Caravans is a dusty expanse of openness by the South Gate, where the merchant convoys arrive from Yalamon and distant Asantia. Camels, mules, oxen and other pack-beasts wait patiently while goods are unloaded under the watchful eye of traders and caravan guards.

'There's only one group active out here,' mutters Dourmane, brushing flies from his mouth. 'A scruffy mob of tribesmen from the Desert of Bones who are running a protection racket. They're not especially numerous. We could try and drive them off if you like, or we could always ally with them I suppose.'

How will you approach the Tribesmen of Bone? By attacking them (turn to 96), or allying with them (turn to 22)?

81

Get the codeword *Pig* if you don't already have it.

'Splendid!' says the Watch Sergeant, leading his men away from your headquarters, their pockets bulging with your gold.

He is, however, true to his word, and your thieves across Darkstrand Towne are untroubled as they go about their roguish activities. Turn to 50.

82

It is at a time like this that the Brotherhood of Nin-Jaku-Za really comes into its own. Led by Kantana and her elite bodyguards, the Brethren leap from the shadows to hack down several heroes and adventurers before darting back into the darkness once again. By the time the heroes realize there are assassins among them, their numbers have already been culled, and the survivors hastily reform into a tight unit of formidable renown.

Still, for every thief cut down by Belanthe's vorpal blade; for every rogue whose skull is smashed by Munctus' iron morning star; for every varlet who is blasted by Selorielle's flaming sorceries; two more criminals rise up to take their place. Who will win the battle of Golden Hill?

MIGHTY HEROES OF DARKSTRAND Power 3

For this battle, you may nominate any faction to attack the heroes. If your faction defeats the heroes, turn to 28. If the heroes defeat your faction, it is destroyed, but you may then nominate another faction to fight. If all your factions are destroyed, you must nominate your guild to fight. If your guild defeats the heroes, turn to 28. If the heroes defeat all your factions and your guild, turn to 13. You cannot Flee from this battle.

83

Despite their name, the Brotherhood of Nin-Jaku-Za is in fact led by a woman; a tall, dark-haired lady from the East, who dresses entirely in black, and whose name is Kantana. She greets you in the outer chambers of their temple, which is decorated with golden idols and brass censers that emit wafting clouds of incense. Kantana is guarded at all times by ten Brothers, swathed in black like her, but with only a slit in the cloth on their face to show their eyes. Each also had a curved sword tied to a tasselled waist-sash.

'We are new to the city,' she explains, 'and an alliance with the eminent power that is your guild would be most beneficial. However, in order to prove your worthiness to the great goddess Nin-Jaku, you must undergo a rite of consecration. Will you accept?'

'Depends on what the rite is. Elaborate further, please?'

She leads you up a spiral staircase to the top of the temple, and out on to the roof. From here you can see all the bell-towers, domes, and cupolas of the worship-houses that form the Temple District.

'Yonder is the gong-spire of the Sky God Mobos,' says Kantana, pointing with a delicate finger. 'Five of your best thieves must race five of my Brothers along the rooftops, to the gong of Mobos and then back here. If just one of your thieves can beat the Brothers, we will ally with you.'

Dourmane mutters something about a "suicide mission" but nevertheless, you have no choice, you are thieves after all! Roll one die and test your guild's Power. If the result is under your guild's Power score, turn to **91**. If the result is equal or over your Guild's Power score, turn to **66**.

84

Your guild thoroughly slaughters the Deep Ones, and the few survivors flee deeper into the dark depths of the sewers. Some of your thieves wish to pursue them, but Dourmane counsels otherwise.

'We've done enough for now,' he cautions. 'The Rat-Catchers can mop up the rest.'

You return to the sewer entrance to share the news with Grimlark.

'Wonderful!' he says, offering everyone mugs of grog from a just-opened barrel. 'Knew you could do it! We've got our livelihoods back, and we'll certainly serve you as best we can!'

The Guild of Rat-Catchers is as follows:

Guild of Rat-Catchers, The Docks, Power: 1, Income: 0, Codeword: *Rat*

Once you have finished adding the details of this new faction to your Guild Sheet, or not, turn to **25**.

85

Fortunately, your alliance with the Troll Strongarm Collective proves useful as their leader Acidnose has a half-brother who is chieftain of a tribe of Rock Trolls in the Bloodstone Hills. The tribe of Trolls has attacked the Doom Battalion several times, and the mercenaries who made it to Darkstrand Town are the wounded and blood-stained survivors, their armour rent and split by blows from trollish axes. Still, you must fight!

THE DOOM BATTALION, Power 3

For this battle, you may nominate any faction to attack the mercenaries. If your faction defeats the mercenaries, turn to **32**. If the mercenaries defeat your faction, it is destroyed, but you may then nominate another faction to fight. If all your factions are destroyed, you must nominate your guild to fight. If your guild defeats the mercenaries, turn to **32**. If the mercenaries defeat all your factions and your guild, turn to **13**. You cannot Flee from this battle.

86

The avaricious activities of your thieves have reached such a level that the Merchants' Guild sends their best assassin after you in the belief that if they kill the head, the rest will die. The assassin, a mysterious Half-Elf known only as 'The Claw', attempts to infiltrate your guild with a bandolier of poisoned throwing daggers strapped to her black leather-clad body. To test whether your thieves can prevent her assassination attempt, roll one die and test your guild's Power score. Deduct 1 from the die roll if you have the codeword *Panther*, and deduct 2 from the die roll if you the codeword *Tiger*. If you roll under your guild's Power score, turn to **71**. If you roll equal or over your Guild's Power score, The Claw slaughters everybody in your guild, including yourself. Turn to **13**.

87

Fortunately, the angry mob of the Poor Quarter is firmly on your side, as the only thing they hate more than street thugs are those corrupt guardsmen who cloak their brutality in the false panoply of the law. During the following battle, you may temporarily increase the Power score of your Angry

Mob faction by 3 points up to a maximum score of 4. Giving the order, your followers pour out of their hiding places to attack the unjust and dastardly oppressors!

DARKSTRAND TOWN WATCH Power 4

For this battle, you may nominate only your Poor Quarter faction, to attack the guards. If your faction defeats the guards, turn to **64**. If the guards defeat your faction, it is destroyed, and you must then use your guild to fight. If your guild defeats the guards, turn to **64**. If the guards defeat your Poor Quarter faction and your guild, turn to **13**. You cannot Flee from this battle.

88

Your faction ambushes the adventurers down a dark alley and slays many of them with a withering hail of arrows fired from the bows of rooftop archers. The remainder flees the area, dragging their wounded with them. Your faction loots the bodies left behind and discovers some magical treasure. Roll one die and consult the following table to see what is found:

Roll 1-2 A Vial of Philosophers' Stone: This will double the income of any one faction's area for one day, after which you must cross it off your Guild Sheet.

Roll 3-4 Several Cloaks of Shadow: These will allow a faction or guild to Flee one battle without suffering the loss of one point of Power, after which you must cross them off your Guild Sheet.

Roll 5-6 A Bag of Yobbo Teeth. These can be used once before any battle to create a horde of green-skinned Yobbos:

YOBBO HORDE Power 2

If the Yobbos win the battle, they disappear in a cloud of magical smoke. If they lose the battle, you must take over with any appropriate guild or faction. Regardless of the result, cross the item off your Guild Sheet.

After you have noted down the details of the treasure you have found, turn to **50**.

89

The Knights of the Citadel wear full-face helmets, and grey tunics over chain-mail, while brandishing longswords and kite shields. They stream down from the parapets and scythe into your forces like a wave of razor-sharp steel. This will be a battle to the death!

KNIGHTS OF RAZAAR Power 5

For this battle, you may nominate any faction to attack the knights. If your faction defeats the knights, turn to **100**. If the knights defeat your faction, it is destroyed, but you may then nominate another faction to fight. If all your factions are destroyed, you must nominate your guild to fight. If your guild defeats the knights, turn to **100**. If the knights defeat all your factions and your guild, turn to **13**. You cannot Flee from this battle.

90

The Docks of Darkstrand Town are where pirate galleons, river barges and the cogs of Gallansia's more disreputable merchants all lie at anchor, watched over by a ramshackle collection of taverns, warehouses and the huts of fishermen. Dourmane reports there are two main factions of interest that operate in this area.

'Firstly, there's the Guild of Rat-Catchers,' he says. 'They're based around the Docks as the best

entrances to the sewers beneath Darkstrand are to be found here. The sewers are obviously where they work to eradicate rats and the like.'

'And the other?' you ask.

'Smugglers, mainly. Diverse collection of folk involved, bringing in contraband from the pirate ships and so on.'

Which faction will you approach to join you? The Guild of Rat-Catchers (turn to **72**), or the Smugglers (turn to **61**)?

91

The race across the rooftops is a close-run thing. Several of your thieves stumble on the gargoyle-haunted terraces of Skarm the Storm God, but still manage to make it to the gong of Mobos before the Brotherhood of Nin-Jaku-Za. On the way back, two Brethren are waylaid by a Blood Vulture nesting atop a bronze statue of Goff, allowing your thieves to sprint ahead and win the race.

'Congratulations!' says Kantana with a smile. 'You are clearly superior to us and we would be delighted to form an alliance with thieves as formidable as yourselves!'

The Brotherhood of Nin-Jaku-Za is as follows:

Brotherhood of Nin-Jaku-Za, Temple District, Power: 2, Income: 1, Codeword: *Tiger*

Once you have finished adding the details of this new faction to your Guild Sheet, turn to **25**.

92

Fortunately, your alliance with the Tribesmen of Bone proves useful as their leader Skrabdur the Insane has contacts within a ragged group of bandits based in the wastelands around Gorkfang Gap. The bandits have attacked the Doom Battalion as they marched through pass between the Bloodstone Hills, and the mercenaries who made it to Darkstrand Town have lost some of their number to bandit crossbows and avalanche traps. Still, you must fight!

THE DOOM BATTALION, Power 4

For this battle, you may nominate any faction to attack the mercenaries. If your faction defeats the mercenaries, turn to **32**. If the mercenaries defeat your faction, it is destroyed, but you may then nominate another faction to fight. If all your factions are destroyed, you must nominate your guild to fight. If your guild defeats the mercenaries, turn to **32**. If the mercenaries defeat all your factions and your guild, turn to **13**. You cannot Flee from this battle.

93

You offer the tribesmen an immediate payment of gold to help them begin recruiting more thieves.

'Well, yes, more gold is always nice,' says Skrabdur in a bored tone of voice, as his men mutter among themselves.

To create an alliance with the Tribesmen of Bone, you need to deduct at least 1 Gold from your Guild's Strongbox. Skrabdur's faction is as follows:

Tribesmen of Bone, Plaza of Caravans, Power: 1, Income: 1

Once you have finished adding the details of this new faction to your Guild Sheet, or not, turn to **25**.

However, if you are unable or unwilling to deduct any Gold from your Guild's Strongbox, the tribesmen quickly get angry. Skrabdur calls you "a traitorous viper!" and a brawl rapidly develops. Turn to **96**.

94

Backed by outraged merchants and traders, a small group of adventurers has decided to attack a faction in one area of the city, to cleanse it of criminal elements. Roll one die to determine which area is under attack:

- 1 The Docks
- 2 Golden Hill
- 3 Market Square
- 4 The Poor Quarter
- 5 The Temple District
- 6 The Plaza of Caravans

If you do not have an active faction in that area you are safe for now; turn to **50**. If you have an active faction in that area, you must fight the adventurers!

ADVENTURERS Power 2

If the adventurers defeat your faction, turn to **73**. If your faction defeats the adventurers, turn to **88**. Your faction cannot Flee from this battle.

95

Fortunately, your contacts in the Guild of Rat-Catchers know many tunnels from the sewer network that enter the citadel from within. Grimlark leads a small strike-force through these catacombs to assault the enemy from the inside, even as the rest of your forces attack from outside the walls.

The Knights of the Citadel wear full-face helmets, and grey tunics over chain-mail, while brandishing longswords and kite shields. They stream through the chambers of the citadel and scythe into your forces like a wave of razor-sharp steel. This will be a battle to the death!

KNIGHTS OF RAZAAR Power 3

For this battle, you may nominate any faction to attack the knights. If your faction defeats the knights, turn to **100**. If the knights defeat your faction, it is destroyed, but you may then nominate another faction to fight. If all your factions are destroyed, you must nominate your guild to fight. If your guild defeats the knights, turn to **100**. If the knights defeat all your factions and your guild, turn to **13**. You cannot Flee from this battle.

96

A vicious street-battle ensues between your thieves and the desert tribesmen, who are clad in white and tan robes, and wield jagged scimitars. Their leader, Skrabdur the Insane, leads the attack, directing his forces from the top of his war-camel.

TRIBESMEN OF BONE Power 2

If the Tribesmen defeat your guild, turn to **13**. If your guild defeats the Tribesmen Ones, turn to **69**. If you decide to Flee, turn to **78**.

97

Thankfully, the Order of Shadows is on your side, and manages to cull the ranks of minor heroes somewhat. For example, the twin barbarians Grom and Grum are slaughtered by a rain of arrows from the rooftops, while Thodoros the Smiter, priest of Mobos, suffers an unfortunate accident involving a wagon-load of chamber pots.

Still, your thieves become embroiled in an epic conflict with the remaining major heroes of

Darkstrand Town. But for every thief cut down by Belanthe's vorpal blade; for every rogue whose skull is smashed by Munctus' iron morning star; for every varlet who is blasted by Selorielle's flaming sorceries; two more criminals rise up to take their place. Who will win the battle of Golden Hill?

MIGHTY HEROES OF DARKSTRAND Power 4

For this battle, you may nominate any faction to attack the heroes. If your faction defeats the heroes, turn to **28**. If the heroes defeat your faction, it is destroyed, but you may then nominate another faction to fight. If all your factions are destroyed, you must nominate your guild to fight. If your guild defeats the heroes, turn to **28**. If the heroes defeat all your factions and your guild, turn to **13**. You cannot Flee from this battle.

98

The Dark Stars are too powerful for your thieves and too well-versed in the art of street-fighting. Many of your thieves are taken out by dirty tactics and questionable weapons. You give the order to retreat and flee the area, with the taunts of Krislein and her cronies ringing in your ears. Gothring is predictably furious.

'You're telling me you're trying to unite the criminals of Darkstrand after that pitiful performance?' he spits. 'You lot couldn't fight your way out of a paper bag! What a useless load of tossers!'

That was something of a bitter blow. The Poor Quarter now lies beyond the reach of your guild. Your bruised and wounded thieves begin the long walk back to headquarters. Turn to **25**.

99

Your thieves manage to break into the customs-house easily enough; distracting the guards and picking the locks on a service entrance out the back. Unfortunately, things then begin to unravel. Two of your more junior thieves mistakenly inhale the fumes of the black lotus, and before you can stop them, go prancing down the corridors singing and laughing at the top of their voices. The alarm is raised and your band of rogues barely makes it out alive, leaving the two fools to an undoubtedly savage fate.

Shearwater Jack is understandably furious.

'We'll never get the lotus shipment back now!' he rages. 'Get out of my sight before I take out its cost on your worthless hide!'

It is an embarrassing end to the day. The Docks now lie beyond the reach of your guild. Your dazed and confused thieves, reeking faintly of lotus fumes, begin the long trek back to headquarters. Turn to **25**.

100

Lord Razaar, who secretly fought alongside his knights to defend the citadel from your thieves, is found in the great hall. He is sorely wounded, bleeding messily from a nasty stomach wound, and does not have long to live. Still, he stares at you with a strange mixture of hatred and surprise.

'Why? Why have you done this?' he gasps.

'Just pre-empting your good self,' you reply. 'We heard you were going to do us in first, like.'

'What? Who told you this rubbish?' Razaar wheezes, choking on his own blood.

'Your own messengers. Told us you were gathering an army for a clean-up operation in Darkstrand Town.'

'You fools!' he says. 'A municipal clean-up, not a criminal clean-up! We needed mercenaries to help deal with creatures in the sewers, bang a few heads together, that sort of thing. Nothing to do with thieves. Oh, by Lord Mobos, please do not tell me my death has been in error...'

And with that the last Lord of Darkstrand Town dies on the floor of his own palace.

Dourmane looks at you in astonishment, for once at a loss for words.

Oh well. Now you truly are the leader of a CITY OF THIEVES...

T H E E N D