

Duke's Park

New City





Old City

Duke's Stronghold

Duke's Pier

Breakwater

To find the distance moved, measure the straight line between the two points with the city scale ruler.

-  Tower
-  Market
-  Contour Line (30' height)
-  Wall
-  Streets
-  Pier
-  Gate

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DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®

Basic Game Adventure

The Veiled Society

by David Cook



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PREFACE

Dawn's light reached through the window to shine on the man who sat brooding in the chair. Cartha Radu, brother to Anton Radu (the leader of the Veiled Society), was thinking. "Today is the day," he said to himself. "Today is the day to bring my plan into action," Cartha smiled.

Below his tower window, the cityfolk slowly awoke. Today was the Festival of Lucor. The goodwives flung open their shutters to the morning. Fishmongers and hawkers heartened their cries. Actors and jugglers

filled the streets, up from their beds of straw in the stables.

On a dusty road a few miles outside the city, a small group roused itself. Some stretched their cramped bones, pained by a night on the damp grass. Others polished their swords and armor. With little ado, they packed their small camp and set out on the road once more. The excitement tingled among them, for today they would reach the city of Specularum — the home of their new fortunes!

An Adventure for Character Levels 1-3

PREPARING FOR THE ADVENTURE

The Veiled Society is an adventure that takes place in the city of Specularum. Player characters become involved in the power struggles of the city.

The "Veiled Society" includes paper sculpture buildings which will introduce a three-dimensional element into your campaign. Cut out and build the paper sculptures found in the center of this book. Your players may then see what the city looks like and where events occur.

Before playing the first encounter, read this introduction and the encounter carefully. It is not necessary for you to read the entire module before you play. The adventure will last many nights; read only those parts you will play in one session.

Specularum

The setting for this adventure is the City of Specularum (shown on the inset map).

Specularum, the capital of the Grand Duchy of Karameikos, is the most important city in the area. Specularum and the Duchy are ruled by Duke Stefan Karameikos the Third. Specularum is the Duke's home, and the trading center of his dukedom. About 5,000 people live in or very near the city. They are farmers, craftsmen, sailors, and traders.

The city is accessed by a port. The port is

protected on the seaward side by two long breakwaters. A large river east of the city allows ships to carry cargos inland to other towns of the dukedom.

The Duke has protected his city from attack by erecting a wall around it. The wall is dotted with 24 towers. His castle is located on a craggy hill that looms over the harbor entrance. In the city, the Duke keeps 500 soldiers ready for any emergency. The Duke also has an elite troop, the Elvenguard, who go on special missions and sometimes act as his bodyguard. The entire Elvenguard often patrols the forest lands to the north.

Just to the south of the city is the private estate of the Duke, managed by a loyal cousin. This land is mostly well-tended woods and gardens. It is surrounded by a low (15') wall. The Duke uses the estate as a summer palace and hunting preserve. Anyone found on the grounds is treated as a poacher.

Poor workers and petty thieves live just outside the city walls. They work outlying farms and the Estate of Marilenev, a holding that surrounds the city.

There is a street map of the city on the inside cover. This map shows only a few specific buildings. Use this map when the characters move around the city. Since the streets are narrow, muddy, and crowded, characters move at the normal dungeon rate. The

encounters are keyed to specific streets. As the adventure progresses, you may want to note information on the map — the location of an inn or the name of an armorer. The city has all standard services that the characters need; place the service businesses wherever you wish.

The city is a crowded, noisy, unsanitary place. It is like the medieval cities of Germany and Italy. Reading about these cities will provide information useful in describing Specularum.

The streets are very narrow, twisting, and dark. There is no sewage system, except for trenches in the centers of streets. Pigs, chickens, geese, and goats are not uncommon in the poorer sections of the city.

Most buildings stand one or two stories. They are made of dried clay brick or mud and wattle, constructed on a wooden frame. A few buildings are made of stone or fired brick. Most businesses are on the ground floor, the owner living upstairs.

Water is drawn from public wells, or from the river when the tide is flowing out.

Crime and gangs are not uncommon. The gangs meet near the city walls and in the squalid sections late at night.

Running a City Adventure

Most of your adventures have occurred in dungeons. This adventure is much different — the action takes place in a city. Players will often surprise you with their decisions and actions. As they become involved in the events of this adventure, their characters will go places and do things that are not explained here.

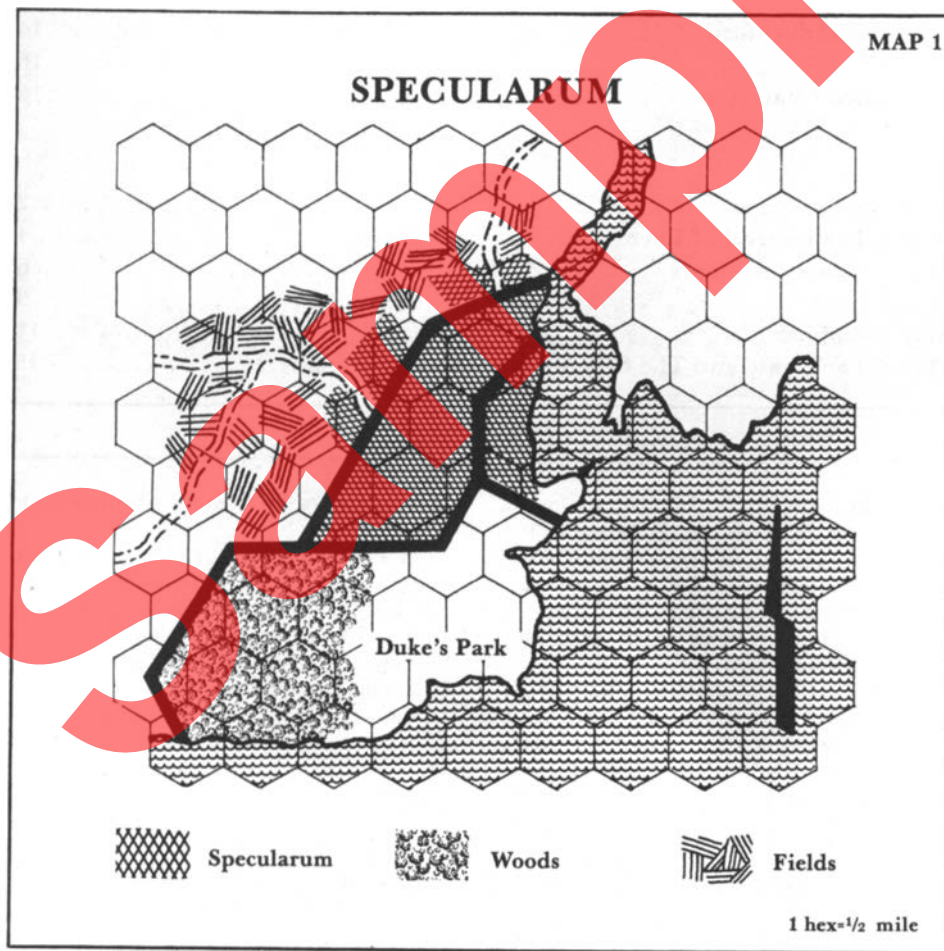
Allow the characters to visit places not shown on the maps. Have the player write down the name of the place, its location, and any important facts about it. If the character returns to this place, have the player remind you about the important details. This makes your job easier and encourages the players to pay attention and remember details.

Characters will also deal with NPCs that are not detailed in the adventure. Do not panic! Have fun with your duties as DM — take the role of the NPC and play it like an actor. Give these people character and emotions. Give the players reason for remembering NPCs. Again, if the NPC is important, have the player note facts about him — where he can be found, what he is like, and what he knows.

The Paper Sculpture

In the center of this module you will find several pages of drawings and diagrams to assemble and use during play. These sculptures are buildings and other features of the city that form scenery for the encounters.

You can continue to use these sculptures in other adventures of your own creation. Once you are done with play, simply store them



THE FAMILIES OF SPECULARUM

carefully in a box until you need them again.

To build the sculptures you need scissors, a ruler, glue, and colored markers or pencils. The instructions for assembling the paper sculptures are on page 10. Read these instructions carefully before doing anything with the sculptures!

On the fold-in panel of the back cover are several characters to cut out and use during play. Many of the **ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™** Metal Miniatures are also suitable for use in this adventure.

Encounters

This adventure is divided into a series of separate encounters. All encounters, when linked together and played in order, make a complete adventure. The encounters are unlike many other **D&D®** adventures. In these encounters, it is likely that the players will not always act as a group. Some of the characters may side with one family, while others may be drawn to another. If this happens, characters may find themselves in con-

flict with each other. This is allowable; however, do not force the player characters into situations where they must kill each other. Allow them to escape the situation, but do not make it easy for them.

Some encounters take place on the streets of the city. Maps provided in the adventure show how to place the paper sculpture buildings to form the scene. This set-up serves as a 3-dimensional map for the adventure.

Random Encounters

There are no random encounters in this adventure. If the characters need to find a fairly common person (a street urchin, beggar, merchant, etc.), they will not have much trouble. If they want to find an unusual type of person (a cleric, fighter, magic-user, noble, etc.), they must go to a place where that person can be found (a temple, for example) or spend time and money visiting inns, markets, and taverns asking questions. If the characters want to find or speak to a particularly powerful or important person, their chances

are almost nonexistent unless they have important information or reason.

The city has several churches, most for Lawful clerics. There are a few Neutral churches, but not many people attend. There are even Chaotic churches; these are very secret and do not advertise their existence in any way. If the characters need healing or similar help, they may obtain it if their cleric goes to his church. Of course, the player characters are required to make some type of offering (anything from flowers to magic items) and may be required to do some service for the church.

NOTE: NPCs listed as Normal Humans have a -1 chance to hit and a -1 on saving throws. They save as a 1st level Fighter.

Characters are healed 1 hit point per day of rest. Rest means no fighting, magic using, or more travel than within an inn (upstairs, downstairs, etc.).



Three families are engaged in the struggle for power in **Specularum**. Each faction is identified by that family's name.

Radu

At a still-spritely 63 years, Anton Radu controls his family and organization with an iron, but hidden hand. He is assisted by his brother Cartha, his own sons Zweis and Antonito, and their sons Theodosius, Emil, and Pieter.

They are also the leaders of the secret Veiled Society, which uses terror and crime against all enemies. Only some members of the society know them as its leaders.

The Radu family has many contacts in the business and market areas of the city. Their strong control over the waterfront and wall districts of **Specularum** greatly influences the shipbuilding and import/export businesses. The Radu are attempting to gain control of the money-lending institutions and businesses of the city so they may dictate terms to the Duke.



Torenescu

Once a powerful faction controlling the everyday business of the city, the Torenescu Family has been weakened by the death of its leader, Christoph Torenescu. It is currently headed by his son Aleksandar, a youth of 26. Because of Aleksandar's young age and internal squabbling (especially between Aleksandar and his uncle, Boris), the Torenescu family has lost power and followers.

The family wants to return to its former glory. The Torenescu still have a great deal of political influence and discreet control on "The Hill," the noble district of town. Others siding with Torenescu include Lady Magda, Yaros (one of the Dukes's Privy Councillors), and "Lord" Dimitros (the self-styled prince of beggars).

Vorloi

Considered by the other factions to be an upstart, the Vorloi family has refused to fit the political mold. The faction is openly con-



trolled by Baron Vorloi. Drawing on his resources as a successful merchant prince, Baron Vorloi maintains a fleet of merchant ships in defiance of the Radu family. He resists all their attempts to control his business (or the businesses of those who side with him). The Torenescu are no more pleased with the Vorloi, since the Baron refuses to side with them simply because the Torenescu represent nobility.

Vorloi prefers that he and those who side with him be left alone. He has been able to maintain privacy through his influence in the military circles around the Duke. He hopes to gain more power and wring important trade concessions from the Duke. To reach this goal, he tries to prevent open strife and silence any bad news that might reach the Duke. Preventing any problems keeps other families from gaining favor from the Duke.

Other members of the the Vorloi faction include the Baron's daughter Marianna, Mikel (the Commander of the Guard Phorsis), and Admiral Hyraskos. He also has a son, Grygori. Unfortunately, the boy is simple-minded and foolish, much to his father's disgust.

THE FESTIVAL OF LUCOR

Anton Radu leaned forward, resting his bony arms on the table. He looked carefully at the others — Zweis, Antonito, and Cartha — trying to guess their hidden doubts. “It is true that Lady Magda will be in the festival?”

“Yes, father,” Zweis quickly said. “She is to lead the Parade of Maidens from the castle.”

“The members have been informed. All will be ready,” Cartha softly rumbled.

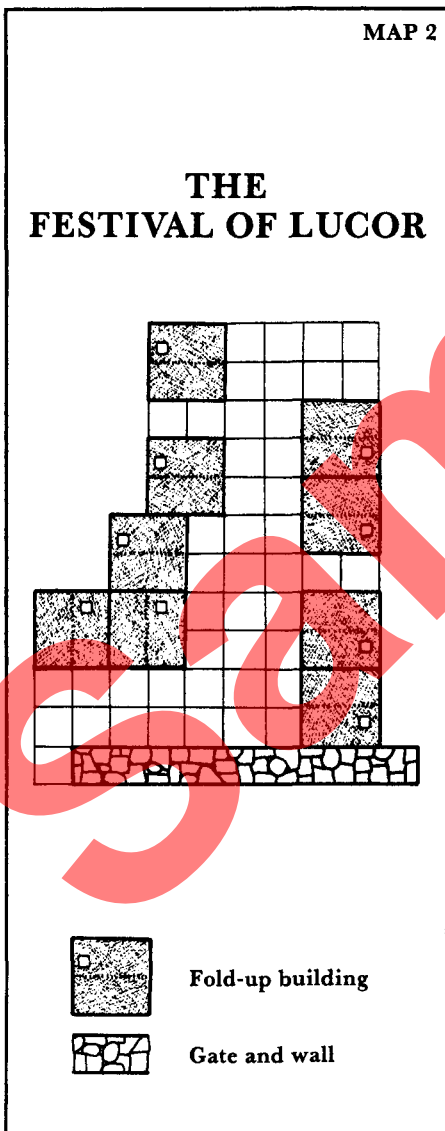
“And our friends, Antonito, do they suspect?”

“My spies report nothing, Father. No one suspects.” Antonito quickly dropped his gaze from his father’s eyes.

“Very good. Then at the Festival of Lucor, we will proceed.”

Entering Specularum

The diagram to the left shows how to place the fold-up buildings for this encounter. Place all but the character pieces as shown.



This encounter will acquaint the players with the city and how things are done here. It also encourages the players to join different sides of the power struggle. Allow the players to ask questions and learn about their surroundings as they play. Be ready to create answers to common questions: Is there an inn nearby? How much does it cost? What time of day is it?

Into the City

The player characters enter the city for the first time. The players should place their figures outside the city gate.

The gate is open. A few soldiers with spears lounge near the entrance. They wear tabards of red and blue with a device of a ship on the front. Beyond the gate is a narrow muddy street. It is choked with people. Most dress in their best clothes and many wear brightly-colored outfits. Jugglers and fire-eaters are scattered throughout the crowd. The noise from whistles, drums, singing, and happy chatter make normal talk difficult.

“Halt! Do you wish to enter Specularum?” shouts a guard inside the gate. “The tax is 8 silver pieces, each of you. All but daggers must be bound with cloth. Unbound weapons are fined. Murder by unbound weapon is punished by confiscation of property, or death for the landless. Interference with the Duke’s men gets you prison. Treasonous activity is especially nice — it gets you one day of slow torture and then we draw and quarter you. So enjoy yourselves.”

The guard appears quite bored. He tries to watch the festival out of the corner of his eye as the characters talk to him. He recites his speech from memory, becoming interested only when he begins talking about the punishments doled out for crimes.

The guard collects the tax from the player characters (3 sp of the 8 goes into his pocket). He checks all weapons to see that they are secured. He lashes swords with thongs and wraps spears and the like with rags. It will take characters one round to remove the bindings from their weapons. After binding the weapons, the guard forgets about the characters and turns his attention back to the festival. The guard has lived here all of his life and can answer most questions asked about the city and what is going on.

Beyond the gate swirls a crowd of people. Mud churned up by stumbling dancers cakes on the crowd’s boots. People jostle each other, straining for a look at acrobats, knife-throwers, dancing bears, and minstrels. The smells of sewage, grilled meats, breads, sweat, and wine mingle in a strange, but inoffensive odor.

Suddenly the crowd sways to the sides of the street. The music fades and changes to bells and chanting. Statues carried by several men seem to float above the heads of the crowd. A sedan chair, borne on the shoulders of clerics, follows.

“The procession is coming!” shouts a young boy.

Advancing toward the gate is the Procession of Lucor. The procession is a religious celebration honoring a legendary local cleric named Lucor. It winds through the streets of the city to the harbor, where the statue of Lucor is floated out to sea. Each year a woman of notable rank and importance leads the procession. This year Lady Magda, a member of the Torenescu faction, has this honor.

The festival is of great importance. This fact well suits the Radu — if the festival has problems, problems that look like they were caused by the Torenescu supporters, the Torenescu would be disgraced.

The procession stops. Something is happening at its front. Three men are arguing. A general hush falls over the crowd as everyone moves back from the procession. Two men, one small, plump, and pock-marked and the other tall and lean, are arguing with the lead bearer of the sedan chair.

Angrily, the small, plump man says to the lead bearer, “Bald-headed fool, do you Torenescu think you own the street? There’s space for all of us, without your ape-like behavior!”

The lead bearer contemptuously waves a rod in the small man’s face. “Out of the way of the Procession of Lucor, Radu rubble!”

The tall, lean man, spitting on the statue of Lucor says, “That old fool? You make me laugh!”

The lead bearer strikes the tall man, knocking him into the filth. The smaller man tenses, ready to lunge.

If the player characters act, they can prevent violence. If they favor the two men, the Radu seek their following. If they side with the bearer, they are sought by Torenescu supporters. Stories of the incident circulate the city. If the characters continue to watch without becoming involved, two men in green livery break up the argument and pacify both sides. These men are Vorloi servants.

After this scene, the characters can learn more about the families by asking any of the people there. Some will reply neutrally, while others fiercely support one faction or the other. Once the incident is over, the procession moves on.

Finding a Room

When the characters decide to get rooms (remind them by asking where they intend to sleep), they find all inns very crowded. Wherever they ask, only one room is available, a tiny thing that cannot hold more than 3 people. If they want it, they may have the room for 1 gold piece per person. Point out that other characters might be able to get a room at the inn across the street. There are rooms for everyone, but it means that several characters must sleep at another inn. If the characters refuse to take any rooms, they must spend the night sleeping in the mud of the streets.

When the characters pay for their rooms, tell one of the characters that some of his money is missing. He has been pickpocketed. Not much should be missing, only enough to remind the characters to be careful.

During the evening, one of the following events will happen to each player character or group of characters. If possible, do not have the same event happen to all the characters. The first event should be used for fighter and strong-looking characters, the second for thieves or a character standing outside the inn.

First Event

Read the following to strong-looking characters as they relax inside an inn.

The citizens have finally slowed their celebration of the festival, although it has taken much time, food, and strong drink. From nearby in this smoky common room comes a loud, tipsy voice.

A scarred man points. "Hey you there! Want some work? Here, sit and drink. I need strong bodies. Theosius is my name. You look brave. Do you want to earn money?"

Theosius explains that he is looking for trustworthy people to perform occasional duties for him. None of the missions involve doing anything illegal, but there may be danger involved. He will press very hard to get the player characters to seal the bargain. If they do, as a sign of good faith, Theosius gives each player character who agrees 3 gp. He will get in contact with them when they are needed. (Theosius will attempt to contact the players in the "EMPLOYMENT" section.)

Theosius works for the Torenescu and so do any player characters working for him. If the player characters ask about him, they learn that Theosius is a respected wood sculptor and craftsman in the city. It is known that

he does a great deal of work for the nobles of the city, and it is rumored he has a small hoard of money.

Second Event

Read the following to a thief or a character standing just outside the inn.

Outside the inn, a man walks by. He lurches drunkenly along. He smiles and nods as he passes. Suddenly, three hooded men step out of the shadows and the drunken man turns around. None of the men carry weapons openly.

"So, new to town, eh?" asks the drunken man, who now appears quite sober. "You look like you need some work. Now, we have some things that need to be done and you look fairly smart. I'm sure you would want to help us. You staying here?" he asks, pointing to the inn. "Be a real good idea if you didn't leave for a while. We'll see you tomorrow night. Here, catch," he says. He throws a small bag.

With that, the men slip into the shadows and run away. The bag holds 20 gold pieces.

The men are members of the Veiled Society of the Radu. If attacked, they immediately run. However, the Veiled Society will treat the player characters as enemies from then on. If the characters ask about these men, NPCs answer evasively. The people do not like talking about the hooded men. If they ask the innkeeper, he explains that he has a quiet business and likes the idea of it staying quiet. He doesn't create trouble and no one creates trouble for him.

If the characters attempt to go to the authorities, it does not help them. City officials will shuttle the player characters to different officials — the magistrate sends them to the warden, the warden to the constabulary, the constabulary to the bailiff, the bailiff to the magistrate, etc. The PCs will not find help — not because of fear, but because of bureaucracy, protection, and bribes. None of the officials are evil.

After meeting the members of the Veiled Society, the player characters are watched discreetly by the innkeepers, merchants, and members of the Society. If a player wishes to determine if the party is being watched, have him roll 1d6 and add all wisdom bonuses. He notices someone watching if the result is 5 or higher. The player characters can attempt to lose anybody trailing them, but will not know if they succeed. They will not succeed.

BENEATH THE FLOORS

Zweis nervously looked at the others around the table. Antonito casually studied his fingernails. Anton, hunched beside a candle, flipped through papers. "Zweis looks a bit uncomfortable," thought Cartha. "Good."

"So, it didn't work as you planned," Anton said, fixing a sharp eye on Zweis. "A feeble plan and it didn't work. What do we do now?"

"Make a statement," Antonito said, grinning. "A knife in the night would teach the Vorloi peace-makers a lot. The members are impatient. They want to act, no more little work."

Anton looked at him calmly, "I then assume you would lead them? We must be cautious. There will be no more mistakes. Cartha, what do you say?"

"We cannot act so long as the Vorloi are about. Use Antonito's demonstration to deal with them."

"No, we cannot," said Anton finally. "It is too soon. There is no more to say. Goodnight, see yourselves out." Anton stood and held out a trembling arm to Zweis. The younger man took it and they both shuffled out of the room.

"Well, what do you feel in your heart?" asked Cartha. "The merchant Fortunato is where I would start, Antonito."

Antonito looked to the closed door. "I agree. When shall it be done?"

At the Inn

If the characters gather at one inn the next morning, read the following. If the group does not gather in one place, read the following to either group.

It is morning at the inn. A cat stalks something in the corner of the room. The innkeeper's daughter sweeps last night's dinner off the floor. From the back comes the clicking of dishes and the splash of water. A traveller snores loudly in the corner. Suddenly, the door swings open and an elderly lady frantically looks about.

"Please, some kind sir, come quick to help me!" she pleads, panic overcoming her. She looks about for anyone to answer her. "Oh save me! There are demons in my house, I know it! I hear them at night, talking to each other. They want to catch me. Please!" she says, falling to her knees.

The innkeeper runs in, kneels beside the old woman, and tries to comfort her.