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“It is an established fact that those going around suspecting vice in others are highly suspect themselves.”

—Guy Bennett, to his mother, *from the movie, ANOTHER COUNTRY*

“Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic.”

—Arthur C. Clarke

### COLOPHON: FIRST EDITION

*Eidolon* was composed with *Microsoft Word* and *Aldus PageMaker*. The text was set in the *Minion* and *Minion Expert Collection* typefaces. Headers were set in *Trajan*. *Minion* is an Adobe original face designed by Robert Slimbach and derived from type of the late Renaissance. *Trajan* is also an Adobe original, designed by Carol Twombly. It is based on the *capitalis monumentalis* letterforms of the Trajan inscription in Rome. The *Eidolon* decorative face is based on ancient cuneiform, and was designed by the author using *Altsys Fontographer*.

### COLOPHON: SECOND EDITION

The entire book was imported into Adobe *InDesign* from *PageMaker* 6.5 on an Intel iMac, with only a few glitches along the way. Most charts were converted to IDD table format for color and clarity.

The original first edition Sel-kai printed maps were scanned on a large-format high-resolution scanner, digitally stitched, and a PDF created. This was used to create the city map windows used in the book and the large, printable PDF file available with the book.

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Director: Nicholas HM Caldwell

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*In the Old City*

# › PREFACE ›



*Decorative Frieze,  
University of Kalingen,  
Ægon College.  
c. 4150*

**E**idolon! The name is legendary from the shores of the Bladelands to the plains of the nomadic Jan. A glittering jewel, a treasury floating on a cloud, a testament to the power of coin, Eidolon is the unassailable heart of the richest trade empire on the Shadow World. The Prince of Sel-kai resides in Eidolon, his gleaming white marble palace towering over rings of landscaped terraces. The rest of the 'Upper City' is dominated by palaces, guildhalls, and shops trading in the most exotic luxury goods. About the towers and rippling banners circle a swarm of sky-ships, the merchant fleet of the Prince. Like bees they serve the hive, but their cargo is merchandise, not pollen, and the gold is metal, not honey.

By any measure of mortal lifetimes, it is an ancient city: for fourteen centuries it has hovered serenely above the rolling hills of Sel-kai. But Eidolon is young compared to her land-bound sister, Sel-kai City. Many times the size of Eidolon, the 'Lower City' is where the bulk of commerce takes place; it remains the backbone of the Sel-kai economy.

Sel-kai City has existed for four and a half millennia, growing from a small cluster of wood and thatch cabins on the bank of the Sharhya to a sprawling metropolis of islands topped by stone towers straddling the delta. Hundreds of bridges span the dozens of canals at many levels, linking the twelve districts of Sel-kai City.

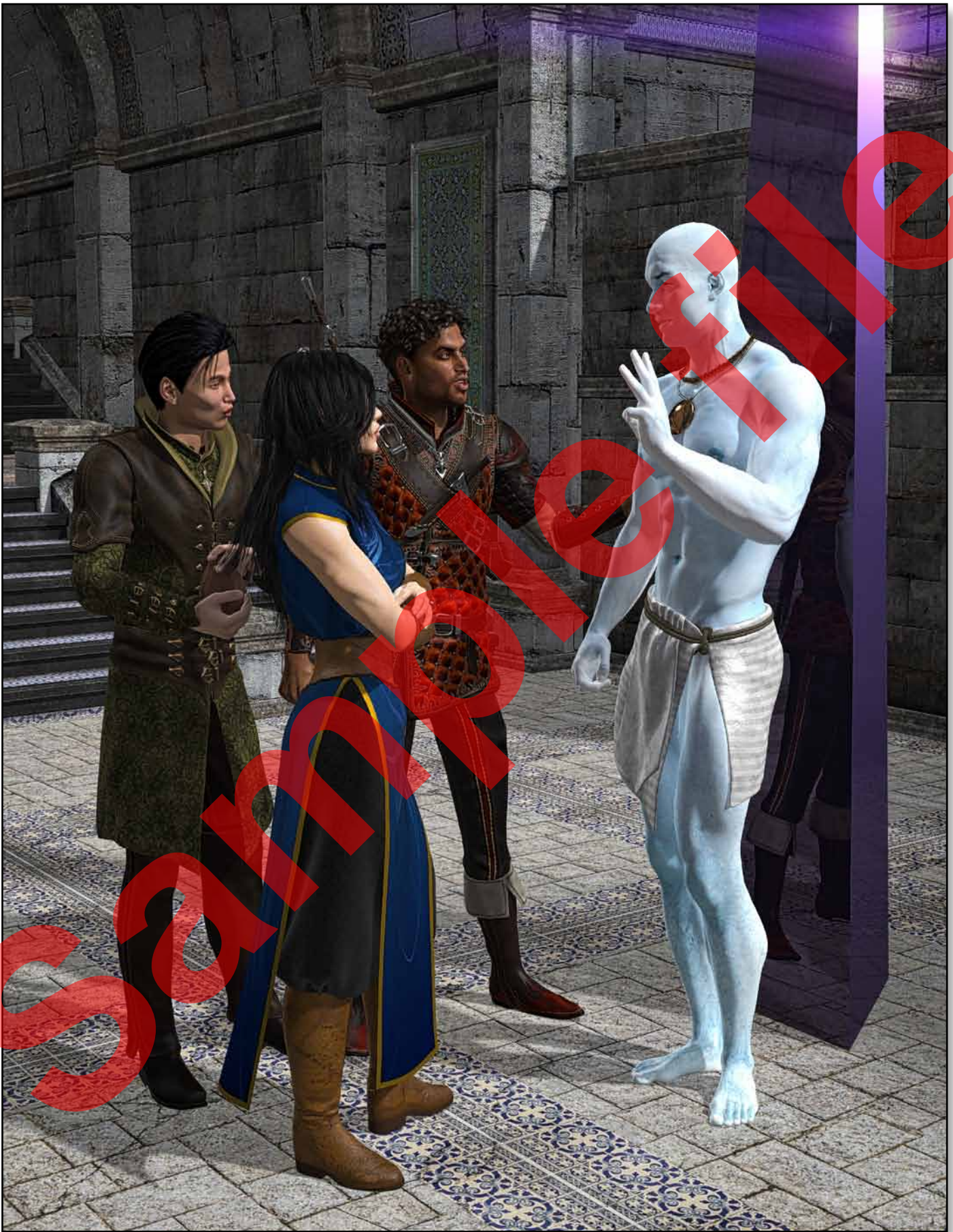
In the Black Oak and Library districts, towers rise higher as the wealthy and powerful seek to dominate their rivals. Meanwhile the pilings supporting the Sighing Docks and Canal Maze slowly sink into the muddy bottom of the river.



Detailing the city of Eidolon, Sel-kai City, and the island-realm of Sel-kai, this book also includes reference material on common trade goods such as metals, gems, herbs, spices, and other items. Exhaustive price lists are included.

Central to this guide is the map of Sel-kai City. Actually several maps, the set includes a color overview of the city, close-up B&W maps of selected areas, and floor-plans of representative shops, inns and other establishments frequented by player-characters.

Also scattered throughout the book are vignettes of life in Sel-kai; scenes intended to give the reader a better feel for life in this land of wealth and poverty, pitiful ugliness and harsh beauty. The canal-city comes to life with interesting characters and unique neighborhoods, all in the trading center of Kulthea!



*Denivor, Sharna, and Kulas-Dar discussing fees with a Jhordian Steersman Navigator.*

# › PART I ›

## TERMINOLOGY & BACKGROUND

Night in Sel-kai City. The Great Moon Orhan had set; red Charón gaped like a bloody hole in the sky; and of course glittering Eidolon dominated the heavens above the Lower City, spurning her poor elder sister... taunting her.

Darkness pressed down on the shadowed alleys, while an oily mist rose from the stinking canals. The night was quiet... deceptively so.

Ormool leaned indolently on his ebony cane, a figure out of context. The handsome Dyari Elf's ears glittered with gold hoops and jewelled studs, and his finely-cut black garments were trimmed with golden thread. But he stood at the end of an alley in the depths of canal-town, flanked by two hulking humanoids with clear genetic ties to Lugrôki. They were Gork and Lunt, Ormool's "special assistants." Behind the trio in the canal a skiff bobbed on the scummed water. The only sound was a rhythmic slurp-slurp as the boat washed against the stone pier.

"Someone approaches, My Lord Priest."

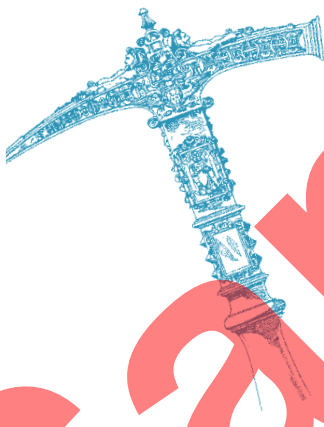
"Thank you, Lunt, but I heard him some time ago." Ormool's words were knives of condescension.

Silhouetted by misty lamplight, a giant of a man stumped down the black alleyway. As he approached it became clear that he carried a sack over his shoulder, whose contents suspiciously resembled a body.

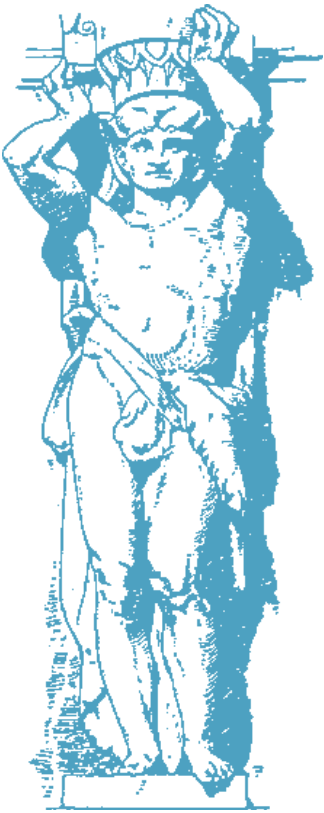
"Ah, Krann, you have brought my new toy?" Ormool grinned, showing perfect white teeth.

Not only far larger than most men, Krann was so ugly that most believed he had Trollish blood. His homely face was expressionless as he closed to tower over this unwholesome trio. "I got it."

"Well, let us see, shall we?" The Dark priest could hardly contain his excitement. "Gork, open the lamp."



*Jeweller's Hammer*



*Atalante from the Temple of Moralis, South Portico. c. 3800*

Krann shrugged the sack carelessly onto a handy pile of trash and yanked open the drawstring, exposing the head and bare shoulders of an unconscious Elven youth, no more than fourteen years old. The boy was a beautiful Iylar: fine blond hair and delicately pointed ears framed his angelic features. His skin was clear and golden in the lamplight.

“He’s perfect,” Ormool crooned. He caressed the boy’s cheek with long, tapered fingers. “Moralis will be pleased.” He straightened, loathe to take his eyes from the boy, and gestured to Lunt to pick up the youth.

“Wait. The gold first.” Krann extended a huge gnarled palm.

Ormool smirked, but produced a heavy leather pouch and dropped it in Krann’s paw-like hand. “One hundred, as we agreed.”

“What’cha gonna do with the kid?” Krann asked conversationally as he stuffed the coins into his breeches pocket.

Ormool’s face went mask-stiff. “Why do you care?” He asked curtly.

“Just curious.”

“An unhealthy habit, curiosity. If you must know, he won’t be harmed... physically.”

Krann stuck out his grotesque lower lip reflectively. “You Moralans really know how to have a good time.”

Even through that thick accent Ormool could read sarcasm.

Lunt hefted the sack into the boat while Gork prepared to cast off. Ormool stood watching the Trollish muggers lumber off the way he had come, but after he had gotten about twenty paces away, the Priest pulled up his voluminous sleeve—revealing a heavy iron bracer covering his entire forearm. He locked his arm, aiming his fist at Krann’s retreating back. With a muffled ‘thunk’, a steel bolt shot from a track along the band and went whistling through the thick air to plunge into the base of Krann’s skull. The Half-troll fell like a tree.

“That will teach him to ask questions. Lunt, retrieve the money.” Ormool turned back and stepped gingerly into the skiff. A moment later Lunt was on board and the boat eased out into the canal, towards the Temple district.

Above them in the clear night sky hung luminous Eidolon, oblivious, scorning the very earth.

This section defines some key words, including businesses and trade materials, as well as providing an introduction to Sel-kai and Eidolon and a brief description of some of the more common races represented in this island-realm.

## 1. DEFINITIONS & TERMS

The following is essentially a reference section, describing the many specific and sometimes technical terms used throughout the book.

### CITY STRUCTURES TERMINOLOGY

What follows are brief explanations of the categories of buildings commonly found in Eidolon and Sel-kai city (as well as most other major cities in the Shadow World). More specific information is provided for selected sites, described in the district-by-district text.

**Admin/Public:** A term to encompass a wide variety of facilities, this could include the city offices, the jail, or public use structures like baths, arenas, or libraries. In Eidolon/Sel-kai this also includes the official mercantile exchanges, which convert common coin to Sel-kai currency.

**Alchemist:** Differing from Apothecaries, Alchemists deal in magical potions, scrolls, and sometimes such operations as the recharging of wands and staves.

**Animal Trainer:** Animal trainers are also—essentially—pet shop owners. They stock a variety of animals from the common to the very exotic. For those unusual clients interested in a Familiar, a few of these merchants have ‘package deals’ with Alchemists who provide *Familiar* scrolls. Only small beasts (no larger than a medium-sized dog) are kept in the shop; though a few have farms outside the city where they breed larger animals.

**Apothecary:** Essentially a pharmacist, specializing in potions of a non-magical nature, salves and drugs which heal or harm. Apothecaries rarely trade in herbs in their natural state. Many also carry spices and other unusual items such as cacao.

**Architect:** While not common, architects are not unheard-of in metropolitan areas. In this society, architects also possess considerable engineering knowledge

**Armorer:** Mainly metalsmiths who specialize in the forging of armor, shields and the like. Some will make primarily chainmail, others plate, while others actually are more leathersmiths.

**Artist:** Pure artists with a 'shop' or studio are fairly rare, but Sel-kai is large enough to harbor a few. Most are independent portraitists or sculptors who no longer wish to deal with the hassles of the Guild and associated teaching responsibilities.

**Astrologer:** One who studies the stars and tells fortunes based on their analysis of the heavens. Astrologers of Kulthea—especially those in more technically advanced areas where they may have access to sophisticated telescopes—are often knowledgeable about basic astronomical realities. For instance, most know that Kulthea is the seventh planet circling the sun, which in turn is just one of myriad stars, etc.

**Baker:** One who makes bread, pies, pastries, rolls, etc. Bakers also usually supply flour and yeast for those who wish to make their own breads.

**Barracks:** Includes military housing as well as administration (as opposed to civilian administrative and support facilities). Barracks may be for military or Wardens.

**Bookbinder:** While technically separate from a Scribe, there is often some overlap in the actual functions between these professions. Bookbinders assemble manuscripts and sew them together into bound volumes. Larger binderies have actual printing presses, but also employ young copyists whose job it is to duplicate manuscripts. The types of books bound are usually more mundane than those copied and traded in by Scribes, but are still important for educational purposes.

**Brewer:** There are few actual breweries in the city (and those are very small), but several brewers have offices in the city where arrangements can be made for the delivery of beer and related spirits.

**Brothel:** This term is used for the full range of 'personal services' from sophisticated courtesans to cheap 'by the hour' girls (and sometimes boys, depending on the customers' tastes). Some establishments pride themselves on the beauty and personal hygiene of their staff, while others are an invitation to an unpleasant disease.

**Butcher:** One who sells meats, including (but not limited to) beef, pork, mutton, venison, poultry. Most butchers have fresh, smoked and salted fare. In large, coastal cities like Sel-kai, butchers do not handle seafood, leaving that to the fishmongers.

**Candlemaker:** Also called a *chandler* in some areas, they make and sell candles and sometimes simple oil lamps.

**Carpenter:** There are several subcategories of carpenters, and the specific type is noted in selected buildings' detailed descriptions. Carpenters fall into three basic categories: cabinet and furnituremakers, detailers and marqueters (those who inlay colored woods—especially in floors) and the joiners and real carpenters (those who work with masons to do interior walls and framing).

**City Wardens:** Warden barracks and posts are scattered throughout the city. Some Wardens have families and live at home, while others reside in barracks. This indicates an actual guard-on-duty outpost, which may or may not include a residence hall.

**Clothier:** Also called a tailor or seamstress, this designates the shop of one who makes clothing. While clothiers may sell cloth, they do not usually make their own. In societies such as this, clothes are usually custom-made for those who can afford it, and made at home by those who cannot afford the services of a clothier (this latter group is the great majority of the population). Except for the wealthy merchants who own vast wardrobes, most people possess only two or three sets of clothes—and maybe a 'dress-up' outfit. The wealthy discard clothing when it is out of fashion; everyone else wears their clothes until they fall apart.

**Cobbler:** Makers of shoes, including most leather shoes, boots, and less expensive wood-soled clogs. Note that most of the poorer classes go barefoot despite the sometimes unsanitary conditions.

**Craftsman:** A general term for any sort of artisan or skilled worker (as opposed to a retailer). *Note: On the color map, entire blocks may be so designated, though in fact the block consists of a variety of different craftspeople.*

**Fishmonger:** Dealers in fish of all sorts. In Sel-kai, most carry fresh and salt-water fish, shellfish, and even some crustaceans.

**Fletcher:** One who makes arrows, crossbow bolts, and sometimes makes and repairs bows as well.

**Glassblower:** Also a glasscutter and crystalcutter. These craftsmen are responsible not only for bottles, fine vases and crystal goblets, but window glazing. Most specialize to some extent; this is noted in detailed entries.

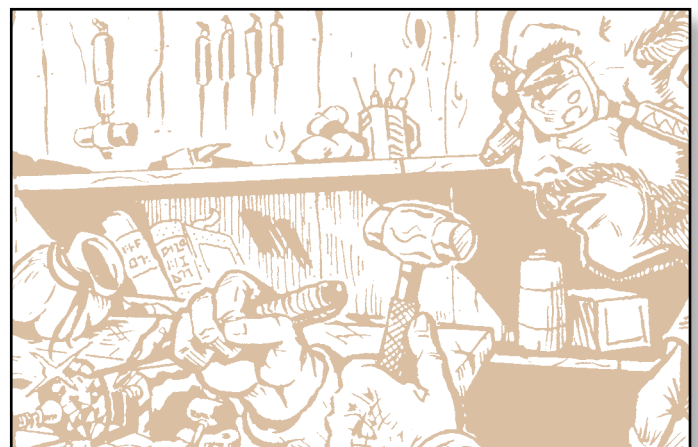
**Granary:** A storage facility for grain, and often a mill as well.

**Great-house:** Similar to an inn, but usually with just a few rooms. Great houses are often converted large homes, rather than genuine inns. These smaller establishments are also usually run by a single family, while Inns have many staff members.

**Grocer:** Generally, a vendor of foodstuffs which do not fall under the categories of butcher, fishmonger, or baker. Grocers carry fresh vegetables and fruits, sometimes pasta and common cooking herbs.

**Guildhouse:** The headquarters of a Guild. For craft guilds, such buildings are usually a combination workshop and meeting hall, with rooms for the resident craftsmen.

**Haberdasher:** One who makes hats. Some also make fine gloves, cloaks and hoods.





**Healer:** Healers fall into two distinct categories. The *Healer* as defined in *Rolemaster* is a religious Channeling user who has the incredible ability to take another's wounds upon himself then regenerate them. Such a Healer is almost always a devout follower of a deity, and so usually linked to a temple. Few take up 'private practice,' as taking money for such services—except as a 'donation'—would demean the supernatural nature of the process. *Lay Healers*, on the other hand, are essentially surgeons with the benefit of some useful utility spells. They are more common (though still rare), and have no problem charging a fee for their services.

**Herbalist:** A specialist in the growing and preserving of herbs, both for cooking and other mundane purposes, and of the enchanted healing variety. This vendor typically has a light-filled, fragrant shop filled with sealed jars and bottles, and dozens of growing plants.

**Inn:** An establishment where travellers may rent a room for a few nights, and usually get food as well. Accommodations at inns can vary from a straw cot in a room housing ten other guests to a huge feather bed in a palatial private suite of rooms. Naturally, the rate varies with the nature of the space and service.

**Jeweler:** Most jewelers content themselves to create settings of gold, silver or other fine metals to hold gems wrought by others. It is only the most skillful (and confident) of jewelwrights who can cleave a gemstone and reveal the glittering, faceted jewel within.

**Lampwright:** Lampwrights not only make oil and gas lamps, but a branch of this guild is responsible for maintaining the crystal lamps of Sel-kai and Eidolon.

**Leathersmith:** Some are tanners, while others perform the less noxious task of cutting and stitching leather into garments, bags or other useful items.

**Locksmith:** The locksmiths of Sel-kai City are known for their ingenious devices. They are (generally) also quite good at unlocking other peoples' locks...

**Mason:** The Guild of Masons includes bricklayers and makers, stonecutters, marble masons, and claymasons (who make terracotta roof tiles and many ornate building materials).

**Miller:** This designation can either mean the actual location of a mill (where grains such as wheat and corn are ground) or a shop selling flour, or both. The location and size of the structure should offer a clue.

**Moneylender/Banker:** Many financial institutions are linked to the more powerful guilds, while a few families have grown wealthy purely through the interest gained on loans. These are the urban bankers. Banking services include keeping customers' money, loaning money, and changing currency; all of which involve a charge to the customer. Moneylenders are usually smaller establishments with higher interest rate and fees (and more dangerous collection methods).

**Pilot/Guide/Outfitter:** Supplier of a wide variety of travelling supplies, maps (of wildly varying reliability) and information. Many will hire themselves or a relative/associate out as guide for short trips.

**Potter:** A maker of ceramics, usually pottery for use in cooking or storage (as opposed to architectural clay works such as brick or terra-cotta).

**Residence:** A structure in the city whose primary purpose is to serve as a permanent, private residence. These may be villas,

apartment structures, or a grouping of multi-storey homes. *Note:* On the color map, entire blocks may be colored as if they were one building, when in fact they might be several attached structures.

**Retailer:** A more generic term for a business which sells finished goods. (The GM may wish to 'flesh out' certain retailers with specific shops of his own.) *Note:* On the color map, entire blocks may be colored as if they were one building, when in fact they might be several attached structures. Buildings marked as residences may also have some retail shops on the ground level.

**Ruins:** Any abandoned (and usually uninhabitable) area. Ruins in a city are usually buildings recently destroyed by fire.

**Scholar/Scribe:** A copier and translator of manuscripts. They usually do not work with magical texts; however they are experts on rare non-magical texts and scrolls and are usually the best place to go when one has such a text he wants to have appraised.

**Seer:** One who will tell fortunes, analyze magical items, locate missing persons or act as truthsayers.

*GM Note:* Most 'seers' are not as skilled as they let on and will at least partially fake their information. A few, however, are truly gifted individuals. Seers are a powerful vehicle for the GM to help the players along on a particularly vexing puzzle, but they must not become too all-knowing or beneficial.

**Shipwright:** Among the most revered men in Sel-kai, shipwrights are the designers and builders of the country's fleet. A very distinct (and sometimes somewhat arrogant) subgroup are the skyshipwrights: those who build the flying craft.

**Silversmith:** A worker in silver and related alloys, the silversmith creates mostly jewelry, eating utensils, cups and goblets.

**Smith:** A generic term for a worker in metal. This is usually used for those who do not fall under a specialist category of gold/silver/swordmaker or armorer. Smiths make common implements and tools, horseshoes, and inexpensive weaponry.

**Stable:** In a city, usually a dark, cramped area where horses are boarded for a short period. In more rural areas a 'stable' is more often a sprawling horse farm where mounts are bred and sold.

**Swordmaker:** A specialist smith who creates only weapons, mostly of the bladed variety.

**Tanner:** Where animal hides and skins are treated and dried. They are soaked in a solution of tannin and thus converted into leathers. (This process creates an unpleasant odor, and tanners are often forced to operate on the outskirts of town.)

**Tavern:** A drinking (and sometimes eating) establishment.

**Temple:** Structures designated as gathering places for followers of a certain deity or group of deities, or set of ideas, philosophies, etc.

**Theater:** Any indoor or outdoor gathering place for the performing arts, usually drama, but also includes music and readings.

**Wainwright:** A maker and repairer of wagons, carts and (usually) any wheel-motive vehicle.

**Warehouse/Shipper:** While some are no more than storage facilities, some of these also include an integral office where one can make arrangements to have materials shipped to virtually any location in the (known) world.

**Weaver:** Those who turn Sel-kai's vast inflow of cotton, wool and other fibers into cloth. They also dye the cloth (or fibers, depending on the patterns desired).

**Winmerchant/Vintner:** This designates a dealer not only in wines but often also distilled liquors. (Brewers make and distribute beer and ale.)

**Woodcrafter:** One who carves and finishes wood. The Woodcrafters' Guild has several branches, including furniture-makers, marqueters (those who lay patterned wood floors and walls), and builders.

## WOODS

**Birch:** A pale hardwood with a close grain.

**Cherry:** A reddish hardwood with circular grain patterns.

**Dir:** The black wood of Dir is among the most prized of hardwoods, being similar to ebony. Durable and fine-grained, it makes superior (+10 to +30 depending on craftsman) staves and bows. Its dark beauty is unmatched in elegance.

The Dir tree itself is deciduous and grows in a tall, vertical trunk with short, horizontal branches. Its small leaves are nearly round with a dark underside and a silvery green upper face. Dir tree seed pods are disc-shaped, curling under at the edge to create an aerodynamic air pocket. The bark of the tree is nearly black like the core. Dir trees are found primarily in the northern regions of Hæstra, southwestern Uj, and Ræl.

**Hoen:** Also deciduous, the Hoen has an overall form similar to the oak, but with large three-lobed leaves which have a light golden color. The bark of the tree is even lighter than the silver birch, and the wood itself is naturally a pale color which makes it quite valuable. It makes excellent bows (+15 to +30 depending on craftsman).

Hoen trees are rare and flourish when tended by Elyes. The isle of Talæn is heavily forested with them, and the Emerald Forest is said to have a number deep in its embrace. The Iylar realm of Lys has Hoen sprinkled through its numerous forests. Hoen do grow elsewhere, including western Hæstra and some areas of Námár-Tol.

**Mahogany:** A tropical tree with a very hard, reddish-brown wood.

**Miran:** This deciduous beauty is rarely encountered outside of Elven lands. Originally only found on Urulan, seedlings were brought by Elven colonists in the early centuries of the Third Era.

Mirans are similar to maples in many ways, but with lighter, smooth bark and rounded, dark green leaves which turn deep gold in the Fall. Miran seeds are like walnut-sized acorns, dark brown with a golden cap. They are delicious to eat, and a handful can provide a full day's sustenance.

**Navaal:** A valued tree, the reddish wood of the Navaal is similar to mahogany but with striking grain patterns. The tree grows wild in the Rulaash and Quon jungles, but harvesting these huge tropical conifers is a major undertaking.

**Oak:** Of the beech family, it yields a hard, smooth wood.

**Tonak:** A soft, coniferous wood; pulp excellent for paper.

**Vitran:** A tall deciduous tree which has beautiful fine-grained grey-brown wood.

## STONE

Most of the following are architectural materials.

**Granite:** Dense, igneous rock used in construction. Granite can be polished to a high luster, and most has an elegant dark grey or black color with inclusions of similar color.

**Limestone:** Yellow-grey, soft stone frequently used in construction.

**Marble:** This decorative, dense limestone is formed in many varieties. The finest, ungrained white marble is known as Pentallitic, used chiefly for sculpture because of its regularity. Red, green and blue varieties with fine veins are valued primarily for architectural uses such as building facings and floor tiles. *Travertine* is a pale brown color, laced with myriad small wormholes (actually air bubbles) also favored for building use. *Pentallitic* is white with a translucent appearance.

**Porphyry:** A smooth purplish rock, sometimes with veins, used as facings.

**Ky'taal:** A translucent white marble, workable but resilient. It is found almost exclusively in the Mur Postisyr region of northwest Jaiman.

**Orhan Marble:** While not really from the Great Moon, this beautiful blue-white stone has innate properties which suggest an almost 'heavenly' origin. "Evil" beings or creatures which serve the Unlife must make a RR vs a 2-10th lvl attack (depending on how much and how pure the marble is) when passing through a doorway of Orhan Marble. Even if they succeed, if they do so by less than 50 (and have no other identity-cloaking devices/spells) the marble will glow bright blue. Orhan Marble was used long ago in the construction of certain good places of power, but the material is rare and hard to work. In small quantities it is not very useful.

## GEMS

Among the most precious of objects in any pre-industrial society are gems and jewels. Below is a listing of gemstones a PC might encounter (if he is lucky). A few of the gems described below are intrinsically enchanted.

### GENERAL DESCRIPTION NOTES

Most mineral gems are either *crystalline*, occurring as single stones, each with a definite structure that is regularly repeated throughout crystals of the same sort; or *massive*, occurring as continuous masses of that mineral, having no regular structure that is readily discernible.

Crystalline stones are generally smaller, more valuable, and often faceted—a process by which they are flaked or ground into a series of flat faces that together usually form one of several customary cuts, in the shape of symmetrical but irregular polyhedra.

Both crystalline and massive stones may be smooth cut, which is the act of forming them into regular shapes with flat surfaces suitable for engraving (such as often found in signet rings). They may be made into *cabochons*, which are oval or round dome-like shapes with one flat side for mounting on various surfaces. They may also be carved into beads, figurines, or other shapes, or simply polished in the natural shape of the stone. Massive stones are sometimes found large enough to be shaped like one would wood or architectural stone; sections may be sawn off and used decoratively as slabs; or, they may be carved into jars, bowls, and other functional shapes.

Inclusions are any of the specks of material, bubbles, tiny flaws, impurities and the like which affect the appearance of a stone by their presence. Cat's-eye stones, found among many mineral families, are caused by certain patterns of inclusions which, when a stone is shaped properly, present an appearance like the slit-shaped pupil of a cat's eye. Star gems have analogous patterns creating the illusion of a pale, six-rayed star. Both cat's-eyes and stars must usually be cut into cabochons to display these effects.