



Doom Song

SWORD AND SPADE

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Doomsong: A Roleplay Macabre

This adventure is written for members of the Gravediggers' Guild, one of Painyme's oldest institutions (though any guild passing through the area could conceivably stumble across this mystery). When they begin, the gravediggers have received a request for their services: the Bonvalet family suffered a recent loss and require a burial to be performed.

Start Your Adventure

If you are running this story directly after completing character creation in the *Doomsong* corebook, each gravedigger receives a guild badge and a spade with a six-foot long handle. Additionally, the party have the following gear and must decide who is carrying each item. They should record this under 'Stowed Gear' or 'Ready Gear' on their character sheets.

STARTING GEAR. A lantern, a prayerbook, a bundle of copper keys, a single silver key, a spyglass, a sturdy walking stick, writing materials. The party also have a lean coinpurse in their possession, which they received as payment for their last burial.

STARTING LOCATION. The story begins with the party arriving in the Market Square (p. 8).

A Primer on the Gravediggers' Guild

The gates of Heall have been closed and the dead rise seven days after a body dies. As willed by the Ecclesiarch Most High, the duties of the Gravediggers' Guild are two-fold: bury any human corpse they encounter and dispatch the unquiet dead, by any means necessary.

THE UNQUIET DEAD. Upon death, souls travel to the gates of Death's Heall. The First Gate has been closed against them, so they are forced to return to the world as unquiet dead. Only burial rites involving keys of various metals have any effect on this process.

COPPER KEYS. If buried with a corpse, the returning soul will be bound inside the key.

SILVER KEYS. If offered to the unquiet dead, they must take it and obey a single command.

GOLD KEYS. If buried nearby when a member of the unquiet dead is defeated in combat, the soul is utterly destroyed. It will never return.

LEAD KEYS. All used up. After any type of key exerts power over the unquiet dead, it turns to lead and is rendered useless.





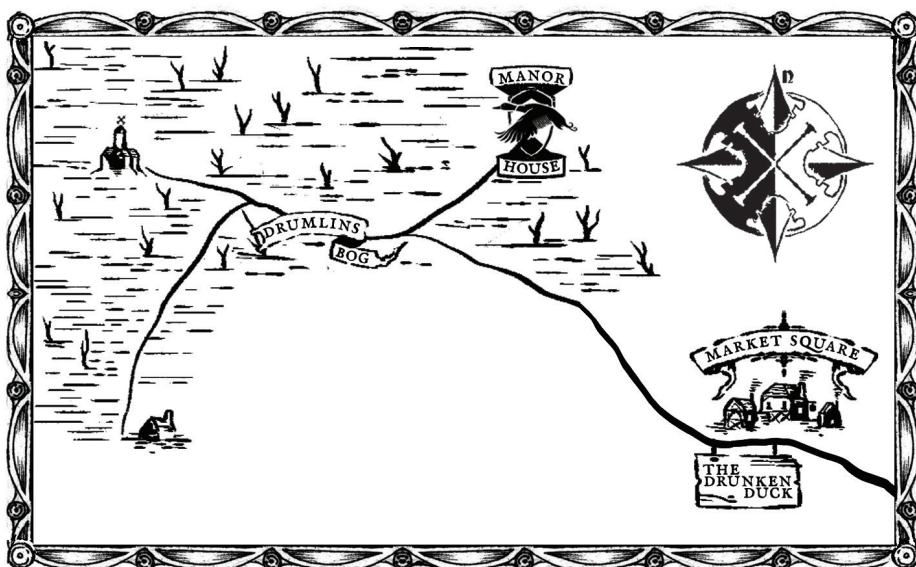
Sword & Spade

The daring and foolhardy whisper that absolute power corrupts, absolutely. If true, partial power is even more inimical to the human soul; having tasted the sweetness that rightly belongs to another, one hungers for it again and again, in ever greater measures.



Strackon-by-Wick

Petty Barony



Petty baronies are untidy, sprawling things. Titleship changes hands often, passing from one landed family to another as heirs marry, die or uncover newly discovered documents. Strackon-by-Wick is located to the south of Phlegethon and Lethe (DS:200-201).

MARKET SQUARE 8

Market stalls have been placed near the local tavern. Vendors ply their wares and a secret lurks in the back of a peddler's wagon.

THE DRUNKEN DUCK 10

At the local tavern, gossip flows freely and some participate in shows of strength.

DRUMLINS BOG..... 12

A vast marsh lies to the east of town. Built on its outskirts are a stately family home and a tiny church overlooking a graveyard.

MANOR HOUSE..... 14

A coffin rests on a plinth in the courtyard of the Bonvalet family home. The many servants and occupants of this dwelling whisper what they know of Alaric's death.



The Story So Far

GM Only

Alaric and Cassian Bonvalet are brothers who grew up on the outskirts of Strackon-by-Wick. Alaric, the elder son and heir to his father's title, was murdered one week ago by his younger brother, Cassian, who is an undiscovered wycce of Hope (DS:176). Alaric was slain with his own sword. Cassian and his bodyguards killed Alaric and his entourage as they all returned from a hunting trip, then buried him in Drumlins Bog. The bodies of Alaric's entourage roam Drumlins Bog (P. 12) as re-animated husks of Hope (P. 17).

A peddler named Jasper stopped briefly on his way to Strackon-by-Wick. While resting, he spotted the hilt of Alaric's sword protruding from the bog. He dug it up, saw both the value of the sword and that it was engraved with the crest of the Bonvalet family. Rather than asking any questions, he squirrelled it away and continued. He will try to sell it to the gravediggers, who are new to the area, while also keeping it hidden from locals.

The Bonvalet family has requested the services of the nearest Gravediggers' Guildhall. Your players are here to perform a burial for Alaric Bonvalet. They have been told the coffin will be empty, as the corpse could not be retrieved from "the hunting trip".

Below are some pieces of information that your PCs may possess at the start of the game.

Common Knowledge

In the grand scheme of things, Strackon-by-Wick is unimportant. Still, characters may have picked up a snippet or two.

BONVALET. The titles for this demesne are currently held by the Baron and Baroness Bonvalet. Their sigil is a mallard in flight.

MERGING. Strackon-by-Wick used to be two small towns: the fishing village of Strackon and its smaller neighbour, Wick. They were merged when Baron Willem Bonvalet married Baroness Valery Mobec.

DANGERS. The borderkingdoms known as Phlegethon and Lethe lie a few days' travel to the north. Creatures from the swamps sometimes make their way south into this part of the world.

Uncommon Knowledge

Characters who have travelled through the area very recently or who love to gossip in taverns may have gleaned rarer knowledge.

OCCULT. Local huntsmen insist there's foul business afoot in the area; wild animals have been seen consorting with humanfolk.

HAUNTED BOG. The superstitious are loath to go near Drumlins Bog. Strange lights are often spotted dancing and weaving over the area. Others whisper of husks roaming the area at night.

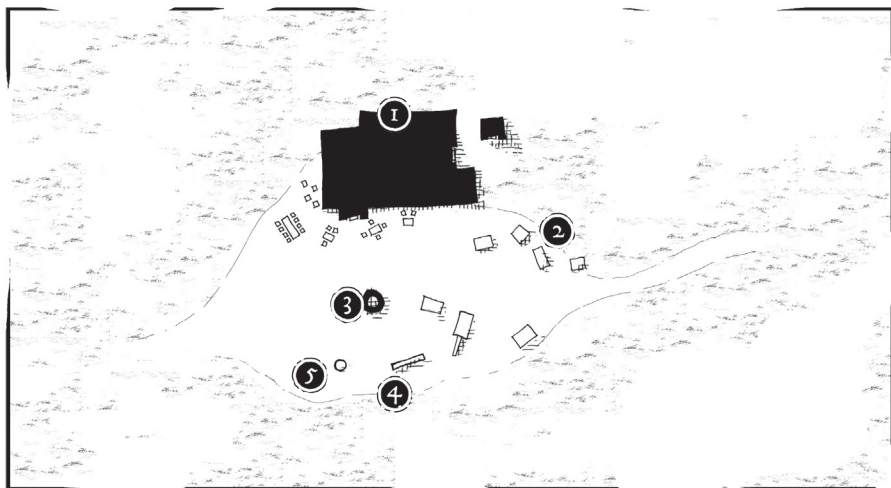
RUFFIANS. The villagers of Strackon-by-Wick do not like Cassian's bodyguards. All are violent and unmannered; the tavernkeep of the Drunken Duck, Colin, has heard one of them preaching the virtues of Hope.





Market Square

The village lies just beyond the river, its thatch roofs, dirt paths and wattle fences unfolding beneath a serene sky. As you approach, the wind carries the tell-tale sounds of merchants and musicians. Your nose catches the scent of roasting meats. At the centre of town, market day is in full swing.



When the characters arrive at this location, it is midday and MARKET DAY is in full flow. Allow the PCs some time to explore the market and gather directions to their goal, but shortly afterwards, a SEFT will form near the cart of the PASSING PEDDLER.

- ① **THE DRUNKEN DUCK.** The local tavern has placed some tables and chairs outside. Serving staff whisk in and out, bringing food and drinks. Villagers are holding an arm-wrestling match; see page 10.
- ② **VENDORS.** The players can find any type of wares here, at the GM's discretion. Specific vendors include a PHLEGETHARY keeping a close eye on her flasks and vials; a passionate ASSARTUM PREACHER holding forth about the dangers of the Traitor Gods; a RENOWNED MINSTREL who has gathered a clapping, cheering crowd around him; and a SHIFTY-LOOKING PEDDLER selling wares from the back of an unhitched cart.
- ③ **OLD FOUNTAIN.** Water cascades into a simple, circular stone trough. A group of children have gathered; they are bullying a small bucktoothed girl.
- ④ **HITCHING POST.** Several beasts of burden are tied up here, including two oxen, a horse and the donkey that belongs to the SHIFTY-LOOKING PEDDLER.
- ⑤ **TOWN WELL.** Three guards from the manor house (p. 14) sit around the well, muttering sullenly. They are complaining about Cassian Bonvalet's bodyguards (p. 18). 'It would be just like them to do something disrespectful to the coffin,' one snarls. 'A bad lot, them.'

Market Day

Stalls have been erected, bunting has been strung, tables have been pulled outside for open-air drinking and arm-wrestling. Children rush about, snatching honeycakes and glazed fruits while their parents go about the business of buying and selling.

PHLEGETHARY. The borderkingdom of Phlegethon is renowned for its fire-alchemists. Selma's hair is shorn close to her scalp; her hands and arms are thick with burn scars. She sits behind a table of padded cases, their tops thrown open to reveal glass vials chained in place to prevent theft and accidental breakages. For a lean coinpurse, the characters can purchase 3 flasks of Phlegethene fire (DS:128; DS:144). She will tell war stories for free.

ASSARTUM PREACHER. A priest named from the capital city of Assartum is a welcome sight indeed. In particular, Sister Beneline denounces the Traitor God called Hope (DS:159), who paves the way to damnation with full bellies and successful businesses. For a lean coinpurse, she will bless the gravediggers' tools. Character present during the blessing gain the Bolstered condition; this has no other in-game effect.

RENOWNED MINSTREL. Even the most sheltered member of the Gravediggers' Guild has heard of Benedict Vane. It's said his voice rivals that of the Ecclesiarch's sacred choirs and that his lute made one of the Justiciars (DS:209) shed a tear. For a lean coinpurse, the characters can commission him to compose a song of their doings in Strackon-by-Wick. If the characters are rude about Cassian Bonvalet, the song will be farcical and insulting.

SHIFTY-LOOKING PEDDLER. A scruffy man named Jasper is selling items he has scavenged, including a pair of worn boots, large tallow candles and a leather satchel. He has an ORNATE SWORD hidden in his cart. He will try to sell this to the gravediggers while keeping it hidden from local villagers. If Cassian (P. 19) or any of his bodyguards (P. 18) catch sight of this item, they will arrest Jasper and confiscate the sword as stolen property.

Seft

This type of unquiet dead resembles an oily patch of viscous cloud that slides through the air in jerky motions. This particular seft (P. 16) is bound to the ORNATE SWORD hidden in Jasper's cart. It will coalesce out of thin air and pass through the NPC that the players most liked. The NPC dies instantly; the folk gathered at the market scream and scatter.

ALARIC BONVALET. This seft belongs to the firstborn son of Baron and Baroness Bonvalet. He was murdered 7 days ago; his corpse was hastily buried in Drumlins Bog (P. 12).

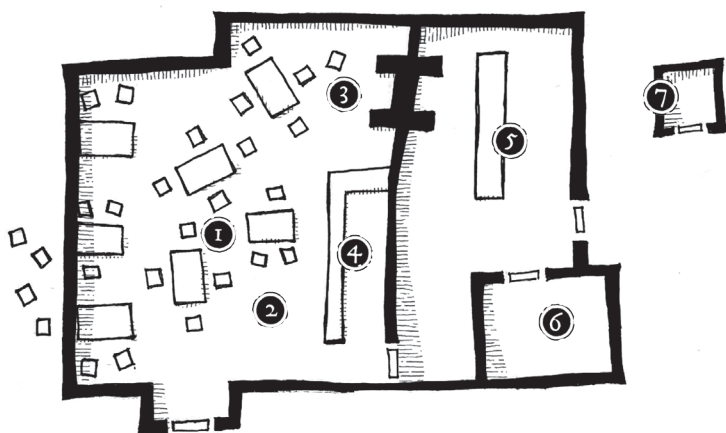
ORNATE SWORD. This morning, Jasper found an exquisite sword and scabbard half-buried near the manor house (P. 14). Its hilt bears the sigil of House Bonvalet (P. 6).





he Drunken Duck

The ceiling of the single-storey tavern is low, creating a dark and comfortable atmosphere. The windows have been thrown wide to catch the breeze. In the kitchen, pots clatter and tankards are sloshed clean in a wash barrel. Staff rush about, carrying food and drink out to their customers.



At the GM's discretion, CASSIAN's BODYGUARDS may or may not be present at this location, either during Market Day or afterwards.

- ① **TABLES AND CHAIRS.** The locals have gathered for an ARM-WRESTLING match. The reigning champion, LETICIA, is lounging amidst the boisterous chatter.
- ② **MAIN AREA.** The floor has worn smooth under generations of feet. It is easy to glean DRUNKEN GOSSIP from villagers.
- ③ **FIREPLACE.** The fire burns brightly despite the day's heat; other villagers avoid this part of the tavern due to the warmth. If the GM has decided to use QUINN, he sits near the hearth, sipping from a tankard and looking upset. A glorious stag's head is mounted over the hearth in the main area. Its fur is sleek and its antlers have 20 points.
- ④ **BAR.** Staffed at all times by Colin, the tavernkeep. He takes orders, directs food from the kitchens and pours drinks. If the GM has decided to use ALDOUS, he is standing here, arguing with Colin.
- ⑤ **KITCHEN.** A brow-beaten cook named Hubert gives orders to his assistants. Occasionally he orders one to fetch wood from the woodshed. This room contains sharp knives and heavy pans.
- ⑥ **STORE ROOM.** Only Hubert is allowed in this room. Contains meats, cheeses, root vegetables and casks of alcohol.
- ⑦ **WOODSHED.** Contains dozens of split logs and a sturdy wood axe.



Cassian's Bodyguards

The GM can lay the foundations for later confrontation by having one, two or all three of Cassian's bodyguards present during Market Day. If you're uncertain about running NPCs, only use Leticia. If you feel more confident, add Aldous and/or Quinn.

LETICIA. The reigning ARM-WRESTLING champion. The villagers are unable to defeat her. She has the Burly trait; it is a difficulty 7 check to defeat her (see the advice below about 'Push, Pull or Lift'). Leticia is haughty and dismissive of those weaker than herself.

ALDOUS. Arguing with the tavernkeep, Colin, about his tab. He will become friendly if the gravediggers buy him drinks or use a lean coinpurse to pay off his tab. If they get him drunk, he will boast about his prowess with a dagger and revel in Cassian's improved status.

QUINN. Seated at the fireplace, nursing a drink and scowling at a stuffed stag's head mounted over the hearth. He resents those who hunt for deer, as they are "the noblest of creatures." If the party pay him, he will act as their guide (unless Cassian orders otherwise).

Arm-Wrestling

Villagers gather to watch the strongest and most confident participate in a show of strength. Any gravediggers who join in are greeted by shouts of encouragement by the crowd. To resolve bouts of arm-wrestling with NPCs, consider using the 'Push, Pull or Lift' effect table from page 293 of the *Doomsong* corebook.

Drunken Gossip

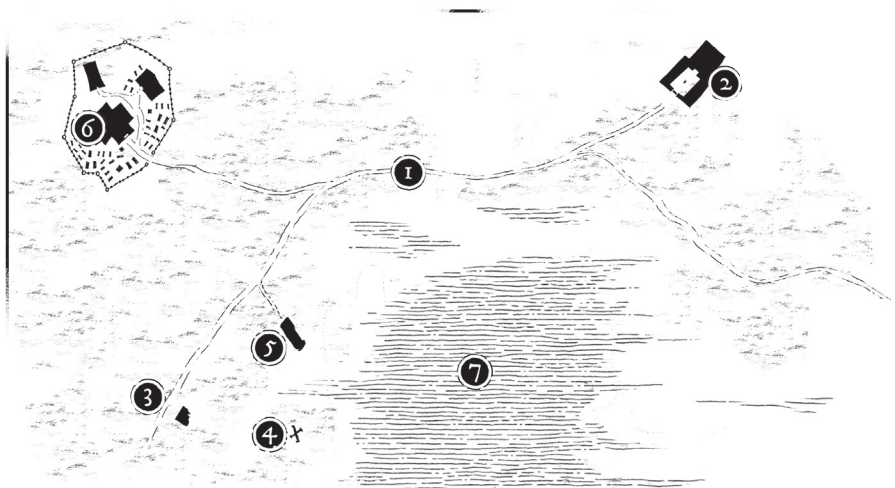
Roll on the table below for conversational tidbits.

1	PAGE BOYS. A pair of youths employed at the manor house (p. 14) are crouched over a game of knucklebones. The dark-haired youth confides in a low voice that one of CASSIAN'S BODYGUARDS threatened him. 'Said he'd let some air into me, just like he did the little lordling. He said it just like that! What did he mean, d'you think?'
2	GOODWIFE COOPER. A woman who blinks a lot is telling her friend, Goodwife Hatt, what she overheard while cleaning the church two weeks ago. Father Bile was admonishing Cassian Bonvalet for his slackening faith. 'And now his brother's dead, poor lamb,' she says. 'May he find comfort in the light of the Divine Corpse.'
3	PEATCUTTERS. Villagers are swapping stories of the horrors they've seen in Drumlins Bog. A tall red-headed man named John speaks slowly and deliberately. Only two nights ago, he watched a group of men rise from the marshy waters, howl at the moon, then set off toward the manor house. 'Dead'uns, I'm sure of it,' he says.
4	VAGRANT. Old Tom Timbertuck has been given a pint of ale in exchange for helping a pair of fishers haul their catch to market. He tells a wild tale of spotting a giant stag in the marsh. 'There were a lad there with it. The boy knelt before the creature, swore fealty to it. I didn't dare move for fear.' The fishers mock him jovially.
5	TOWN CRIER. The local town crier, Benjamin, is taking a break from his duties. He is scowling at those partaking in the ARM-WRESTLING competition. 'It isn't right,' he grumbles. 'A young lad is due to be buried and those upstarts are treating the day like a festival. LETICIA should know better. No respect for the dead...'
6	PASSING REEVE. A shire reeve named Hyacinth Parnel has stopped for a meal. She patrols four different regions. If asked, she knows Alaric Bonvalet died in a hunting accident but not where it happened. 'Odd,' she will reflect. 'I know the areas those boys like to hunt. No accidents or deaths reported lately, though.'



Drumlins Bog

To the west of Strackon-by-Wick, the land is eternally spongy and damp. A lonely road wends its way through the area, passing a stately manor house and a small village church. Out in the bog, a small shack and storehouse lie abandoned, half-sunk into the marshy ground.



When the party approach this area, roll to see what DANGERS lurk nearby.

- ① **WELL-WORN ROAD.** Curves east toward the Strackon-by-Wick market (p. 8).
- ② **MANOR HOUSE.** A tiled roof and clean walls gleam in the sun. The large gates are open and guarded during the day but locked and silent at night. To enter the manor, turn to page 14.
- ③ **SUMBERGED HUT.** Long ago, someone tried to start a life here. The seasonal flooding of the river put an end to that; only the upper part of the cottage remains to mark this failure.
- ④ **HASTY GRAVE.** A portion of the bog has been disturbed several times: first with a shovel, then with paws and claws. If the party dig here, they will find the CORPSE OF ALARIC BONVALET.
- ⑤ **OUTBUILDING.** Structure supported by waterlogged beams. It has no walls and contains large stores of chopped wood. Scattered within these stacked rows are a few long-abandoned toys. Two old training arrows are stuck fast in a beam. Beneath these arrows, the letters "AB + CB" are scored deeply into the wood.
- ⑥ **LOCAL CHURCH.** Well-kept building, kept in good working order by a priest named FATHER BILE. It is surrounded by a graveyard and an iron fence. Two family crypts are located on-site; the older bears the family name 'MOBEC' while the newer is inscribed 'BONVALET'.
- ⑦ **UNSTABLE GROUND.** If characters explore here, they will begin sinking slowly and inexorably into the soggy ground.

Dangers

1-2	WISPS. A trio of glimmering orbs dance and bob over the surface of Drumlins Bog. These wisps (DS:229) will approach the party as they explore the area. If night falls or the party begin digging up the CORPSE OF ALARIC BONVALET , the wisps will draw close and try to lure characters deeper into the marsh.
3-4	HUSKS. Six figures hove into view from the south. From a distance, these appear human. Up close, it becomes apparent they are husks of Hope (p. 17). This form of the unquiet dead retains speech and memories; however, they wish only to convert others to the worship of their Traitor God, Hope (DS:240).
5-6	MUIRSLANG. An enormous fleshy predator has camouflaged itself in the bog. Only the eyes of the muirslang (DS:251) are visible. It will attempt to crush the first party member who draws close. If the party kill this beast and bring proof back to Strackon-by-Wick, the village will show their gratitude with a lean coinpurse.

Corpse of Alaric Bonvalet

The grave contains the corpse of a young man: pale, staring and bloated with bogwater. It is a week old. Over the past seven days, any number of scavengers have dug up the hasty burial and torn at its flesh.

CAUSE OF DEATH. The corpse has been bitten and partially consumed. Characters with the Barber Surgeon trait can determine the young man was killed by a collection of stabs and slashes to his upper torso. These wounds were very probably made by a sword.

IDENTIFICATION. The corpse wears a slashed jerkin embroidered with the same insignia that appears on the hilt of the ornate sword. Local villagers, such as **FATHER BILE** or Colin the tavernkeep (p. 10), can identify the body as that of Alaric Bonvalet.

Father Bile

Devout member of the Church of the Divine Corpse. Father Bile is an old man who has carried out his duties in Strackon-by-Wick for thirty years. He baptised both Bonvalet boys and was heartbroken to hear of Alaric's death. He will cooperate fully with the gravediggers to organise the burial ceremony. While discussing the funeral, he will repeatedly express dismay that such a young man will be the first Bonvalet entombed in the family crypt.

CONCERNS. Lately, Father Bile has been concerned that Cassian Bonvalet's faith is wavering. The boy has missed chapel more and more often, and he seems resentful during prayers.

UNUSUAL EVENT. A week ago, Father Bile saw lights converging near the submerged hut in the bog. He heard screams, though they could have been the cries of a fox.

STRANGE SIGHTINGS. At night, Father Bile has seen a great number of wisps (DS:229) darting over Drumlins Bog. He fears this increase means heresy is afoot in Strackon-by-Wick.

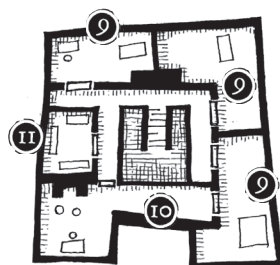
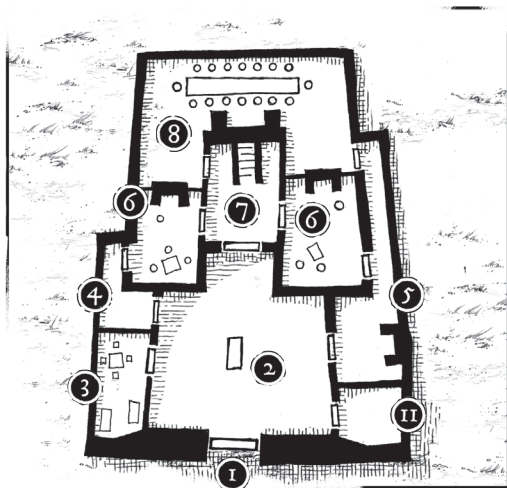
COMBAT. If attacked, Father Bile will cower and clutch his Amulet of the Crossroads. He has the following traits: Righteous, Coward and Meticulous. He will not defend himself.





Manor House

Red clay tiles adorn a large, well-fortified manor house. The gatehouse gives way to a central courtyard, in the centre of which rests a coffin heaped with fresh flowers. Household staff, dressed in black and speaking no louder than a whisper, bow solemnly whenever they pass near this display.



Second Floor

Note that everyone encountered at this location is wearing black mourning clothes. They will become uncomfortable, then hostile, if the party speak or laugh too loudly.

When the gravediggers enter rooms of the manor house, roll to see what they **OVERHEAR**.

- ❶ **GATEHOUSE.** Stone entrance topped by the sigil of House Bonvalet. Guards will allow entry at sight of a gravedigger's badge. If the party leave, turn to page 12.
- ❷ **COURTYARD.** A coffin rests in the centre. Alaric's corpse is not inside; instead, it is piled high with bouquets. A dead, bloody duck lies concealed under the flowers.
- ❸ **GUARD QUARTERS.** Bunks for shift rotations; table and ongoing cardgame.
- ❹ **LAUNDRY.** Washtubs and boiling water; stores of lye, paddles and washboards.
- ❺ **KITCHENS.** Food is always being prepared here; only empty in the dead of night.
- ❻ **PARLOURS.** Each contains a fireplace and many comfortable places to sit. One is used for after-dinner entertainment; the other for quiet, private conversations.
- ❼ **ENTRANCE HALL.** Grand staircase.
- ❽ **FEASTING HALL.** Long table with many place settings. Huge fireplace.
- ❾ **BEDROOM.** One for each Bonvalet family member. Alaric's is shrouded in black.
- ❿ **BONVALET SOLAR.** A place for business conversations and family affairs.
- ⓫ **PANTRY/BUTTERY.** Stores of dried goods, flasks of wine, boxes of fine wax candles.

House Bonvalet, in Mourning

There are three living members of the Bonvalet family.

BARON AND BARONESS BONVALET. Devastated by the loss of their eldest son. If they learn that Alaric's corpse was found in Drumlins Bog, they will voice serious doubts about the story told to them by their surviving son, Cassian (P. 19).

CASSIAN BONVALET. Orchestrated his brother's murder; elated that he will inherit. If Alaric's corpse or sword is retrieved by the gravediggers, he will try to silence them.

Overhear

1	GUARDS. A group of guards have gathered in the otherwise-empty room. They are sharing a tot of whiskey from a flask. The youngest one asks if anyone else has seen a group of undead (husks of Hope, P. 17) wandering out in Drumlins Bog at night. The group looks uncomfortable and denies seeing anything strange.
2	SERVING STAFF. Three members of household staff are delivering a meal. The shortest one mutters to his fellows that Cassian's bodyguards have been intolerable of late. 'Swanning about like they own the place, threatening folk down in the Drunken Duck. I wish they'd been carried off by a bautenlobbe, not Alaric's lot.'
3	CHAMBERMAIDS. A pair of women — one who limps and the other who scowls — huddle in the corner of the room. The one who limps is telling her companion that Cassian has long desired to inherit in his brother's place. The one who scowls remarks, 'That explains why he's been grinning so much to himself this past week.'
4	LAUNDRY STAFF. Two men and a woman, arms reddened from hot water, have paused while delivering baskets of fresh linen. In whispers, they discuss the blood that stained the clothes of Cassian and his bodyguards when they returned from hunting. 'It was fresh, I swear it!' one man mutters. 'Too fresh to have happened when he said...'
5	BARON BONVALET. Willem Bonvalet is speaking to his steward about succession. The steward — a woman named Mervina — doubts there will be any trouble adjusting writs of inheritance. 'After all, his bodyguards have all sworn the truth of Cassian's statement... a hunting accident. Completely unforeseen. Most unfortunate.'
6	BARONESS BONVALET. Valery Bonvalet is writing a letter to her mother. She speaks of the horror she feels at burying her oldest child, and the distance she has felt growing between her and Cassian. 'Do you remember how they used to play together in the old groundskeeper's hut? Oh, the worry that plagued my heart then. I dreaded losing them both to the bog. It has taken one, but I fear heresy will have the other.'

Cassian Bonvalet

If his plot is revealed, Cassian (P. 19) will seek revenge against the gravediggers. Consider staging a confrontation in the feasting hall, the church (P. 12) or the tavern (P. 10).

COMBAT. Cassian has three loyal bodyguards (P. 18) who will aid him no matter what.

FAMILIAR. Cassian has the Familiar ability (DS:167) at Level 3. His familiar — a large albino bear — is splayed across his chest as a white tattoo. Cassian will only unleash him as a last resort, because revealing his familiar will expose him as a wycce and heretic.

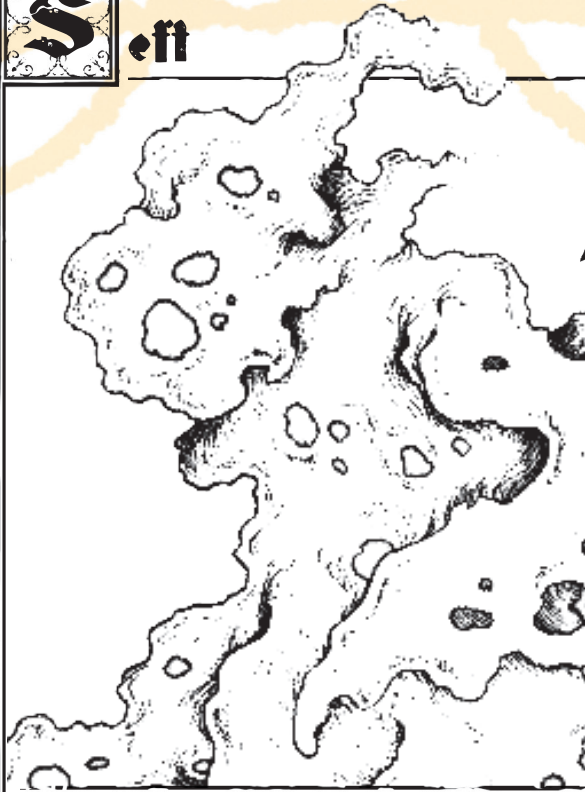
WYCCE. Some time ago, the Dread Hope (DS:240) heard Cassian's desperate longing and offered him the chance to become a wycce. Cassian has the Wish ability (DS:176) at Level 1. As a last resort, he will offer the gravediggers a single wish in exchange for his life.





Seft

Alaric Bonvalet



Miasmic, cloudy, oily, filmy, mournful, confused

In life, Alaric Bonvalet was entitled, snobby and full to bursting with boring hunting stories. In death, his seft hovers, formless and seething, four feet off the ground.

FORMLESS. This seft is not strong enough to form full, coherent sentences. Under most circumstances, it is too weak to retain a human shape (see below).

SWORD. Alaric's seft is bound to the ornate sword he was killed and buried alongside. If his brother, Cassian, tries to wield this weapon while the seft is present, Alaric will manifest solidly, full of outrage and indignation.

WANTS: To remember who he used to be.
HATES: Cassian Bonvalet (P. 19).

4

6

Seft

UNLIVING • INCORPOREAL

ETHEREAL. The seft can only interact physically with objects that existed while it was alive. It can only be harmed by weapons forged before the seft's death.

DEATH TOUCH. Touching the seft requires a character to resist [death, difficulty 5].

TETHERED. The seft can only travel a long distance (DS:92) away from the object it is bound to.

■ **DISTRACTED.** The seft repeats some incident from its former life. After completing this action, it immediately regains +3 footing.

■ **LOST IN TIME.** The seft passes through terrain that has been moved or constructed since its death, or interacts with an object or structure that has been destroyed since its death.

■ **WAIL.** A scream of shock and hatred reverberates through the air. Each living foe must resist [fear, difficulty 6].

■ **ANCIENT STRIKE.** If the seft has coalesced around the ornate sword, it solidifies enough to [attack, +4]. If the target is Cassian, this becomes focused.

■ **RECOGNITION.** The seft mistakes a nearby creature for somebody it knew in life, then reaches toward them. They must lose -2 footing or resist [death, difficulty 5].

■ **ETHEREAL ACTION.** The seft performs an open action on an object that existed while it was alive. For example, it might bar a door, pour a drink or brandish an object in fury.



Husks of Hope

Unquiet Dead



Foyous, deceivers, convincing

Soulless corpses animated by the heretical power of Hope (DS:240), a Traitor God. In general, husks are less coordinated than living humans. However, they remain dangerous for as long as they are filled by the corrupting influence of Hope.

SPEECH. Unlike most unquiet dead, husks of Hope retain their ability to speak. They also remember their former lives and retain all traits they had before they died. Without fail, they use these assets to spread Hope's message and influence.

DRUMLINS BOG. The six husks encountered near Strackon-by-Wick died recently. They were bodyguards of Alaric Bonvalet and are clad in bloody hunting clothes. If a party member pledges to follow Hope, they will share how Cassian and his bodyguards lured them into the bog and killed them. If the party has a wycce of Hope among their number, they will show the gravediggers where Alaric is buried.

WANTS: To further Hope's aims.

HATES: Followers of Voracity (DS:190).

Husks of Hope

UNLIVING • CONNIVING • PICK A TRAIT

THRALL. This hulk speaks and retains all traits and memories of its former life, but it serves the Dread Hope.

HORDE. At the start of each combat round, gather husks into groups of three. Treat each group as a single creature that shares an action die. Individual husks are killed when they lose any toughness or footing. An action die is only lost when every hulk in the group of three is destroyed.

ARMoured. See DS:222.

■ **PAINED HOWL.** Husks keen through ravaged lungs. Any foe surrounded by three or more husks must resist [fear, difficulty 4].

■ **SWARM.** Each hulk shuffles a short distance. They will attempt to surround a foe.

■ **CLAWING HANDS.** The husks reach out with inhuman strength. Ready this die. While readied, foes must [struggle, difficulty 5] to move away from a hulk. This die is discarded when a foe succeeds this check.

■ **REBIRTH.** Each hulk forces a nearby wisp (DS:229) into the mouth of a nearby corpse, creating a new hulk of Hope.

■ **CLUMSY BLOWS.** A single hulk flails outward in an [attack, +X], where X equals the number of adjacent husks.

■ **SUDDEN RUSH.** With a wail, a single hulk tries to [impair, +3] a foe. On success, they drag the target (Impair Effects, p. 100).

■ **BEATDOWN.** A hulk charges into a savage bludgeoning [attack, +1]. If the target is surrounded by three or more husks, they cannot dodge or block during this check.





Brynn

Cassian's Familiar



Solitary, inquisitive, defensive, intimidating

This large, albino bear was gifted to Cassian Bonvalet when he became a wyce of Hope. It is Cassian's conduit for his occult powers. It also contains his soul; if either Cassian or his familiar is killed, both will die.

WANTS: To protect Cassian.

HATES: Black prayer-steel weapons (DS:129).

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Bear

LARGE • BEAST • BURLY • SHARP NOSE

REAR. The bear stands on its hind legs and readies this die. It may spend this die to make a bludgeoning [attack, +4] against an adjacent enemy. It cannot move while this die is readied.

PIN. The bear tries to [impair, +4] an adjacent enemy. If successful, it pins the target (Impair Effects, DS:100). A character may [struggle, difficulty 6] as an open action to escape or free an ally.

CRUSH. The bear smashes a nearby object.

LUMBERING CHARGE. The bear bites down in a bludgeoning [attack, +8]. Any footing spent to dodge this attack is doubled.

SWIPE. The bear swipes in quick succession at two adjacent foes, making a separate slashing [attack, +4] against each.

ROAR. All adjacent enemies must resist [fear, difficulty 4].



Bodyguards

Loyal, unwavering, vicious, immoral

Long ago, Cassian hired three bodyguards named Aldous, Quinn and Leticia. To run them, choose 3 human statblocks from pages 222-225 of Doomsong; do not use Templar.

These individuals seek wealth, status or — barring any of these — a free pint in town. It would be difficult (but not impossible) to convince one or all of them to betray Cassian.

WANTS: To avoid being blamed for Alaric's death.

HATES: Anyone who insults their lord.





Cassian Bonvalet

Self-entitled, nasal voice, assertive, greedy, handsome

Second son of Baron Willem and Baroness Valery Bonvalet. He is an avid hunter and enjoys nothing more than going hunting with his brother, Alaric.

If asked about this character, villagers will note he has an excellent sense of humour and is a firm patron of the arts. He is particularly fond of jesters and musicians. Younger villagers secretly hope to marry this eligible bachelor; they may remark on his good looks and strong physique.

CORRUPT OF HEART. Cassian has long been desperate to inherit his father's title. He is unsure exactly when this desire overwhelmed his love for his brother.

MURDERER. Cassian conspired with his bodyguards to murder his older brother, Alaric, and all six of his entourage. This scheme was helped along by Hope, the Traitor God who grants wishes.

WYCCE. This character is a wycce of Hope. He has the Wish ability (DS:176) at Level 1 and the Familiar ability (DS:167) at Level 3. His familiar — a large albino bear — is splayed across his chest as a white tattoo. He will keep this hidden unless he feels his life is in danger.

WANTS: To always get the last word in, to bring back impressive hunting trophies.

HATES: Being laughed at.

Cassian Bonvalet

DUELLIST • AVOWED • JOCLAR
SWIFT-FOOTED • EYE-CATCHING

ARMED. When armed, Cassian gains +1 to any [attack] made with a one-handed weapon and +2 for a two-handed weapon. Apply a weapon's damage type as normal (DS:124).

ARMoured. Increase the toughness value of Cassian by 1, 2 or 3 if he is wearing light, medium or heavy armour.

DEFENSIVE STANCE. Cassian readies this die. After dodging an [attack], he may spend it to apply an Impair Effect (DS:100) to his attacker. After doing so, he can turn this die to any face.

FAMILIAR. Cassian releases Brynne (p. 18) or subsumes him back into tattoo form.

NIMBLE DASH. Cassian moves a short distance. He does not need to spend footing to ignore opportunity actions from foes.

COMMAND. Cassian orders his bodyguards to move a short distance or perform a hasty open action.

PROBING STRIKE. With lightning reflexes, Cassian makes a hasty [attack, +2]. If it deals damage, he regains +1 footing.

ORDER. If released, Brynne (p. 18) moves a short distance and regains +4 footing.

RPOSTE. Cassian makes an [attack, +3]. If his target missed an [attack] against him this combat round, the check is focused.

ACTION. Cassian takes an open action.

RECOVER. Applying fancy footwork and deadly focus, Cassian recovers +2 footing. Alternatively, if he is not adjacent to any foes, he gains up to his max footing.

