

# A TRIP — DOWN — WATER LANE

A RAGING SWAN PRESS MINI-EVENTURE





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# A TRIP DOWN WATER LANE

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*Down by the river, near where the oily black water slides passed the Wreck's rotting, decrepit piers, and where the night mists thickly gather, lies Water Lane. Haunt of beggars, lepers and outcasts Water Lane is a dismal, hopeless place. No one in their right mind chooses to live on flood-prone Water Lane. The people living here have nowhere else to go. And yet rumours of lost and hidden treasures in sunken cellars lure a trickle of bored or desperate adventurers to Water Lane.*

*Even the smallest town has more locations than all but the most diligent and time-rich GM could ever hope to detail and design. To make matters even worse, when an adventuring party gets to a town or city, the characters often have the irritating habit of going off exploring. What's a GM to do? Designed specifically for you, the busy GM, this urban locale is designed to help you bring depth and flavour to your characters' next urban adventure. This Urban Locale is designed for use with City Backdrop: Language, but is designed to be easily inserted into virtually any town or city.*

## CREDITS

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## WHAT'S A MINI-EVENTURE?

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A mini-eventure is akin to a normal encounter, but does not (normally) feature violence or physical challenges. Instead, a mini-eventure focuses on the use of social skills and role-play to resolve the challenges, or events, therein. Most mini-eventures take place in an urban locale. Mini-eventures are an excellent change of pace and can be used as filler between adventures or as situations in which characters who have invested in social skills can shine. They are also perfect for players who enjoy role-playing.

## USING THIS MINI-EVENTURE

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This supplement provides everything you need to run a short, flavoursome eventure. As well as presenting an in-depth look at a locale this supplement also present several tables for use during play. Roll on any or all of them as often as desired to create interesting, engaging situations.

You can either plan events ahead of time or just "wing" the whole mini-eventure using the tables herein to facilitate play. (These tables could form the basis of repeated visits to the featured location as long as you keep track of what results the characters have already experienced).

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## A TRIP DOWN WATER LANE

Water Lane lies on the eastern edge of the Fishshambles.

Down by the river, near where the oily black water slides passed the Wreck's rotting, decrepit piers, and where the night mists thickly gather, lies Water Lane.

Haunt of beggars, lepers and outcasts Water Lane is a dismal, hopeless place. Ruined, crumbling tenement buildings lean drunkenly out over the sodden, muddy street. Water Lane is low-lying and often floods. Heavy rain, unusually high tides and the savage annual winter storms regularly inundate it and the surrounding buildings. Mud and silt fill many of the lane's cellars and basements. Persistent rumours speak of treasures lost in several of the cellars. Occasionally, treasure hunters come here to dig; none have admitted finding anything of value.

No one cares what happens on Water Lane. Thieves and murderers use the lane's rank, sunken cellars to dispose of their victims or hold secret conclaves in the ruined and abandoned buildings down by the waterfront.

No one in their right mind chooses to live on Water Lane. The people living here have nowhere else to go.

### OLD TOIVOTTU VILJA

The fisherfolk whisper of Old Toivottu Vilja, a hunch-backed, wizened crone said to stalk Water Lane on the darkest nights, when the mists gather thick. Toivottu is a hateful old women widely identified as a witch. Her repellent ugliness is so horrific, folk have died of fear and shock after gazing upon her hideousness. The fisherfolk hate and revile her, and blame her for any ills befalling them. Several sea shanties, including *Water Lane Girl*, *Thing in the Fog* and *Mist Devil*, along with several macabre nursery rhymes, tell of Old Toivottu and her hideous deeds and foul tastes.

Old Toivottu Vilja is, of course, a sea hag. Drawn to the city by its beauty, she works tirelessly to degrade and destroy that beauty. She has dwelled in a sunken cellar at the bottom of Water Lane for over a century and takes care that no one sees her true form.



## OTHER FOLK

When the characters arrive, they won't be the only people on Water Lane. Roll as many times as desired on this list to determine who else is present:

1. **Elias Asikka** (N old male human commoner 1) shuffles along using a short spear haft as a walking stick. Half-blinded in an accident Elias has been a beggar for 30 years. Well known about town he often hears things. If the characters are nice to him, he tells two rumours from "Whispers & Rumours".
2. **Hilppa Kaleva** (NG female human commoner 1) hides her face under a deep cowl, and rings a small handbell vigorously if approached. Hilppa suffers from leprosy and her face is horribly disfigured. She expects abuse and revulsion from anyone she meets. She is taken aback, if shown kindness. Anyone curing her affliction earns her eternal gratitude.
3. **Brusi Hirvi** (CE middle-aged male human rogue 3) hides on Water Lane after surviving a brutal double-cross when his last job went too well. He escaped his companions' blades and now skulks here while planning his next move. He is vicious and angry. Several beggars have already felt his boot. Brusi has hidden a substantial hoard of jewellery nearby.
4. **Miina Toivas** (CN young female half-orc fighter 1) has nowhere else to go, and no one to turn to for help. Her mother was recently killed and she was thrown out of her home when she couldn't pay the landlord. Miina is aggressive, loud and strong. She is ashamed of her orc heritage and uses mud to hide her complexion. The other locals have learnt not to annoy this angry young woman.
5. **Aake Niera** (CE male human cleric [Dagon] 3) loves the feeling of decay and hopelessness prevalent on Water Lane, and feels close to his depraved master here. He owns one of the houses at the top of the lane, but spends an inordinate amount of time down by the river just watching. He is waiting for a sign.
6. **Tuulitar Ora** (CG female human commoner 1) mutters and screeches. The locals think she is "moon touched" and listen in rapt awe to her gibberish pronouncements. Sometimes her predictions even come true. There is no sanity in her eyes.

### RUNNING THIS EVENTURE

The characters are unlikely to find themselves on Water Lane for no reason; something will have drawn them here. They may have come to explore a flooded cellar or to search for a specific beggar—perhaps one with information they need. Characters could also come to Water Lane to hide from their enemies; this is not a place many would think to search. Other characters could simply be lost—and fate could guide their footsteps to Water Lane.

The entries on these tables are designed to be time-neutral. Modify them to take into account the time of day, weather, level of illumination and so on.

## WHAT'S GOING ON?

While the characters are on Water Lane, one or more things from the list below may occur.

1. **Skulking Figure:** A cloaked figure skulks in the shadow cast by one of Water Lane's rotting homes. If approached, the figure darts into a ruined tenement.
2. **Do-Good Priest:** A man—Aatami Otava (LN male human cleric [Conn] 1)—wearing stained white robes emblazoned with Conn's scared symbol staggers through the mud of Water Lane. Bent almost double under a sack bulging with food stolen from the cathedral—he is here to help the helpless. His theft of food weighs heavily on his conscience.
3. **Heavy Rain:** Heavy rain lashes Water Lane. Quickly the sodden ground turns into a glutinous morass of sucking mud. The rains drives all the residents undercover.
4. **Listless (Money-Grabbing) Locals:** Several beggars and outcasts hang about doing nothing. Sitting in doorways or staring blankly into space, they pay little heed to the characters, unless offered coin or food. Giving one of the beggars a few coins backfires spectacularly as the other locals gather around begging for donations. Each has a sad story and each—in their own mind—is more deserving of help than the others.
5. **Hunched Figure:** A hunched figure shuffles slowly down the street. Characters approaching the figure are first accosted by a hideous stench of rotting fish. Then they hear the figure muttering to herself in a high-pitched voice. Is this Old Toivottu or just some other deranged denizen of Water Lane?
6. **Deserted:** When the characters arrive on Water Lane, there is not another soul in sight. The sounds of the city at large reach the characters' ears, but Water Lane is curiously silent and empty. Where is everyone?

## OPPORTUNITIES & COMPLICATIONS

Lucky adventurers can find opportunities almost anywhere. Unlucky adventurers can find complications almost anywhere.

1. **Drowned:** A perceptive character spots a pair of legs sticking out of a doorway. Investigation reveals the person—a man wearing thief's garb—is lying face down on a flooded stair leading to a cellar. His head and shoulders are underwater.
2. **Scream:** Hysterical screaming breaks out from the second floor of a sagging tenement. It continues for some minutes before trailing off into loud sobbing. If the characters investigate, they find a bedraggled, obviously mad old man. He mutters the name "Toivottu" over and over again.
3. **Argument:** Roll twice on "Other Folk". The two folk are arguing—perhaps over a scarp of food, who gets to keep a nice cloak they both found at the same time or some other mundane matter. For these two, this is important—and could be a matter of survival. They come to blows, unless the characters intervene.
4. **Heavy Mist:** A heavy fog blankets low-lying Water Lane and the surrounding alleyways. The mist is cold, damp and smells

of the sea. Locals—fearing Old Toivottu is abroad—stay inside until the fog dissipates.

5. **Toughs & Beggars:** A trio of local thugs have come to Water Lane for some fun. More than a little drunk, they think it will be fun to threaten and rough up some of the lane's residents. If the characters intervene, the toughs immediately back down—they don't want to fight anyone who could actually hurt them. They remember the characters, though, and could appear in future adventures at inopportune moments.
6. **"Treasures for Sale":** The characters meet Silja Mielo (CN old female human rogue 3). Silja has a knack of finding "lost" things and then finding someone to buy it. She has 1d4 items for sale; she is flexible on pricing.

### D10 ITEM

1	One fine leather lady's glove
2	Silver dagger with dried blood on its haft
3	Half-full wineskin (watered-down wine)
4	Two "pork" pies wrapped in seaweed
5	Sodden spell component pouch

### D10 ITEM

6	A dainty silver teardrop earring
7	<i>Scroll of magic missile</i> in a leather tube
8	Silver locket holding a portrait of a small child
9	Cowled cloak with a gash in the back
10	Chipped gold signet ring with a swan crest

## WHISPERS & RUMOURS

Characters chatting with folk on Water Lane may learn some or all of the rumours (which may or may not be true) below:

1. **The Sunken Cellar:** Something foul and horrible dwells in one of Water Lane's flooded cellars. Strange croakings—such as from an army of frogs—have been heard emanating from one of the buildings closest to the Svart's black waters.
2. **Disappearing Beggars:** Several beggars known to live on Water Lane have disappeared lately. Normally no one cares if a beggar disappears, but the sheer number of such occurrences has got people talking.
3. **Tottering Ruin:** Many of the tottering houses on Water Lane are in an advanced state of ruin and decay. The next good winter storm will likely spell their doom.
4. **Crone About Town:** Old Toivottu Vilja has been seen abroad on Water Lane, once again. The hateful, hunched old crone is mean and spiteful, and torments those living nearby. Something must be done.
5. **No One Cares:** No one cares about Water Lane or its residents. The town officials would raze it to the ground, but no one can decide what to do with the residents. No one wants to be responsible for them.
6. **Cursed:** There is something foul about the atmosphere hanging over Water Lane. The residents are nearly uniformly sick or mad (or both). What could cause such a miasma of misery—a potent curse, that's what!

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