

World of Jhendor

The Plans of Demetrion Kiraljar

A World of Jhendor adventure for 4 to 6 characters of beginning to moderate ability
by Ralf Schemmann

Special Thanks To: **Max Skibinsky** (for providing the impetus and a deadline) – **Ralf Wagner**, **Joachim Gallhoff**, **Christian Lentzen** and **Florian Kudermann** (for making the original adventure a success) – **Katrin Schemmann**, **Ralf Wagner** and **Stefanie Ehmke** (for suggestions and proof-reading) – **Profantasy** Software Ltd. (for providing the map-making tools)

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Introduction

While the following adventure is generic in that it provides no game system information – you need to make up your own stats where needed – it is tied to a specific setting: The World of Jhendor. The glossary explains some of the background terms used in the text. For further information on Jhendor visit its website at <http://www.jhendor.de>.

With a little work the module can be placed in a different setting though. See the chapter “Adapting this adventure to your campaign” for some suggestions on how to do this.

“The Plans of Demetrimon Kiraljar” is not combat-heavy. PCs need to plan, scout and negotiate a lot to bring the plot to a satisfying solution. If the GM likes, she can emphasize the motif of illegitimate rule, on which the plot is based. On the other hand she can simply play it as a tactical and political exercise in which the PCs try to gain power.

The central secret of the plot will not be revealed up front in the text. This will keep a bit of the mystery for the GM during her first reading and mirrors the ignorance of the players concerning their opposition. Impatient GMs can skip ahead to page 5 to learn the “Secret of Uldoran”.

If you read or play this adventure, I would love to hear your feedback. Please send an e-mail with your experiences and opinion to ralf.schemmann@cityweb.de. Thank you!

Background

The adventure takes place in the giant metropolis Chélekar, the capital of the non-human Tlaroian Empire. The Tlaroi live in the walled inner city, which they control tightly and humans are rarely

allowed to enter. The outer districts, where humans and other species live, are largely left to govern themselves. Despite its size the outer city is basically a lawless place where might makes right and the strong exploit the weak. The Tlaroian rulers hardly care for the city’s human inhabitants and only intervene in their affairs where Tlaroian interests are concerned.

In this state of affairs government and rulership is usually limited to a few city blocks at a time. He who has money and/or power controls as much of the city as his paid mercenaries patrol or as far as his spells reach. Some of these petty rulers are just and provide real protection for their “subjects”, but many are just bullies who run elaborate protection rackets. Such is life in Chélekar.

The resulting equilibrium is precarious at best, and sometimes someone tries to upset it and grab a bigger portion of the city for himself. The next attempt will be made by **Demetrimon Kiraljar**. Having inherited a huge fortune accumulated by his father and grandfather by trade, his ambition turned from the economic to the political world. He decided to become the ruler of human Chélekar and set his money to work. A first try, mainly based on bribery and lavish gifts, failed miserably as the hard bought supporters soon forgot their allegiance. Now Demetrimon has acquired the help of an experienced mercenary captain who plans and manages the military side of a second bid for rulership. Weapons have been accumulated, soldiers hired and problem areas identified. Everything is set and ready to go.

Starting the Players

PCs can be hired either by Demetrimon Kiraljar himself or his mercenary captain **Malvin**. These two do not trust each other fully and someone hired by either could be

instructed to “keep an eye” on the other’s men, making for some interesting roleplaying situations.

Motivations for the characters can range from the purely monetary (Demetrior pays well) to the political, i.e. they want to help set up a city-wide government which would give humans a stronger voice. Or perhaps Demetrior and Malvin are calling in old favors to recruit a few more men.

The setup can be used to bring together an unfamiliar party. Malvin assigns tasks to his men depending on skill and necessity, the GM can simply assume that the characters are placed in one task force.

Neither Demetrior nor Malvin know the PCs very well and are not sure about their capabilities. Therefore they assign them to a supposedly “easy” target, a city ward that has a reputation for quiet and peace. Depending on their experience and the references they bring, the PCs are either assigned as leaders or simple muscle to the task force. Of course not everything is as easy as it seems.

Rewards

As part of their payment Demetrior will equip all his men with ordinary weapons, like swords, leather and light metal armor, shields, etc., which are theirs to keep. Additionally everyone is paid twenty Klan per day in Demetrior’s employ, which is a very generous amount, and can expect a bonus on completion of the mission. Leaders and specialists (e.g. healers or mages) will be paid double.

Those who prove themselves in the coming days can expect to win profitable positions of authority in Demetrior’s planned government.

Preparations

Malvin’s plan calls for the simultaneous overthrow of the petty lords of several strategic districts of the city and the assumption of rulership by Demetrior’s representatives. This will bring a large section of the city under his control from which he can expand at a slower pace once his rule is secure. One of the faults of the first attempt was that it tried to do too much at once, and Malvin will not repeat this mistake. The initial coup is supposed to bring about one fifth of Chélekar under

Demetrior’s rule, which is already a huge piece of the city.

The PCs’ target is an area of Chélekar known as Uldoran. Depending on how much the GM wants to involve the players in the preparation for the coup, the characters can do the necessary scouting themselves or they are simply presented with the information that Demetrior’s spies collected.

Players’ information on Uldoran

Uldoran is a quiet ward far from any of the main thoroughfares of the city. It is not widely known in Chélekar, but among those who do know of Uldoran it has a reputation for quiet orderliness and moderate wealth. Its inhabitants keep to themselves and strangers are not really welcome in Uldoran, although none are known to have been assaulted there.

The ward is “ruled” by a woman of the name Tjelvilen. She is a rich ex-courtesan who employs a small group of mercenaries to patrol the streets of Uldoran and keep order. This they seem to do reasonably well, as there are apparently few thieves in Uldoran and no muggers. It is commonly reasoned that Tjelvilen learned quite a few secrets of the local elite in her working days and that this, rather than her wealth, is the real source of her power.

Uldoran is home to a lot of small craftsmen who make a living by selling their services and goods to their own and the surrounding community. A few prosperous merchants also live here who seem to have wide-ranging connections outside Chélekar. Most Uldorans worship Elrani or Olkin, the gods of Family and Crafts, and there is a small temple of Elrani and a shrine to Olkin within the ward.

Apart from Tjelvilen there are several other important people who would need to be placated or pressured to cement the new “government” in Uldoran. They are:

Ilach Doron is one of the oldest and most respected citizens of Uldoran. He is a merchant by trade and is quite prosperous. He lives in a large house in the coreward (northern) part of the ward.

Jarn Geran owns a large smithy in the center of Uldoran and employs several journeymen. He is an active community member and acts as spokesperson when

the Uldorans want something from Tjelvilen.

Agarim is the local priest of Elrani and operates and lives in a small temple in the rimward (southern) area of the ward.

Tolin Elvara is the priestess of Olkin. She lives in the coreward (northern) part of Uldoran and looks after her goddess' shrine not far from her home.

Tjorrem, the physician, wields quite a bit of influence, since he is the only resident member of his profession. His house is not far from the temple of Elrani.

Somorrem is the richest merchant in Uldoran. This alone makes him important but the time he spends traveling limits his involvement in the community. His opulent home is near the ward's center, next to the plaza.

Dion Akaros is a prosperous tailor and a good friend of Jarn Geran. He seems to have a lot of influence on the smith. His home is coreward (north) from the center, across the street from Geran's smithy.

Silwen Earn is a local wise woman who provides charms, fortune-telling and some healing for her customers. The Uldorans apparently seek her advice on many matters.

Tjelvilen

The ruler of Uldoran seems to be an able if somewhat inactive administrator. She is not young anymore, probably in her forties, but remains a beautiful woman. She must have been absolutely stunning in her youth. She lives in a large house on the spinward (eastern) edge of the ward.

Tjelvilen employs 14 mercenaries who patrol the streets of Uldoran, keep out troublemakers, settle minor disputes among the residents and collect Tjelvilen's taxes. She obviously paid attention to her underlings' character and pays them well. Therefore the soldiers refrain from making trouble and are actually quite well-liked in the community. They are quartered in barracks near Tjelvilen's house.

Tjelvilen keeps a lover, a young foreigner by the name of **Delgin** who is reputed to be a master of spear fighting. He lives in her house and acts as a captain for her mercenaries.

Once every six days, Tjelvilen holds court. Residents of Uldoran are allowed to enter her house and bring grievances and pleas before her. She tries to give fair

judgment, which is enforced by her soldiers. She does not seem to be a brilliant judge, and Uldorans sometimes complain about her "strange" decisions. Not surprisingly her audiences are not very busy, most residents prefer to settle disputes among themselves and turn to respected elders if this proves insufficient.

The mercenaries usually do patrols around Uldoran. During daylight hours, four guards will be on station near the field in the ward's center, where they can be quickly called by anybody needing help. At night two groups of two men each will patrol the streets, and Tjelvilen's house is permanently guarded by two men.

Scouting

If the PCs do not trust the information provided by Demetrian, they can try to confirm it by doing some scouting themselves. Although rumors are circulating in the city that something big is about to happen, Tjelvilen does not feel unduly alarmed, thinking that Uldoran is uninteresting to anybody but herself. The PCs have to be careful not to alarm her. If too many strangers start to ask questions and hang around in the area, Tjelvilen will become alert. The mercenaries will patrol in threes instead of twos and the permanent watch at Tjelvilen's house will be increased to four. As this overtaxes the mercenaries manpower, the schedule will return to normal after a day or two.

Superficial scouting will only confirm the information gathered by Demetrian's spies. But if the PCs think the situation through, they should wonder why Uldoran is as free of depravations and crime as it is. The guards are few, there is neither a rich consortium protecting the area, nor a powerful sorcerer weaving spells of protection. Close inquiries in the neighboring quarters will reveal that thieves trying to ply their trade in Uldoran often return with reports that it is not as prosperous as it looks, and that there are no worthwhile targets. More research will reveal that these thieves all have vanished somehow. They supposedly left the city, moved to a different area, died, etc. The PCs will be unable to locate any of them.

If the PCs check back with Malvin or Demetrian on these suspicious findings, they will be informed that it is too late to change the plan. They might be provided some additional help (four more men at

most), but will be expected to deal with any arising trouble themselves. That is what they were hired for after all.

Resources

The PCs will not be alone in the appointed task. Demetrimon will supply material resources in the form of weapons, armor and equipment, as far as it is needed. Nothing will be overly fancy or magical, but everything is of adequate quality. He will also provide a purse with 40 Ilas (gold coins) which will be sufficient for small to medium bribes.

Malvin will assign about 15 of his men to the task in addition to the PCs, the exact number depending on the size of the group. The total should not exceed 20 men. These will be a more or less equal mixture of competent fighters and rogues, led by one of Malvin's lieutenants, a woman named Cypra.

Cypra is a tough, middle-aged mercenary, who has seen too many battles in her time. She would like to find a quiet position to spend her "retirement" days. She hopes Demetrimon's coup will result in such an opportunity. Depending on the experience of the PCs, either any one of them is put in charge of the operation in Uldoran, or Cypra will be the leader. Even if the latter is the case, PCs should have enough opportunity to act independently and responsibly as Cypra is quick to delegate tasks to her subordinates and always open to suggestions.

Demetrimon will also supply a map of Uldoran on which the most important locations are marked (see player handout).

The Coup

Demetrimon will set his plans in motion on the third day of the month Rimail in the year 1783 Imperial. The PCs (or Cypra if she is the leader) are free to execute their takeover of Uldoran anytime on that day, but not earlier or later. The best time is probably early in the morning before dawn, as news from Demetrimon's coup will arrive in Uldoran during the day and put Tjelvilen and her mercenaries on alert.

Objectives

The final goal is of course to take power in Uldoran in the name of Demetrimon Kiraljar and establish – his – law and order. To achieve this goal, the PCs need to meet several objectives.

- They need to capture, kill or permanently drive off **Tjelvilen**, so that she can not try to oppose Demetrimon's rule in the future.
- The **mercenaries** need to be confined or captured, so that they cannot fight back. Those that can be bought could be offered positions in the new "government", while all others must be killed or captured and disarmed.
- The PCs must secure the **compliance of the local populace** by argument, threat or force. If they cannot keep order and the Uldorans start to fight back or riot, Demetrimon's rule will be shaky at best. How they do this is up to them, but **convincing the majority of the local elite** is a good place to start.

Capturing Tjelvilen

The easiest part of the whole affair is probably to get hold of the local ruler. Tjelvilen's house is only guarded by two men (if the PCs did not alert the locals), and she is not a fighter or spell-caster herself. The biggest obstacle will be her lover Delgin who is an expert warrior and will fight to protect his love. The two will be in their common bedroom if the PCs try to get Tjelvilen before dawn. They will be completely surprised if the intruders manage to be stealthy and overpower the guards without noise.

Should something awaken Delgin, he will grab his spear, which he keeps close to him at all times, and will go to investigate. If he suspects an attack he will try to take the time to put on his armor, a set of splendid scale mail.

Taking on Delgin one-on-one is very dangerous because of his fighting skills. It would be better to convince him that fighting is pointless, take Tjelvilen hostage to make him surrender, or attack him with several people at once.

Tjelvilen really loves Delgin and she will be the PCs' mortal enemy if they kill him. Should that happen nothing short of death will keep her from getting revenge.

After the woman is captured, keeping her in a safe place should pose no problem. She can be freed once Demetrior's rule is firmly established.

Getting rid of the Mercenaries

The next, or better yet simultaneous, step is capturing and disarming the mercenaries. These are competent fighters and quite loyal to Tjelvilen. The larger their number, the more likely they are to fight when confronted. The most obvious strategy is to pick off the nightly patrols one by one and surprise the rest when off-duty. As long as the soldiers are seriously outnumbered or strongly surprised, they will surrender without putting up a fight.

Demetrior's spies missed that not all of the soldiers are living in the barracks. Two of them have married locals and live in their own homes. If they are not apprehended, they might serve as a nucleus around which resistance forms.

Only about a third of the mercenaries will be willing to work for someone else but Tjelvilen. The rest's loyalty is too strong or they are too angry about having been overpowered to consider changing sides immediately. One or two might even try to feign a change of allegiance to get a chance to avenge or rescue their former employee. They are not very good liars though, and the PCs should be able to weed them out, if they keep their ears and eyes open.

The Local Elite

The final step supposed is to be announcing the change of "government" to the locals and getting them to accept it quietly and peacefully. The PCs should seek out the most important members of the community, make the situation clear to them and get their pledge of compliance either individually or communally. Whether they use persuasion, promises, hostages or threat of violence to achieve this, is the PCs' to decide. Demetrior's future rule would certainly benefit from a non-violent takeover though.

As the PCs talk to the different people, they might realize that part of the notables form a sworn circle that makes no decision without consulting the others. They should identify Ilach Doron, Jarn Geran, and Tolin Elvara as the leading decision makers. They seem to be running things and it might become apparent that they and not

Tjelvilen are the ones that make things work in Uldoran.

With some sweet-talking and gentle pressure the PCs can extract promises that people will stay quiet and accept the new order. They should remain careful though and a bit uneasy, wondering whether these promises are sincere.

The coup seems complete at this point, everything is quiet, the PCs think they have everything under control. And of course this is the point where things begin to go wrong.

Complications

By now the PCs and the rest of Demetrior's men will probably be spread out across Uldoran. Some will be patrolling others gone to talk to particular people. If the characters organized the whole affair properly and keep an eye on their underlings, they will notice that a patrol gets back earlier than expected and a pair of men returns with an unfinished errand without reporting back. When questioned, they prove evasive on the reasons or give lame excuses but will set out again after their orders have been restated.

Treachery!

If the PCs do not investigate these happenings and take appropriate action, some time later a soldier (or more if patrols are larger than two men) will return to their base bleeding from a heavy wound. He explains that he and his companion were suddenly attacked in an alley by some youngsters, and when he turned to face the assailants his companion attacked him from behind. He could barely escape but the attackers fled together with the traitor when another patrol arrived on the scene. Questioning the men will reveal that the traitor was one of those who returned earlier without finishing their errands.

The Secret of Uldoran

Uldoran is not as "normal" as it looks. Nearly half the population of the ward are not really humans at all, but shapeshifting Driandri – a race of doppelgangers.

These are not monsters though. They live here, because they have to live somewhere, and desire nothing as much as

to be left in peace. Tjelvilen, who is human, found out their secret a long time ago and made a pact with the Driandri. They would let her rule Uldoran and she would do everything in her power to keep the secret. This is the true base of her rule and the arrangement has worked very well – until now. Demetrimon’s coup has upset the balance and the Driandri feel that the influx of strangers poses a great risk.

The Legend of the Driandri

Once upon a time the Driandri lived in their own homeland, a green and fertile country. They had their own faces and bodies and were beautiful to behold. Then Humans came to their land. They were envious of the Driandri’s beauty and desired the rich fields, so they made war. Being no fighters the Driandri were slaughtered by the thousands. The survivors fled to remote places but were hunted without pity by the humans. In despair they called upon their gods to protect them from their implacable enemies.

The gods granted their prayers. They gave the Driandri the power to take the shape of their pursuers so that they could hide among them and escape unnoticed. But the gift came with a price. In exchange the gods took away the Driandri’s own beautiful form, so that they always have to take another’s guise.

The Driandri’s Power

A Driandri can assume the exact appearance of another being (of about his own mass, i.e. within 10-20%), if he or she has the time to study it closely for a few moments.

Driandri do not have a form of their own. Mothers define the look of their offspring by looking at other children. Driandri learn to control their appearance themselves at the age of about twelve, as a rite of passage. Only in death do Driandri lose any assumed appearances and their bodies and faces become strangely featureless.

A Driandri can assume any appearance he has “learned” again and again, switching between them as desired. The process of transformation takes only a few seconds.

Human paranoia and xenophobia would probably lead to a bloody pogrom in case their secret would be discovered. Many Driandri would like to restore the status quo and bring Tjelvilen back to power. This makes them enemies of the PCs.

The Driandri are not united in their view of the situation though. Many of the younger ones feel a kind of loyalty to Tjelvilen and want to act immediately, attacking the intruders and restoring their “ruler”. They already overpowered some of the strangers and took their places. The last attack went wrong, and a soldier escaped wounded, alerting the PCs.

Their elders see the larger picture. Once it becomes apparent that the coup is not limited to Uldoran, they will realize that restoring Tjelvilen is no solution, Demetrimon’s men would just come back and try again. If they have the time and opportunity to meet, the elders will decide on a plan to let the newcomers take power and then slowly and carefully replace them with Driandri. They are not happy with this, as they do not like to “rule” themselves but feel that this is their only option.

Identifying Driandri

Not all of Uldoran is populated by Driandri, and the PCs might even at first assume that there is only a handful of doppelgangers. But there are clues to where the Driandri live and ways to recognize them.

The Driandri community is centered in the coreward (northern) part of Uldoran (see map “Driandri in Uldoran”). In contrast to many of their neighbors they use family names, i.e. Ilach Doron is a Driandri name, while Somorrem is not. Of course this is not a foolproof method to identify doppelgangers.

There is one physical feature which can betray a Driandri. Their blink reflex (the reflex that makes the eye blink unconsciously), is much less pronounced than in humans. This is not directly apparent to an observer, but someone who talks to a Driandri might get the feeling that he is “staring” at him.

The Driandri have no supernatural way to get the memories of someone they impersonate. They have to make do with the things they learn by spying and talking to others. This is of course a major

weakness, and the PCs should be able to detect the doppelgangers among their men once they have figured this out.

The PCs should not easily witness a shapechanging. The Driandri do not do this callously and in plain sight. Instead let them keep guessing until they slowly figure out a combination of clues to identify their opponents.

GM Note: To see where Driandri live in Uldoran and who of the elite is a doppelganger check the map "Driandri in Uldoran" and the NPC descriptions.

Countermeasures

The PCs will certainly take measures to insure, that not more of their men are replaced by doppelgangers. A combination of a password system and larger patrols will probably do the trick but might force the Driandri to concentrate on the leaders of the "invaders", i.e. Cypra and the PCs.

After a tense time, when each party is trying to learn more about the other and find a way to outwit the opposition, a stalemate might result. The Driandri will be unwilling to attack in force, as they are no fighters and will find it difficult to get at the alerted PCs. And the characters will have no way to eliminate their foes without having to kill half the population of Uldoran.

It is quite possible to incite a riot and pogrom at this point, if the PCs make the Driandri secret public and do a bit of agitation but an act of such depravity should not be committed by PCs. It would also make all surviving Driandri into mortal enemies, destroy the peace and prosperity of Uldoran and give Demetrion's reign an ugly start.

Getting help from outside

Faced with their dangerous opponents, PCs might decide that they have inadequate resources to deal with this threat alone. If they do the logical thing, they will send messages to Malvin and Demetrion and call for help.

If the players really have a hard time dealing with the Driandri, the GM can let Malvin send a few extra men or even a magician with some divination spells. On the other hand, they might also be preoccupied with a tense situation in another part of the city and have no

resources to spare. "Deal with it yourselves" would be the answer to the PCs message.

If the PCs have few problems or the GM feels especially mean, Demetrion or Malvin might even demand that they send some of their own men to other trouble spots as reinforcements.

Roleplaying the Driandri

The GM should try to show the players that the Driandri are not evil monsters. They are primarily simple, peaceful folk who happen to have a strange power. They only fight to defend the status quo and to keep their secret.

The Driandri are also individuals. Their attitudes towards humans in general and to the intruders in particular differ widely. This is exemplified in the split between younger Driandri and their elders.

The Driandri live beside and among humans who do not know their true nature. This fact can be used to confuse the players but is also proof that Driandri get along with their neighbors quite well when left in peace.

Resolution

No matter how the PCs deal with the immediate threat posed by the doppelgangers, they should eventually come to the conclusion that they need to negotiate an agreement. Otherwise Demetrion's rule in Uldoran cannot be properly secured unless they commit genocide.

If they have identified one or more of the Driandri elders – Ilach Doron, Jarn Geran, Silwen Earn, Tolin Elvara, and Dion Akaros – they can approach these. If not, they could make a public call for talks or send a captured doppelganger with a message to his leaders. The chance of the Driandri listening will be best if their secret has been kept so far.

The PCs could try to make the Driandri situation public, while at the same time starting a campaign to show their "good" nature. This might work at first, especially where old neighbors are concerned. But

eventually distrust and paranoia will probably overcome common sense. If someone knows that there are doppelgangers around, it is very easy to blame all kinds of things on them. Unscrupulous strangers might also try to use the Driandris' powers for their own plans by bribery or blackmail. In the end the Driandri will be forced to pack their belongings and flee, setting themselves up in a different place.

The best solution for both parties would be an agreement similar to the one the Driandri had with Tjelvilen. A human as "ruler" of Uldoran would keep the Driandri out of the spotlight, lessening the chance of revealing their nature. In exchange Driandri support of the new "government" will once again insure peace and prosperity in Uldoran. Demetrium's taxes might be higher than Tjelvilen's, but his protection will also be better.

Tjelvilen herself could be a problem, if she survived the coup. As she knows the Driandris' secret she cannot be allowed to simply go free. The doppelgangers and the PCs will have to decide what to do with her.

At this point the PCs will have to decide whether they will clue Malvin and Demetrium in on the nature of Uldoran's inhabitants. Both will be quite willing to enter an agreement, not least because they see the potential of having doppelganger allies. At least the person who will be Demetrium's governor of Uldoran should know about the Driandri, but perhaps that will be one of the PCs?

The Outcome

The GM can use the success of the PCs in Uldoran as a general measure for the outcome of Demetrium's coup. If they did well, he got a large portion of Chélekar under his control and is ready to continue his bid for the whole city. If they just barely managed to gain control and are still struggling with the Driandri problem, resistance has been stiffer than anticipated and Demetrium will have a tough time ahead as he tries to consolidate his wins. If the PCs failed miserably, Demetrium and Malvin have suffered a crushing defeat and will have to wait a long time before they can try again.

Alternatively – and more realistically – the outcome of the coup is independent from the PCs action. In this case the GM

can choose any outcome she likes or base the results on a throw of the dice.

If the PCs are interested in positions of authority and power, they might try to become the governors of Uldoran for Demetrium. He will grant their wish, if they have handled their task well, did not depend on outside help, and can convince him that they have gained the trust of the populace of Uldoran. Their responsibilities would be protecting Uldoran and Demetrium's interest in the ward, while at the same time collecting his taxes.

Aftermath – An Ugly Surprise?

The situation in Chélekar is actually more complex than it appears on the surface and than even Malvin and Demetrium know. Few people are aware that there are actually more humans living in Chélekar than Tlaroi, but the Tlaroi rulers know this quite well. A unified human population with a central government is not in their interest.

Usually they monitor the events in the outer city and take subtle steps to prevent anyone of gaining too much power. If Demetrium's coup was successful, this strategy has now failed. To address the situation the Empress deploys two full legions into the outer city, each five thousand strong: They have orders to arrest Demetrium, Malvin and any of their underlings they can lay hands on. This of course means the PCs too.

Demetrium will be captured and dragged into the inner city, never to be heard from again, while Malvin manages to flee from Chélekar and avoid pursuit. The PCs best bet will be to vanish for a while, lying low until the fury of the Empress has passed. If they treated the Driandri well and came to an agreement with the elders, the doppelgangers will help them escape, even hiding them in their own houses. The PCs might even be welcome in Uldoran again, when the dust has settled.

Alternative endings

If the GM wants to end the adventure less drastically, she might consider a different turn of events.

If the Tlaroi do not intervene, Demetrium's plans can still be compromised by infighting. Malvin is certainly not one to easily accept an inferior position, so he might try to make

his own bid for power. He is a much better tactician but lacks the merchant's wealth and some of his charisma. If the PCs are still involved, they have to choose sides, but fighting between the two factions can easily ruin the whole scheme.

Or Demetrior's plans come to fruition and he unites human Chélekar under his rule. Friction between the Tlaroi and the human government and the PCs role in the whole affair offers more than enough material for further adventures in Chélekar.

NPCs

This chapters contains details on the non-player characters appearing in the adventure.

Demetrior Kiraljar

The Kiraljar Family has been involved in trading for several generations, and Demetrior's grandfather finally hit it big. He managed to become a middle-man for Narsarian merchants wanting to sell their goods in Chélekar and made a fortune. His son, Demetrior's father, diversified and improved on this foundation, making the Kiraljars one of the richest families in human Chélekar. Demetrior was trained to succeed his father but never acquired his elders passion for trade. Instead he turned to politics, and when his father died, he set the immense wealth at his disposal to work on gaining power. His dream is to rule all humans in Chélekar and deal on equal terms with the Chélek.

Demetrior is generous with his money, and has attracted quite a following. He is a charismatic individual and fancies himself a great ruler. He might even make a fair administrator and good judge, as he understands economics and people. He is no soldier or general though, not even a good conspirator, which led to the failure of his first attempt at a coup.

Demetrior is of medium height and keeps himself physically fit. His dark hair is carefully groomed and he regularly dyes the gray streaks that have begun to appear since he has reached his late thirties. He is a pleasant host, fair and generous to those in his employ and always tries to make people like him.

Malvin

This mercenary appeared in Chélekar several months ago and quickly made a reputation. He is ruthless and efficient, always ready to fight alongside his men, but is also an accomplished diplomat and negotiator. The pact between Demetrior and Malvin has proven exceptionally successful so far, as the two compliment each other well.

But Malvin has no intention of remaining an underling of Demetrior, high as he might rise. He wants to rule himself, and is quite willing to get rid of his co-conspirator and replace him. But for the time being he needs Demetrior's wealth and charisma.

Malvin knows the power struggles in Chélekar well and is confident that Demetrior's scheme can succeed. His mistake is not taking the Tlaroi into account.

The mercenary is an imposing man. Taller than most and broader than anyone, he comes across as very intimidating. His shock of bright red hair and his piercing blue eyes do nothing to lessen this impression.

Digging into Malvin's mysterious past will only reveal that he fought in some Narsarian trade wars some time ago and that this is not his first visit to Chélekar. Nothing more can be learned.

Tjelvilen

The combination of a poor birth and good looks made Tjelvilen's career choice easy. She became a prostitute. The girl also had a quick mind, keen senses, and a desire to get more out of life. She used her charms to learn quite a few important and profitable secrets from her clients and set herself up as a high class courtesan. A combination of factors led her to discover the secret of Uldoran. She approached the Driandri elders very carefully, at first gently blackmailing them but finally reaching an agreement. In exchange for keeping their secret she would rule Uldoran and live out her life in peace and prosperity. The agreement has worked to the satisfaction of both parties, until the arrival of the PCs destroys the arrangement.

Tjelvilen is now past forty, but is still a beautiful and charming woman. She has

proven an able ruler, but retains a strong sympathy for the underdog from her own experiences. This sometimes alienates the wealthier inhabitants of Uldoran.

Recently Tjelvilen has fallen in love with Delgin, a young foreigner she met on the streets of Chélekar. She invited him into her house and showers him with gifts to keep his affection. She is afraid to lose him to a younger woman, which makes her pretty jealous. Delgin's death would hurt her deeply and she would not rest before getting her revenge on the killer.

Cypra

Cypra is one of the many mercenaries roaming the streets of Chélekar. She is quite capable, but never managed to save enough money to secure her future. Everything she earned drained away for gambling and men. She is now actively seeking a permanent position that would eventually let her retire with an adequate pension. She is not very comfortable in command position though, leading her to quickly delegate tasks and listen to advice frequently.

Cypra is a stout woman with a dark complexion and closely cropped black hair. She fights with shortsword and shield, her ringmail cuirass is her most valuable possession.

Delgin

Delgin is a young and little naïve adventurer come to the big city. He is a natural with the spear, and many have regretted taunting him for his foreign ways. He met Tjelvilen on the streets one day and felt attracted to the older woman. This attraction grew only stronger as he got to know her and he is now deeply in love. He sees himself as her champion, and slightly aggravated her hired swords by assuming the position of their captain.

Delgin's favorite weapon is his spear. It is a family heirloom reputed to have magical powers (perhaps a lot of his skill is provided by the weapon?). Before coming to Chélekar Delgin bested an older warrior in single combat and took the man's scale armor as his prize.

The young man is tall and slender, his skin is tanned from his long journey to Chélekar, and his dark eyes shine brightly under a mop of wild brown hair.

Ilach Doron

The Driandri keep up a wide-ranging network among their own kind, using the connections in far-away cities to do profitable trade. The most respected elder of the Driandri community is one of those merchants. For some time now his children do the necessary travels and Ilach has the time to care for his people in Uldoran. He has visited many Driandri communities on his journeys and is keenly aware of the dangers they face. The protection and secrecy of his kind is his foremost motivation. Any loyalty he feels to humans like Tjelvilen takes a back seat when his people are threatened. Ilach is not one to make hasty decisions though. He always tries to confer with his peers, before he decides on a course of action.

Ilach is aging and not very mobile anymore. He manages to walk short distances but usually keeps to his home, making it the natural meeting place of the Driandri elders. Shapechanging causes him great pain nowadays.

Driandri Religion

The Driandri have a curious relationship to the gods. They claim that their own gods have vanished long ago and that the human gods are still hostile towards them. Instead of praying for help and support from the gods, they try to appease the divine powers so that they do not harm the Driandri.

A visit to the Driandri shrine will reveal that a strange version of the Olkin cult is practiced here. As they are in a city of innumerable cultures and religions, this should not make them unduly suspicious.

Jarn Geran

Uldoran's smith is the most vocal of the Driandri elders. He usually pressures his peers for a decision and is the one most likely to approach any strangers on his own. He runs a large business and even takes on human journeymen occasionally.

Jarn is quite fond of Tjelvilen and will not look kindly on anyone trying to replace her. He is also the one most likely to sympathize with the younger Driandri when they strike back against the

intruders. In the end he is a reasonably man though, and will back any rational agreement between the Driandri and the outsiders.

Tolin Elvara

As the only priestess of the Driandri community Tolin wields a lot of influence. She interprets signs from the gods and advises her community on how to avoid the displeasure of the heavens. She also acts as a go-between when other cults try to gain a foothold in Uldoran.

As a result Tolin is quite used to dealing with humans and uses the respect for a priestess to protect her community. She will be the natural candidate for negotiating with the PCs if they try to meet the elders on neutral ground.

Driandri Appearance

The NPC entries of Driandri contain no visual descriptions. This is on purpose. Of course Driandri keep to one form for most of the time, lest humans grow suspicious. Their attitude to appearance is more like human attitude to clothing though. One might have a preferred set of clothes, but it is easy to change it when necessity or mood requires it.

The GM is encouraged to use the descriptions of old or minor NPCs from his campaign for the Driandri. This reflects the temporary nature of Driandri appearance.

Dion Akaros

The tailor is the youngest of the Driandri elders and has only recently been accepted into their circle. He usually keeps quiet in discussions and follows the lead of his friend Jarn Geran. He is not quite as impetuous as his friend though and more careful. If approached alone, he will not make any decisions himself before he has talked to the other elders.

Dion's business is thriving and the clothing he makes is of excellent quality. Among his customers are several wealthy people from outside Uldoran, but none know of his Driandri nature.

Silwen Earn

The old wise woman is the wild card among the Driandri elders. She is one of the few Driandri without an immediate family in Uldoran and mostly keeps her own council. She strongly relies on portents and diverse methods of fortune telling to make her decisions. Lately she has had premonitions of impending danger for the community, but the others have not heeded her warnings as she is prone to make pronouncements of impending doom.

Silwen lives alone in a small cluttered house amidst several cats. Depending on her mood she might greet strangers as saviors of Uldoran or harangue them as mortal enemies.

Somorrem

The richest man of Uldoran does not play an important role in the community's politics. He is often away on trading voyages and does not care much about his home. He might as well live in a different ward or another city altogether. He stays in Uldoran because it is quiet and relatively secure. He is not aware that doppelgangers live in the district and does not suspect anything at all. He will be at home though, when the PCs begin their task, and they will be able to approach him. He does not really care about who runs Uldoran as long as he does not have to pay too much taxes. He will be quite willing to back anyone who promises to keep order.

If Somorrem learns of the nature of his neighbors, he will be shocked. He will not actively attack the Driandri, but neither will he speak for them. He will leave the ward as quickly as possible with his belongings and never come back.

Somorrem is a small, balding man of considerable girth. He has no family but employs several servants who keep his home in order when he is away. His warehouses are not in Uldoran but along one of the great avenues of the city.

Tjorrem

Tjorrem is the only physician in Uldoran and therefore quite important. He is a quiet, middle-aged man who is friendly to his customers and courteous to anyone. He is also the only human in Uldoran except Tjelvilen who knows the ward's secret. His suspicions that some of the

inhabitants are strange had been growing over the years and he began studying his neighbors. He read a lot of old books and finally determined that he was living among the legendary doppelgangers. He told nobody of his discovery but continued observing and studying. By now he is probably the greatest human expert on Driandri without anybody knowing. He would love to get his hands on a Driandri corpse to examine it medically. If the PCs get into a fight with the Driandri, Tjorrem will surely show up to see whether he can get a corpse. He will not offer any information though, only if the PCs ask him directly about doppelgangers or Driandri will he share his knowledge. He will try to keep the Uldoran secret as long as possible to continue his studies undisturbed.

Agarim

The human priest of Elrani is a stocky man with dark blonde hair and pale blue eyes. He is a devout worshipper of his goddess who pledged himself to a religious life after he lost his family in a fire. His is still embittered and constantly chastises his congregation for their lack of piety.

Agarim is strongly opposed to any kind of change and will do what he can to work against the PCs and restore Tjelvilen. One of the aspects of his goddess is loyalty and he feels he owes that to the former ruler of Uldoran. He will not attack the strangers physically but will constantly preach on the streets against the “usurpers”. The PCs might have to imprison him to shut him up.

Should Agarim learn of the Driandri his oratory will take a different turn. He will be surprised and afraid and preach against the “unholy spawns of chaos” among the people of Uldoran. He will try to stir up the humans to attack the doppelgangers and will be the first to put a torch to a Driandri home.

Adapting the Adventure to Your Campaign

“The Plans of Demetrium Kiraljar” is a rather setting-specific adventure. It requires a huge city with a loose power structure to be run as described. It also

works best if good and evil are not clearly defined. Nevertheless it is quite possible to adapt the scenario to different settings with a bit of work.

Alternative Settings

Instead of trying to take over open rule, Demetrium might be trying to set himself up as crime lord in a city where a strong “legitimate” government exists. His opponents would not be petty rulers, but rival “godfathers”, gang leaders and racketeers. Tjelvilen would have set up a rather benign racket in her district, protecting the Driandri from other gangs. This sort of scenario is well suited to thieves, rogues and other shadowy characters as operation have to be done in secret to prevent attention by the authorities. The final Tlaroi intervention could be easily replaced by a “police” crackdown.

Transplanted to a larger scale, Demetrium could be a powerful noble, rebelling against an oppressive king. The PCs are part of a force sent against a distant vassal of the king (Tjelvilen), who is not as bad as the rest of the corrupt government. The pace of the scenario is slower in this case, as distances are greater, and PCs are much more isolated from the rest of the events.

Alignment

If used as described, the scenario is not well suited to alignment-like categories, especially if the PCs are of “good” persuasion. The motivations of the main conspirators might be construed as “lawful” as they try to establish centralized government and law, but certainly not as “good”. To motivate PCs in this case, the GM should play up the lawless and chaotic nature of human Chélekar and introduce personal reasons for the PCs to participate in the plot. Motivation should be no problem for self-serving characters.

Driandri as Monsters

The feel of the adventure changes drastically if the Driandri are made into shapechanging monsters but it would probably remain playable. Perhaps Uldoran is a base for the doppelgangers evil operations and Tjelvilen is just their puppet. The adventures focus would shift

from negotiation to combat. The GM should greatly reduce the number of doppelgangers in this case to make the threat manageable. PCs would probably also need to be more powerful.

Glossary

Amachtera

Goddess of Sun and Daylight, creator and protector of the Tlaroi. All Tlaroi, but few humans worship her. The Tlaroi Empress is said to be an avatar of this goddess.

Chélek

The Tlaroi Empress, supreme ruler of the Empire (Chelekantar Tlaroi). She is said to be an avatar of the sun goddess Amachtera.

Chélekar

The capital of the Tlaroi Empire is a huge metropolis, none have ever dared to count its inhabitants. The human city surrounds the inner Tlaroian district and is an immense urban sprawl with no central government.

Compass Directions

Most humans consider Jhendor to be a large disc revolving under the sun. Directions on this disc are given as Coreward (towards the center of the disc, north), Rimward (towards the rim of the disc, south), Spinward (the direction in which the disc turn, east), and Trailing (the opposite turning direction, west).

Elrani

Goddess of Family and the Hearth. She is widely worshipped among common folk.

Ilas

A heavy gold coin worth 100 Klan (copper pennies). As one Klan can usually feed a person for a day in a city, an Ilas represents quite a large amount of wealth.

Imperial

In Chélekar the years are reckoned after the founding of the Tlaroi Empire, abbreviated "Imperial" or "I". The events depicted in this adventure take place in the year 1783 Imperial.

Jhendor

Jhendor is a large continent straddling the northern hemisphere of a small world. It is a harsh place of cold climates and many dangerous creatures. Four large "empires"

dominate politically – two human, two non-human.

Klan

A copper penny. The most common coin in Chélekar, a Klan can feed a simple laborer for a day. Klan are often halved or quartered to make small payments.

Olkin

God of Crafts and Wealth. Patron of craftsmen and the urban middle-class.

Tlaroi

The Tlaroi are an insectoid, six-limbed (two legs, four arms) species. They sport two large multi-faceted eyes on each side of the head and communicate via telepathy. Their society is hive-like and strictly hierarchical. Males have considerably less intelligence and independence than females.

Tlaroi Empire (Chelekantar Tlaroi)

The monolithic state of the non-human Tlaroi is the largest and most powerful empire on Jhendor. The Empress (Chélek) is said to be an avatar of the sun goddess Amachtera.

Further Information

To learn more about Jhendor visit the world's website at

<http://www.jhendor.de>

Please direct feedback, questions and comments to

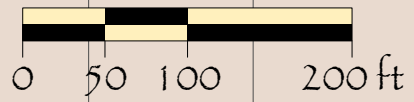
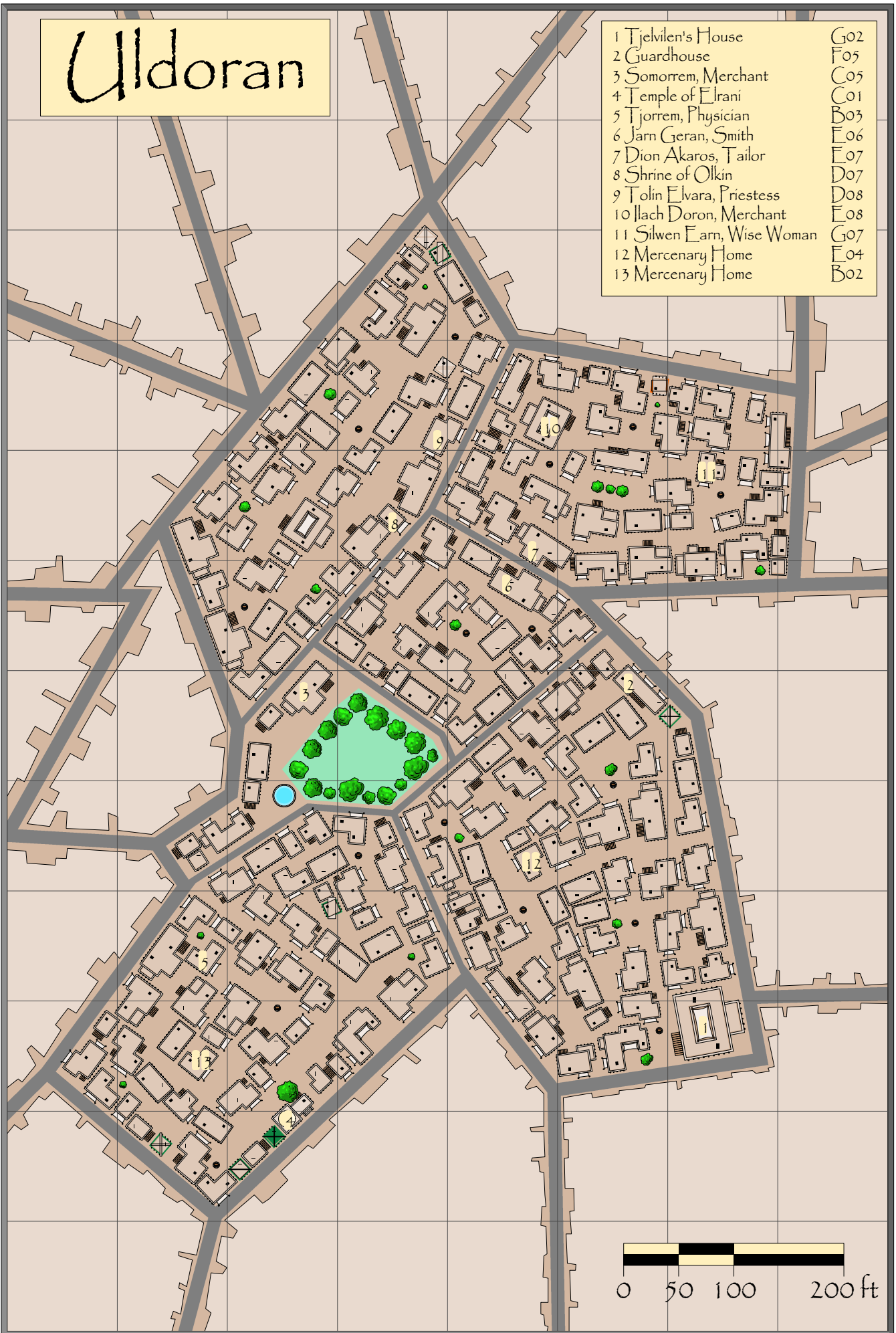
ralf.schemmann@cityweb.de

A B C D E F G H

Uldoran

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| 1 Tjelvilen's House | G02 |
| 2 Guardhouse | F05 |
| 3 Somorrem, Merchant | C05 |
| 4 Temple of Elrani | C01 |
| 5 Tjorrem, Physician | B03 |
| 6 Jarn Geran, Smith | E06 |
| 7 Dion Akaros, Tailor | E07 |
| 8 Shrine of Olkin | D07 |
| 9 Tolin Elvara, Priestess | D08 |
| 10 Ilach Doron, Merchant | E08 |
| 11 Silwen Earn, Wise Woman | G07 |
| 12 Mercenary Home | E04 |
| 13 Mercenary Home | B02 |

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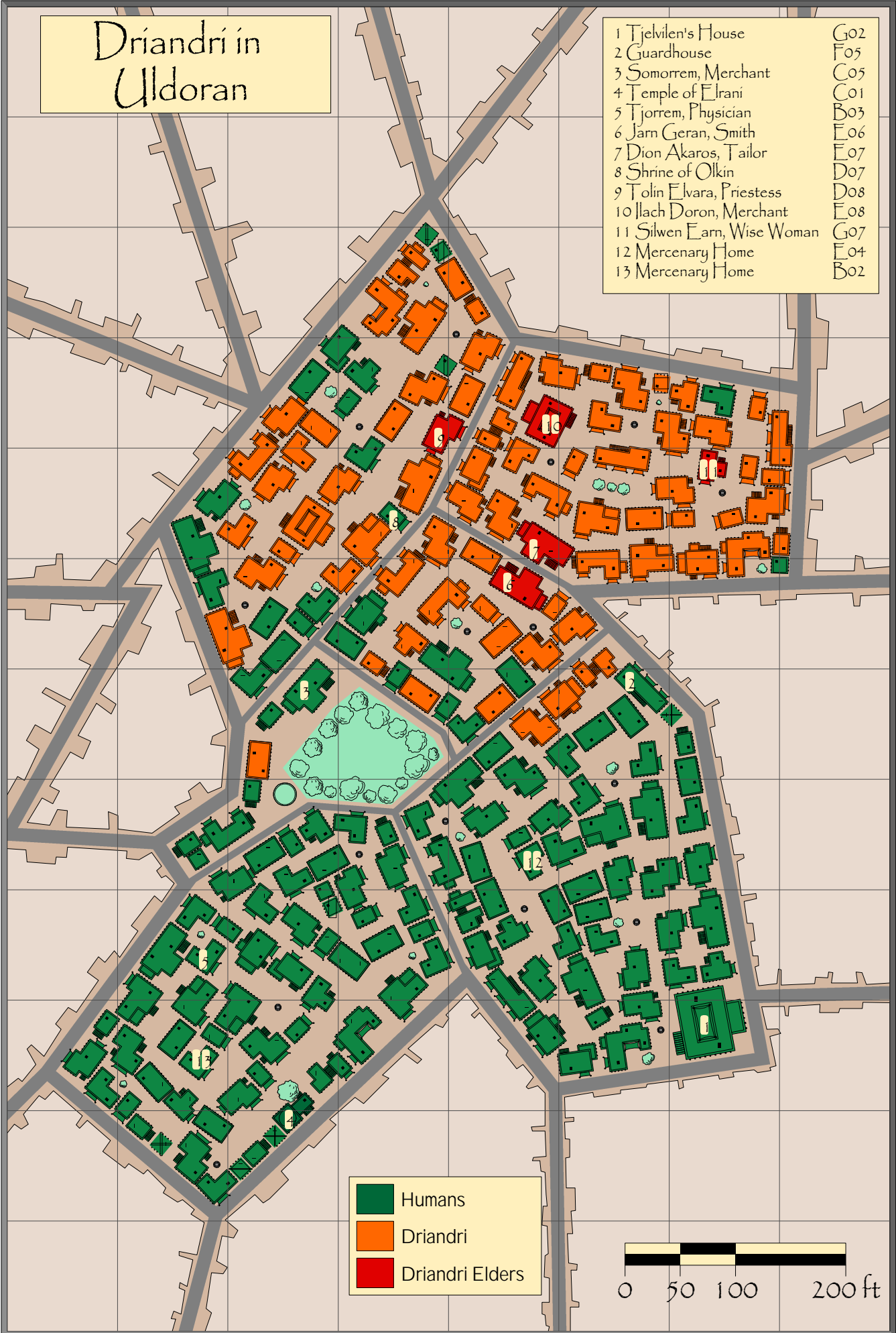



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Driandri in Uldoran

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|----------------------------|-----|
| 1 Tjelvilen's House | G02 |
| 2 Guardhouse | F05 |
| 3 Somorrem, Merchant | C05 |
| 4 Temple of Elrani | B03 |
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| 7 Dion Akaros, Tailor | E07 |
| 8 Shrine of Olkin | D07 |
| 9 Tolin Elvara, Priestess | D08 |
| 10 Ilach Doron, Merchant | E08 |
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| 12 Mercenary Home | E04 |
| 13 Mercenary Home | B02 |

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|---|
|  Humans |
|  Driandri |
|  Driandri Elders |

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Map of Uldoran (Player Handout)

Uldoran

Here is the required map of Uldoran marked with the war's the most important and respected inhabitants.



Overall the area is pretty quiet.
There should be no problems.

For Malvin
D.K.

Elkjin