

The Surrender of Lischon

You have surrendered your war on the condition that you shall be allowed to live and that the civilians will not be mistreated. Once everything is decided, you will have no way to enforce either provision. *A scenario for Vain the Sword, or any dungeon game.*



Dramatis Personae

Duke Shan- second Duke of the Northwest.
Issued the surrender order

Chen- heir to Shan, would prefer to die fighting.

Vei Sworn- nephew of Shan. The sole reason we didn't lose months ago.

Servitor Hao- Corrupt eunuch. Convinced Liu Shan to surrender.

Captain Rahmal- leads a much-disliked mercenary band.

Commander Hannes- Allied foreign commander.

Schin Sworn- Seeks control of their father's tomb.

Zhuge Sworn- loyal servant and guard of Duke Shan

Ingeborg- Shan's foremost concubine

Chiara Blackwoods- a witch that predicted the Fian forces wouldn't attack.

Events Tracker

Day One:

As DM, frame the first scene with Duke Shan deciding how to explain to his court his decision to surrender. If the Duke is not a PC, wing it and let people make decisions from there.

Day Two:

In the morning, a messenger arrives to notify Vei Sworn of the surrender. Frame the first scene with them and their decision of what to do and what orders to give to the soldiers under their command.

Day Three:

The city's bureaucrats prepare on the eve of Sendem's day, when we all celebrate the victory of the ancient emperor of Mesomergos, the Charging Onager Emperor, in defeating Nouali invaders on the fields of Sendem outside Lischon. The festivities are considered essential to civilian morale, though our mercenary allies, descendants of those "invaders," consider it a mixed message at best.

Day Four:

Sendem's Day celebrations, involving parades, fried foods, and dramas played out on the city's steps. If anything at all negative has occurred in the past three days, riots of corresponding size will threaten to break out in the south half of the city.

Day Five:

Members of the wealthy and the aristocracy will publicly speak out against Servitor Hao, Captain Rahmal, and Chiara Blackwoods, seeking allies among the PCs. If Rahmal is a PC, his officers will request that they flee the city for Noual. If not, Rahmal will ask a PC for assistance in doing so.

Day Six:

The Fian army arrives. If the surrender is still on, ask each PC what they are doing. If any PCs are attempting to flee, consult the [Attempts to Flee the City](#) section. If the surrender is *not* still on or if one or more PC attempts resistance, go to the [Crushing Resistance](#) section. After all such scenes are resolved, consult the [Surrender Conditions Tracker](#) to determine how angry the Fian commanders are.

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Surrender Conditions Tracker

+1 for every sleight or complication. +3 for every instance of outright defiance.

1. Treated with total respect.
2. Surrender respected, but prominent leaders taken to live in the capital under close supervision.
3. City seized, minor street fighting, weapons seized, scapegoats arrested. Otherwise, respect of terms.
4. Leader and major agitators executed. Scapegoats executed. City seized and entered into martial law.
 - a. Escape check.
5. Standard pillaging. All major characters killed, leader drawn and quartered, with body left for the birds.
 - a. Escape check.

6. Spiteful pillaging. Major characters killed, all such bodies disgraced and major family members arrested.
7. No surrender accepted. All government officials and soldiers put to the sword. Significant citizen casualties.
8. City leveled. All people put to the sword.
 - a. Escape check. Can take a penalty to try to save NPCs.

Attempts to Flee the City

When a PC attempts to flee, if they are a scapegoat or the city's current ruler, show a scene in which someone tries to stop them, by force or with words. Then, have the character make some kind of test based on their method of escape. If they fail, they are intercepted by the Fian army; see [Crushing Resistance](#) below. If they escape *that* scene, they are free.

Crushing Resistance

When a character attempts to resist Shan or the Fian army by the time the Fian army arrives, ask them their plan. If you care to use mass combat rules, assume the detachment of the Fian army sent to deal with them outnumbers them 2-to-1 and has local guides. If you don't, skip to after the mass battle, when Fian elites and their soldiers (likewise outnumbering the party 2-to-1) attempt to confront the resisting PCs in combat. Players not in the scene (perhaps having been killed by previous Fian crackdowns) are invited to play a member of the Fian elite for the remainder of the adventure:

Fian Elite

1. **Mara**, Warrior 2. Wields a spear that sends foes into the distant future. Thinks of all things as the success of one civilization over another.
2. **Zhason**, Thief 3. Despises violence but has no other scruples.
3. **Rowan**, Eunuch 2. Made of wood and cannot be harmed by piercing or bludgeoning. Wishes to preserve Lischon's infrastructure.
4. **Kurtar**, Warrior 3. Hates nobility (the social class) and nobility (the moral quality)
5. **The Princess Widow**, Animist Wizard 3. Seeks to win a favorable husband through martial service. An ageless, qualmless elf.
6. **Avrey**, [Tea Wizard](#) 2. Frequently takes a gigue which allows them to walk through walls but renders them unable to tell the truth about themselves. Kind but unforgiving.
7. **Blake**, [Orbseeker](#) 3. Seeks the relics of Lischon above all else.
8. **Nieve**, Witness 2. Has the eyes of an angle-spirit, casting aside any concealments where they look. Want to record this historic occasion.
9. **Elspeth**, [Swordwife](#) 3. Wants revenge on Schin Sworn, who killed their husband in battle.

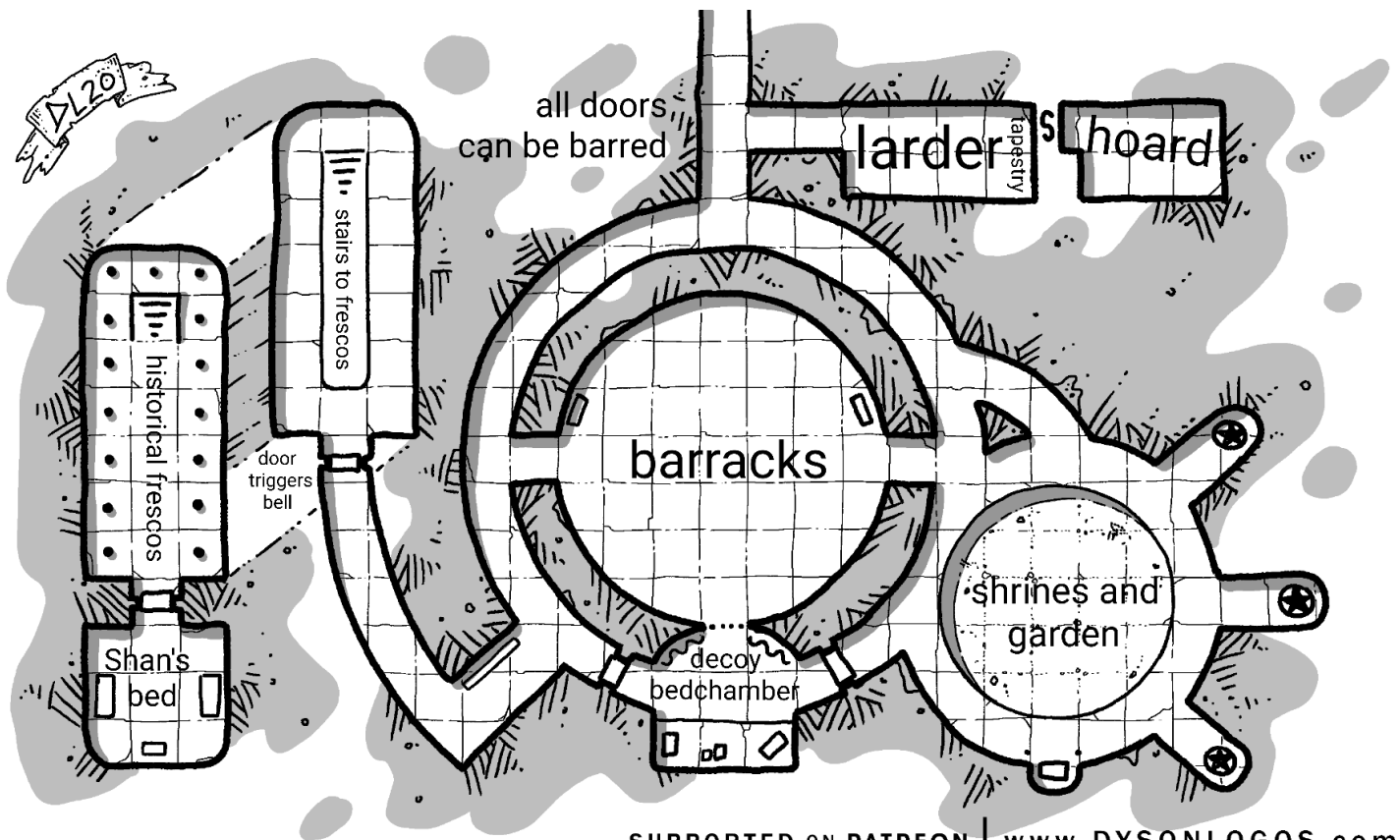
Duke Shan-

You are the second Duke of the Northwest, son of the great Xigurd, who declared himself Duke and led the resistance after the Fian invaders captured the emperor and the capital. Alas, while your father was a hero of the age, the best you can hope for is to protect your people by making peace.

Though many blame you, you have issued a general surrender, and promised today to explain your mandate to the court. One thing is certain: if you or the people are to survive, the surrender to the Fian army must go as smoothly as possible.

Assets: You possess the ivory seal that is a symbol of your authority, and command all, save the Fian invaders. You have a gilded riverboat and your father's hallowed scale armor. When all else fails, you know you can retreat to the inner sanctum of your palace:

Palatial Redoubt



Chen-

You are heir to Duke Shan, and the grandson of the hero Xigurd who established your dynasty. While your father prepares to sell out everything your family has worked for, you know that it would be the deeper betrayal to surrender. Your wife, a champion in her own right, has already gone before the Fians with a spear in her hand, knowing it would mean her death.

Relationships: While you are prepared to sacrifice your life, you have many vendettas to settle as well. The army's morale is being actively sapped by several traitors: Servitor Hao, the craven eunuch; Captain Rahmal, the beastman mercenary; and Chiara Blackwoods, the lying witch.

Assets: a gilded staff that is utterly unbreakable— as long as a wick on the top end is lit, it cannot be moved. You also possess a sling and twelve good slingstones. Finally, you have the respect of almost everyone.

Vei Sworn-

You are nephew to Duke Shan, and it is only because of you that his forces are still standing. Currently, you are successfully defending Don Shan Bailey a day north of Lischon, and are not yet aware that the war is over. The decisive battle has not yet arrived.

Special rule: Vei will only hear of the surrender on the second day of the adventure and may choose to stay away from the city for some time. While this happens, you will also play as your loyal daughter, Servitor May. She can inform Vei of all that she has seen when and if he returns.

Assets: 100 loyal soldiers in the north and west of Lischon, battle-hardened and dedicated to each other. Knowledge of the military movements of the hundred soldiers in Lischon and the 45 mercenaries under Captain Rahmal. Scouting reports of 400 Fian soldiers, 50 Fian charioteers, ten Fian commanders and honor guard.

Servitor Hao-**Scapegoat**

You are a eunuch, a loyal bureaucrat advising the illustrious Duke Shan. Though you have only told the duke how to protect the people, many have slandered you as corrupt and conniving. If anything happens to the Duke, you worry that your head would be first on the chopping block. Your study of history warns that should the Fian occupying force decide the population is too unruly, even they would be willing to sacrifice you to appease the throng. You must keep the peace without being seen as a manipulator

Assets: knowledge of secret passages between any two points in the city. The love of beggars and servants, who will warn you of any plots against you they learn. Access to a budget of 20 gold bars (worth 400 gold coins.)

Captain Rahmal- must be a gnoll, gets Tengor as a bonus language

Scapegoat

You may be in a bit over your head. Last season, you blamed certain elements of your own mercenary company for your order to “liberate” some supplies from an allied town. Since then, prejudice against gnolls like you and your band has been inflamed, and access to beer and song has been denied you at every tavern and camp. You know that over the course of Duke Shan’s surrender, you will be made out as a scapegoat and either ruined or killed. The only thing you haven’t decided is what to do about it.

Relationships: You have worked directly with Commander Hannes, a Nouali military advisor. Surely they, at least, have not been infected with the racism that pervades so many.

Assets: Honorary command of the southwestern Commandery, guarding part of the wall of Lischon. You have direct command of 40 gnoll mercenaries, originally from the allied state of Noual. Each is skilled in violence but little else. About half of them have lovers or families among the citizenry or the refugees in Lischon.

Southwestern Commandery



Commander Hannes- gets Tengor as a bonus language

You are a military advisor from the allied empire Noual, and have done your best to reform these Meso barbarians into a proper fighting force. Since success here is impossible, you must think of later battles, for the Fians will surely not stop here. Their next target will be the Nouali city called Fisochei, where you are from— where your family lives. It is imperative that the Fians are delayed at all costs. Whether that means convincing Duke Shan to rescind his surrender, or even stoking rebellion here, it is your duty to ensure Fisochei has all the time it needs to prepare, or else greater bloodshed will surely result.

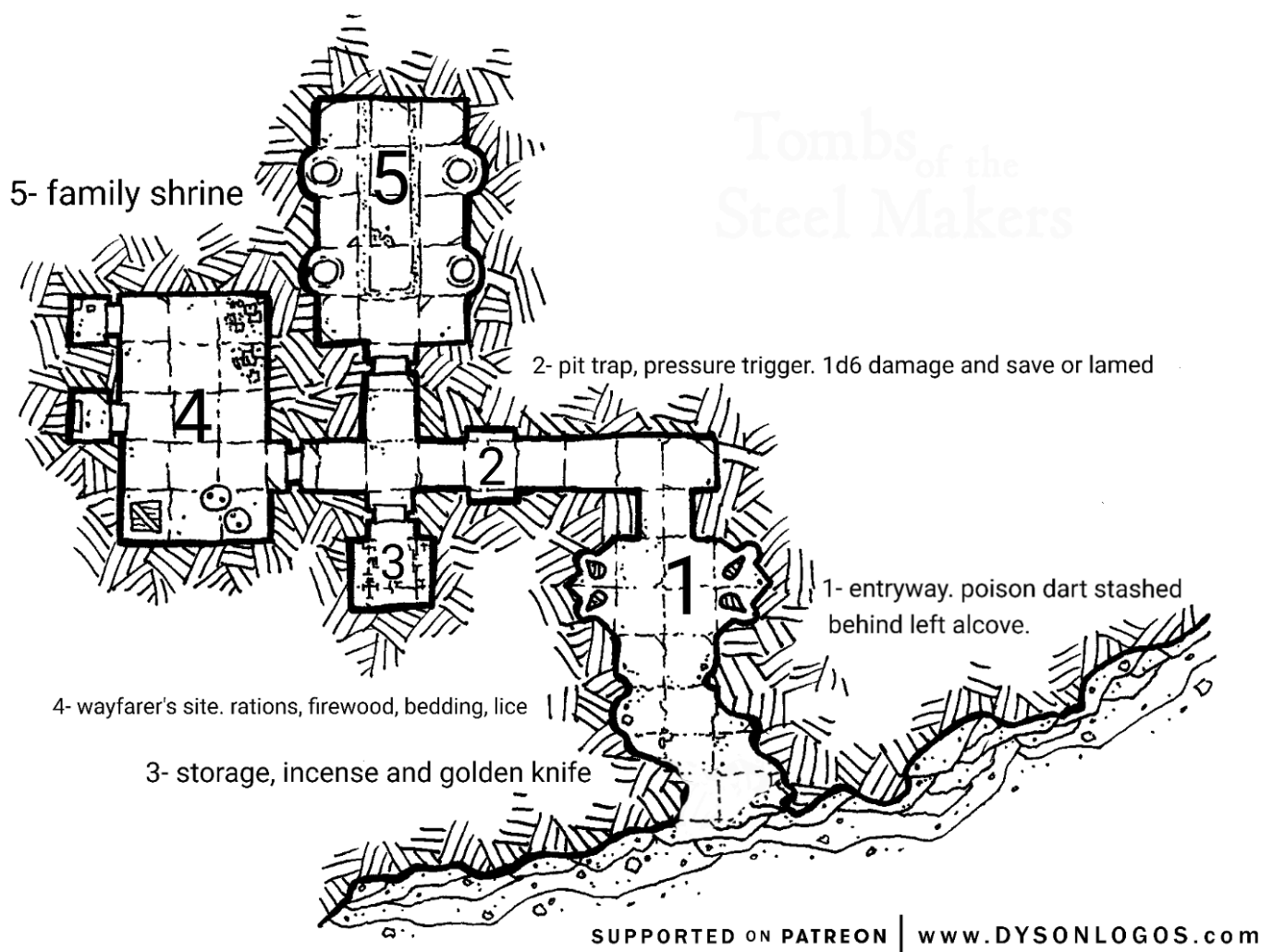
Assets: a tablet with inscriptions for the spell *assume form*, allowing you to cast the spell with 1 MD, taking on the appearance of any creature you can observe. You also have diplomatic immunity to civil (but not military) law.

Schin Sworn-

The Duke has been swayed by eunuchs and cowards to give up the fight, but you cannot abide surrender— at least, not yet. Your father's tomb, a few miles west of the city, is in the path of the invading forces. It must be defended or the Fians will surely rob it. At the very least, surrender must be delayed until the Fians promise to leave it sacrosanct. While you have never been one to tell your ruler what to do, honor demands you do something to delay this surrender.

Assets: A spear that can shrink to the size of a needle. Knowledge of your family tomb.
Command of 30 soldiers, all from the same neighborhood.

Family Tomb



Zhuge Sworn-

Hmm. You made a vow to your parents that you would not waste the life they gave you, and when it became clear that Duke Shan was useless you sent a secret letter to the Fian army, offering your surrender and defection. Unbeknownst to you, the Duke surrendered almost immediately after. If your “treachery” is detected, he will almost certainly have you executed. But if the surrender were halted for a time, then perhaps your life and your promise to your parents might be saved.

Assets: Your home, your family graveyard, your mother’s spear, and your brother’s lamellar armor. As Duke Shan’s bodyguard, you have a good reason to accompany him anywhere.

Finally, you have heard rumor of Servitor Hao’s secret passages throughout the city, of Chiara Blackwoods’s dark magic, and an inner sanctum deep within the palace.

Ingeborg-

As Duke Shan's concubine, you are well acquainted with the intrigues of palace life. While you have some affection for him, you know Shan will doom himself one way or another if he stays in Lischon to surrender. You seek to convince him to flee the country, east into Noual or even south into the barbarian lands of Pulpogamania. If he is to be made irrelevant, at least he could try to save himself.

Assets: You can always retreat to the imperial harem, where none save eunuchs and other concubines are permitted.

Chiara Blackwoods-**Scapegoat**

As a country hedge witch, you never would have predicted that the Duke would call on you to predict the future for him. While you never quite had the knack for it, you told him what he wanted to hear, that the Fian forces wouldn't attack. When this turned out to be false, you attempted to flee but were confined to the palace. Now that the city is under siege and escape is far from certain, you have set your sights on another goal.

In four days, on the anniversary of the Charging Onager Emperor's victory two centuries ago, the stars will be right for a potent ritual. By presenting the duke's seal of office at the site of great bloodshed, you can create a link between the seal and the threshold between life and death, tying your soul to it. This will make you impossible to permanently kill as long as the seal remains intact. You just need to get the duke's seal and arrange a little massacre, one way or another.

Assets: Knowledge of dark rituals, the ability to always be able to find 1d4 superstitious stooges, a prison warden who owes you a favor and doesn't ask questions.