

A CONVENTION  
SCENARIO FOR

**ELRIC!**

J. M. Abbott's

**DEATH  
IN  
DHAKOS**

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# DEATH IN DHAKOS

## AN *ELRIC!* CONVENTION/INTRODUCTORY SCENARIO

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All Maps created in Profantasy's Campaign Cartographer 3+ & Character  
portraits created in Midjourney

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## INTRODUCTORY TEXT TO READ ALOUD:

### A Shadow Falls Over the City of Spires!

*Dhakos, the capital of Jharkor, a city whose splendor is whispered to rival even the ethereal beauty of Imryyr, the Dreaming City, is teetering on the brink of chaos. A sinister plot is unfolding within its walls.*

*There is discord amongst the city's influential merchant houses, fanning the flames of rivalry and suspicion. Whispers of betrayal and sabotage fill the air, and tensions are escalating rapidly. Unless brave individuals can uncover the source of this growing conflict and quell the rising tide of animosity, the magnificent streets of Dhakos will run with the blood of the innocent.*

**D**HAKOS, THE CITY OF SPIRES, capital of Jharkor, a city whose beauty rivals that of Imryyr, the Dreaming City, is under threat. Makor Tanyen, an Agent of Chaos and his cultists plot to weaken the city from within by fomenting a war amongst the merchants, leaving Dhakos ripe for invasion. The streets will run with the blood of the innocent unless the adventurers are able to defeat the cultists.

## Introduction

This adventure is ideal to use as a one-shot or introductory scenario to a longer campaign and is suited for novice characters. Six pre-generated characters (the beginning adventurers from the Elric! core rulebook) were used at Chaosium Con 2025 and were ideally suited. It is set any time after Theleb Kaarna earns Elric's enmity and before Elric takes his revenge on the Pan Tangian in *The Stealer of Souls*. It was originally written using Mongoose Publishing's, MRQII edition of *Elric of Melniboné*. In that, Makor Tanyen, the main antagonist and his fellow cultists, belong to the Deathbringers Cult (from *Cults of the*

*Young Kingdoms*) – a cult dedicated to the Chaos gods Chardros and Hionhurn. If using this as the introductory scenario of a campaign it would be worthwhile utilising the Cults and Rune magic from those sourcebooks. Makor had the Gifts, Second Life, Weapon of Faith and the compulsions, Need to Kill, Obsessive/Compulsive-Record Keeping (actually a Lawful compulsion but it suited the scenario). His fellow cultists had Combat Acuity as their only gift, with Need to Kill their only compulsion. Obviously, their kills are offerings to Chardros.

Makor and his associates have been attacking the caravans and ships of three of Jharkor's most powerful merchants; Jerran Oneleg (he lost his leg when his ship was attacked by pirates), Borric Devlan and Pawyll Stenor. He and his men, boosted by mercenaries and freebooters, have been playing one merchant against another so that now paranoia runs high among them and what was once fierce rivalry, now threatens to become outright war. Makor's primary goals are to destabilise the city economically and create a situation where Queen Yishana's White Leopards will be dispersed to end the violence, leaving the Palace open to assault and the Monarch vulnerable to an assassination attempt. This will ensure the city is in turmoil, ripe for invasion by Dharijor and their Pan Tangian allies, bringing forward Jagreen Lern's insane quest for domination and hastening the end of the world.

## Authors Note

Rather than using the +/- 20% or +/- 40% modification to skill values for situational modifiers I use Bonus/Penalty dies imported from Chasoiium's, *Call of Cthulhu 7<sup>th</sup> Edition*.

Players roll one or two additional 'tens' die and use the lowest (bonus) or highest (penalty) result. Example: The player has a Bargain skill of 45%. Due to good roleplaying, I allow them a Bonus die. They roll a 55%, they roll another 'tens' of 30, their result is now modified to 35% a success. Had it been a Penalty die the result would be the original roll of 55% and a failure.

## Adventure Start

The scenario starts in Aflitain at one of the city's larger open-air markets. Have the players give a general description of their character and state how long they've been in Aflitain and what drew them there. At this point the adventurers are not known to each other. This section brings them together and gets them involved with the scenario. Read or paraphrase the following:

## Authors Note

If any players are unfamiliar with the saga or any other works in the Eternal Champion series, have Galrod enlighten them regarding the three cosmic forces, Balance, Chaos and Law and the eternal struggle between Chaos and Law throughout the multiverse.

The market square is a hive of activity with people everywhere. Troubadours are playing, dancers are weaving amongst the crowd (along with pickpockets who steer clear of you). Some criers are offering employment, while others are tempting patrons to try their wares. The numerous food stalls give off aromas of spiced, grilled meats, sweet treats and other edibles. It is a veritable feast for the senses.

You are drawn to a small, squat, older fellow with a prominent nose. His bluish-black, greying beard is long and plaited, decorated with coloured beads. He is dressed in a golden silk shirt with a tan leather vest and striped pantaloons in a riot of colours, none of which are complimentary. Sturdy, functional leather boots adorn his feet. He has been reading from a scroll, in a sing-song fashion; the words gibberish. As you move to approach him, he rolls up his scroll and starts wandering off.

The old man is Garlod, who is using a 'little trick', a minor enchantment, to attract adventurers to him. Call for a Resistance Roll POW vs POW against his POW of 18. If using the suggested starting characters, the required results needed are; Tabita  $\leq 30\%$ , Kevi & Carkan  $\leq 40\%$ , Rathek & Vreen  $\leq 25\%$ , Bort  $\leq 45\%$ . Those that succeed are no longer compelled to follow the old man, while the others follow, blissfully unaware they are under his spell. Ask those that passed their rolls for their actions as they notice the enamoured characters follow the old man into a nearby alley and resolve as appropriate.

Assuming they follow or merely try to warn the enamoured characters in some fashion, the old man leads the adventurers a merry dance, as he makes his way through winding alleys until he enters a rundown, abandoned dwelling. He leaves the door open. He introduces himself as Garlod and explains he is an Agent of the Balance.

He has heard disturbing rumours from numerous contacts that tensions between three of Dhakos's most powerful merchants are escalating and his intuition is telling him there is more to it than a mere squabble between merchants. As an Agent of the Balance, Garlod is dimly aware of Elric's destiny and feels deep within his soul, that somehow, Chaos is involved. He fears that if left unresolved such activity could be devastating, thwarting Elric's destiny. He is willing to pay the adventurers 500 bronzes each to get to the bottom of the situation.

Assuming the adventurers accept his offer, he pays them 100 BR upfront and organises for them to travel with a merchant caravan heading North at first light tomorrow. He tells them to lodge at The Prince's Pleasure, one of Dhakos' better inns, and he will meet them there in 10 days.

If the adventurers ask for more coin, call for a Bargain Roll (with a bonus die for good role playing) if successful, adventurers earn an additional 150 BR (30/day) for 'guard duty' and get to keep their mounts, fine Shazzarian riding horses, when all is done.

The caravan's owner is Edum, a Shazzarian horse trader. He is heading to Dhakos with a mixed herd of riding and working horses, and two wagons of general trade goods. All of his men, six in total, are proficient fighters. The teamsters (Edum and his second-in-charge, Tallain) will be wearing sea leather armour and armed with broadswords, those on horse are similarly accoutred with the addition of hunting bows.

## To Dhakos

Ask the adventurers how they are spending their last hours in Aflitain. Assume they are equipped with appropriate travel gear, bedrolls and the like.

The next morning, they meet up with Edum and his crew and head north. Most merchants use the road north rather than sailing from Aflitain's port – navigating the Serpent's Teeth is a rather tricky and treacherous exercise, irrespective of the season. Edum provides shelter and meals as recompense for whatever aid, if any, maybe requested of them along the journey. He does not expect much trouble; the road is well travelled and patrolled for approximately 20 miles from both cities. The road meanders along the landward side



GAMEMASTER'S MAP OF DHAKOS—CITY OF SPIRES

of coastal hills. Occasionally, glimpses of ocean can be seen through gaps in the hills. The trip usually takes five days in good weather.

On day three, call for a Group Luck roll ( $POW \times 5$ ), i.e. the player whose character has the lowest POW. On a success, the trip is uneventful and the group reaches Dhakos late afternoon of the fifth day. On a failure have the character roll 1D3.

### D3 Result

1. Bandits (6-10) attack the caravan.
2. An unnatural storm appears on the horizon moving swiftly in their direction. In less than an hour it engulfs them with pelting rain and hail. The wind wails like a banshee. Multicoloured lightning illuminates the clouds. If shelter is not sought, call for  $POW \times 3$  rolls. Failed rolls result in unconscious for 1d4 hours. Assume 3 of Edum's men also suffer unconsciousness. Roll 1D20, that number of horses perish if not sheltered in some manner.
3. Two horsemen approach, they appear weary and wary... Elric and Moonglum. Elric is seeking Theleb Kaarna in Aflitain and gives a vivid description of the man asking if any have seen him. Have the players make luck rolls, if more than one succeeds, they have seen such a man but his tastes far exceed their budgets, so they are unaware of where he based himself. If only one player succeeds, the man was staying at their inn.

## Arrival at Dhakos

The adventurers bid Edum farewell as they approach the city gates. It is late afternoon, early evening, the sun low on the western horizon. Guards stop them and ask

their business. They are also warned that the wearing of metal armour within the city, apart from on entry and departure, is strictly prohibited. Knives and medium sized melee weapons are allowed for personal protection. If asked, the guards will provide directions to The Princes Pleasure.

The Princes Pleasure is clean, if noisy and busy. The mood of the place is sombre. The barkeep, and owner, is a hulking brute of a man named Neyven, who bears the scars of many battles. Costs: Meals 6BR, Rooms (per night): 4 bed 40BR, 2 bed 30BR, 1 bed (double) 40BR. All rooms have wash stands and lockable chests. Ale: Mug 1BR, Jar 6BR, Wine: Goblet 3BR, Decanter 20BR. There are four serving wenches; Peregrine, Melina, Aisha and Raven. If the adventurers wish to haggle, ask for a party spokesperson and have them make a Bargain roll; award a Bonus die (or two, GM discretion) if the encounter is roleplayed well. Ask the adventurers their plans for the remainder of the evening. After depositing their gear in the rooms and removing their armour, if they choose to linger hoping to overhear talk of the troubles mentioned, have them make Listen rolls with a Penalty die (noisy environment). If they choose to actively engage other patrons in conversation, have them make Insight rolls. Reward them with a Bonus die if role played. With successes re-enforce the general tension, particularly between the three merchants and mention that guard patrols are now more frequent, particularly in the waterfront district at night. If the roles are failed the room is too noisy or patrons are wary of strangers and keep their own counsel.

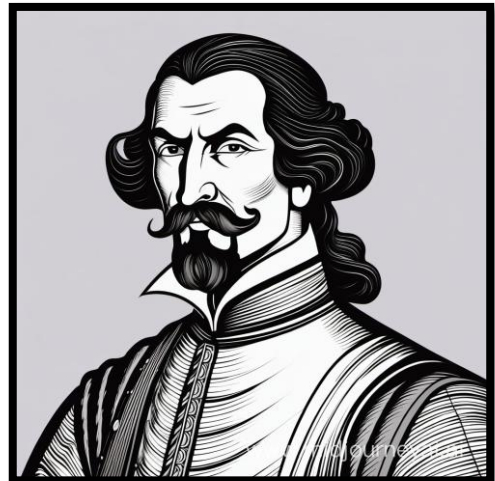
Ask the players their general plans for the next day or two. Ideally, they will want to begin their investigation by either talking to the three merchants or endeavouring to get information from the seedier parts of Dhakos, most notably some of the less palatable Inns of the waterfront district, and gathering as much information as possible. As they leave for the day have them make Search rolls. Make a note of those that succeed: they notice a number of street urchins; some are playing, while others are scanning the streets, perhaps looking for possible marks.

## The Merchants

Due to the hostilities the merchants' enclaves (walled villas within the merchant quarter of the city) are guarded and on high alert. Obtaining an interview will



**JERRAN ONELEG**



**PAWYLL STENOR**



**BORRIC DEVLIN**

be difficult requiring the adventurers to succeed on Fast Talk or Oratory against the guard(s) at the gate. Any threat of violence by the adventurers at any of the enclaves makes any further such tests very hard suffering 2 Penalty die.

- \* **Jerran Oneleg** is an embittered, grossly overweight, balding man of average height. He blames Pawyll Stenor for the loss of his leg, believing that the pirates that attacked his ship were in his employ. Due to his obesity and general lack of fitness he has trouble breathing and speaks through his nose, as if he has a constant cold.
- \* **Pawyll Stenor**, a tall, lean man of middle age is nothing but a thief masquerading as a merchant. Despite his protestations to the contrary, the pirates that cost Jerran his leg were freebooters in his employ. He is also responsible for the deaths and bankruptcy of several smaller merchants that dared to try and compete with him in the importation of scrimshaw and whale products from the north.
- \* **Borric Devlin** appears to be an honest and noble merchant, albeit an effeminate one. A child of the streets, a kindly merchant whose son died at sea took him in. His effeminate nature is belied by his ruthlessness. Once he was old enough, he arranged an accident for his adopted parents and took over the family business. He dresses in bright coloured silks of finest quality and speaks with a pronounced lisp.

All three merchants tell much the same story; their caravans and shipments have been attacked, the guards and crews murdered, and goods stolen. The only 'evidence' has been the odd piece of livery, usually scraps of cloth, bearing a rival's crest. None of them can offer any reason for the attacks (apart from material gain) swearing oaths to the effect that they have not been involved. There have been many heated arguments with accusations flying back and forth on the odd occasion the merchants have been in the same room, something, which of late, they studiously avoid.

A successful Insight roll reveals that the merchants are not lying therefore a 3rd party must be involved; a Special or Critical reveals that while they are being truthful about these attacks, there is something that

they are hiding – this is left to individual GM discretion. If the Perception Test is fumbled, the adventurers continue, but under the belief that this particular merchant is behind the attacks. It will come as a shock when they learn he is innocent.

As the adventurers finish with each merchant have those that succeeded with their Search rolls previously, roll Search again. Do not reveal the result of success' until after they leave the third merchant. They have noticed a particular urchin on more one than occasion. If they approach, the urchin runs away. Call for Resistance Rolls of DEX vs DEX against the urchin's DEX of 15 if they give chase. If all fail the urchin gets clear, otherwise the adventurer with the highest DEX that succeeds catches them. The urchin will act tough, squiggling and squirming, denying they have been following the party. If threatened with violence or offered a significant sum, they will admit to being employed by some 'nasty looking bloke in fancy armour with a big axe' to report the adventurers' movements in the city. Treated fairly, if pressed, they may give directions to Makor's warehouse. Treated badly, they will double-cross the adventurers, allowing Makor to set up an ambush.

## The Waterfont

The adventurers should now be seeking information from the seedier inns and business' in the waterfront district; striking up conversations with patrons and staff and greasing the palms of likely informants. Whenever they are questioning someone directly regarding the attacks have them make an unopposed Insight test. If they have offered a reasonable bribe, they gain a Bonus die to the roll. On a success, roll (or pick) from the following table for rumours heard. On a failed roll the adventurers gain no useful information. If the Insight roll is failed twice in a row or is fumbled, they have been talking with one of Makor's hirelings who leads them into an ambush. At some point they should receive item 5 regardless of their success or failure as it leads to the climactic encounter.

### D6 Result

1. A man named Makor has been hiring sell-swords and other miscreants.
2. Jerran Oneleg's business has been suffering of late, well before the current hostilities

began. He blames Pawyll Stenor's dubious business practices.

3. Borric Devlan has been trading with Dharijor and Pan Tang.
4. Makor is a worshipper of Chardros, the Chaos Lord of Death
5. Makor purchased an old warehouse at the far end of the waterfront.
6. Roll again.

## Confrontation

Makor is currently using a warehouse in an older part of the waterfront as his base of operations. The warehouse is approximately 18 metres long, 12 metres wide and 6 metres high with an attached office/dwelling of six metres long, seven metres wide and three metres high. The walls are timber and there are six windows on the outer walls of the office. The main warehouse section has large windows around the top half of the building. All the windows are currently boarded shut.

### Main Warehouse (Area 1)

This is the primary warehousing area; stacks of old crates, barrels and hay bales lie strewn about providing cover for ranged attackers. A mezzanine area that is 3 metres high covers the southern end. The ground floor of the mezzanine is part stable and part barracks for Makor's hirelings. There are three to five sell-swords here, the men are little more than thugs and thieves and have no stomach for a real fight. As soon as any have suffered five or more points of damage they surrender or attempt to flee. There is little of value in this room apart from the equipment of the thugs and a few dozen silver pieces. The sounds of combat however, alert the cultists in the barracks, Area 1.

### Office/Barracks (Area 2)

What was an office is now being used as a barracks for the cultists. There are five men here, Makor and four die-hard cultists who have no fear of death and in fact, welcome its cold embrace, as such they fight to the death. Makor is somewhat more cunning and if the battle is going badly, will retreat to the mezzanine. Once at the top of the stairs he will cast Make Fast to fuse the door and wall to slow down pursuers.

GAMEMASTER'S MAP OF MAKOR'S WAREHOUSE



## **Makor's Private Chambers (Area 3)**

Located on the upper mezzanine Makor retreats here. If he is able to reach his room, he bars the door and uses a Rune of Relocation to take him back to his home in Dharijor. If unable to reach his room and overwhelmed, he surrenders rather than fighting to the death, hoping to be able to affect an escape at some point. After all, Chardros is a hungry God and there are many souls yet to harvest.

Makor is a scrupulous record keeper and in a secret compartment of his dresser, Search roll with a Penalty die to locate, is a journal listing payments to mercenaries, privateers and, if the GM wishes, bribes to Jharkorian officials, particularly contacts in the Harbourmasters Office and the City Guard. There is also 1D100 x 10 Bronzes worth of gemstones and 1D20 x 10 Bronzes.

## **Conclusion**

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The journal in Makor's dresser provides ample evidence of his plots and schemes exonerating all three merchants, though relationships between the three are still tense. These relationships and the bribes to the officials can be explored further by enterprising GM's wishing to have subsequent adventures in Dhakos but lie outside the scope of this scenario. Makor can make an excellent recurring villain; if he escapes (which he should!), he will undoubtedly be looking for ways to send the adventurers souls to his lord and master Chardros. If killed by the adventurers, Makor is reincarnated by Chardros and he becomes an arch enemy, though his identity may not be discovered for some time as he will be wary of the adventurers and act through agents rather than risk another direct confrontation.

## Statistics & Profiles

### BANDITS

Use the **Nomadic Raider** statistics (see **Elric!** page 112)

#### JERRAN ONELEG

STR 13, CON 12, SIZ 16, INT 14,  
POW 13, DEX 10, APP 16

HIT POINTS: 12

ARMOUR: NONE    DAMAGE BONUS: 1D4

WEAPON	SKILL	DAMAGE
Quarterstaff (Crutch)	65%	1D4+2+DB

SKILLS: Bargain 70%, Conceal Object 35%, Evaluate 60%, Fast Talk 35%, Insight 45%, Scribe 40%

#### PAWYLL STENOR

STR 11, CON 10, SIZ 13, INT 14,  
POW 13, DEX 14, APP 12

HIT POINTS: 12

ARMOUR: NONE    DAMAGE BONUS: 1D4

WEAPON	SKILL	DAMAGE
Rapier	70%	1D6+1+DB
Dagger (Parrying)	64%	1D4+2+DB

SKILLS: Bargain 70%, Conceal Object 35%, Evaluate 60%, Fast Talk 35%, Insight 45%, Scribe 40%

#### BORRIC DEVLIN

Use the **Capable Noble** statistics (see **Elric!** page 112)

#### MAKOR TANYEN

##### AGENT OF CHAOS

STR 12, CON 13, SIZ 13, INT 14,  
POW 16, DEX 14, APP 10

HIT POINTS: 13

ARMOUR: 1D8+1 (HELM ON), HALF PLATE

DAMAGE BONUS: 1D4

WEAPON	SKILL	DAMAGE
Battle Axe	70%	1D8+2+DB
Full Shield	55%	kb+1D4+db
Dagger (Parrying)	64%	1D4+2+DB

SKILLS: Bargain 60%, Disguise 60%, Hide 50%, Insight 45%, Natural World 40%, Oratory 50%, Potions 30%, Scribe 25%, Young Kingdoms 40%

SPELLS: Brazier of Power (4), Chaos Warp (4), Hell's Armour (4), Hell's Razor (4), Make Fast (1), Summon Demon (1), Summon Elemental (1), Soul of Chardros (1-3)

RUNE: **Rune of Relocation.** This rune is cast in pairs. The first must be inscribed on a solid surface, usually a floor or archway of some description, and invested with at least 1 Magic Point to activate. Once its partner rune is inscribed or spoken, the object or Sorcerer is immediately relocated to the original rune. The second casting costs 1 MP for every three points of SIZ to be relocated. Once the relocation is complete both runes dissipate. If used on an unwilling participant the Sorcerer must succeed on a POW:POW roll on the resistance table. The effect is immediate and the range unlimited within the same plane or world. It takes one round per Magic Point invested to cast or inscribe the second rune.

### CULTISTS

STR 14, CON 15, SIZ 13, INT 09,  
POW 09, DEX 10, APP 08

HIT POINTS: 15

ARMOUR: 1D8+1 (HELM ON), HALF PLATE.

DAMAGE BONUS: 1D4

WEAPON	SKILL	DAMAGE
Battle Axe	55%	1D8+2+DB
Full Shield	50%	kb+1D4+db

SKILLS: Dodge 40%, Insight 35%, Listen 35%, Ride 40%, Search 30%

### THUGS

STR 09, CON 10, SIZ 09, INT 12,  
POW 12, DEX 13, APP 10

HIT POINTS: 10

ARMOUR: NONE    DAMAGE BONUS: NONE

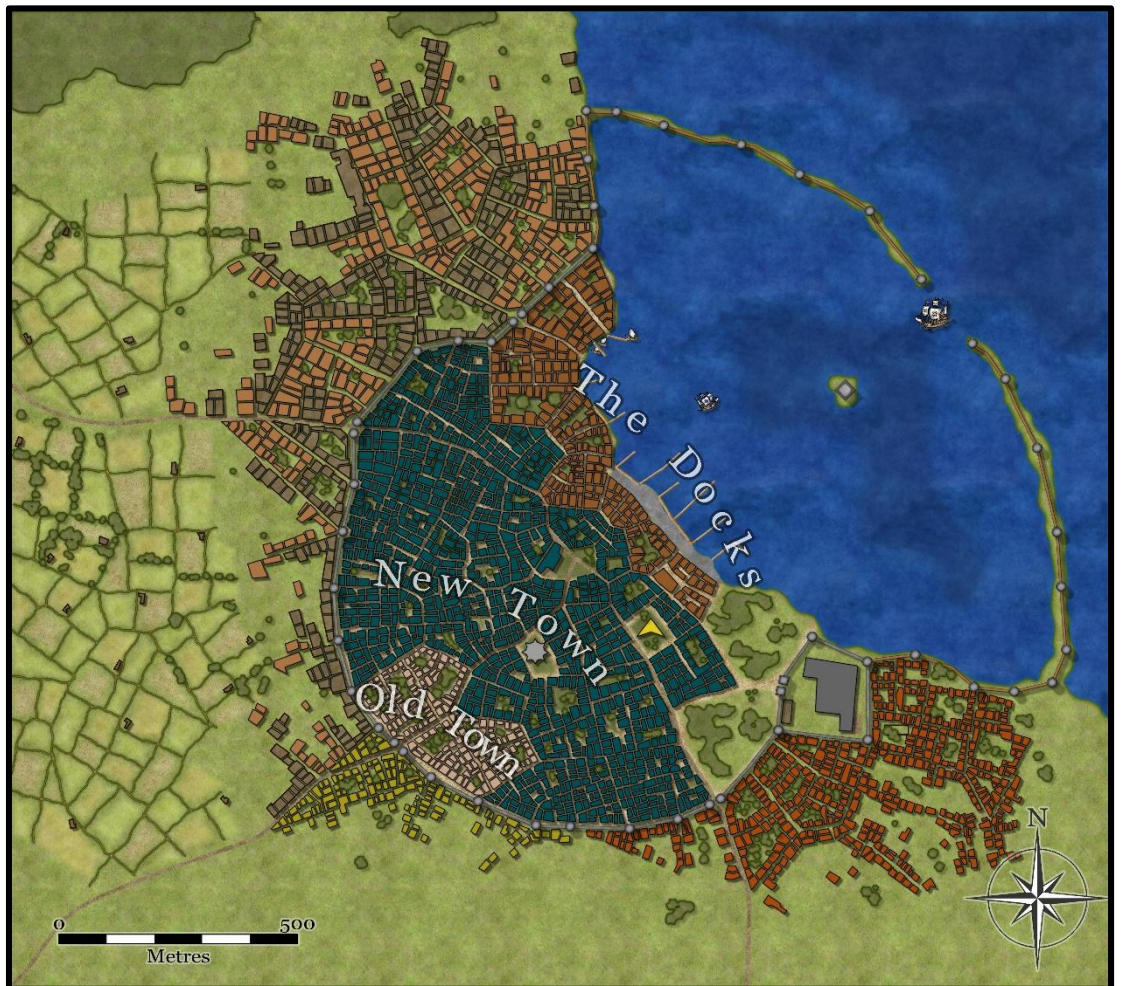
WEAPON	SKILL	DAMAGE
Thieves Bludgeon	55%	1D8+DB
Dagger	50%	1D4+2+DB

SKILLS: Brawl 60% 1D3, Dodge 45%, Hide 55%, Move Quietly 60%, Pick Lock 50%, Search 65%

## Players Maps



PLAYERS' MAP OF  
MAKOR'S WAREHOUSE



PLAYERS' MAP OF  
DHAKOS - CITY OF SPIRES