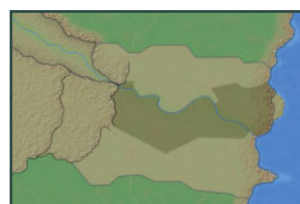
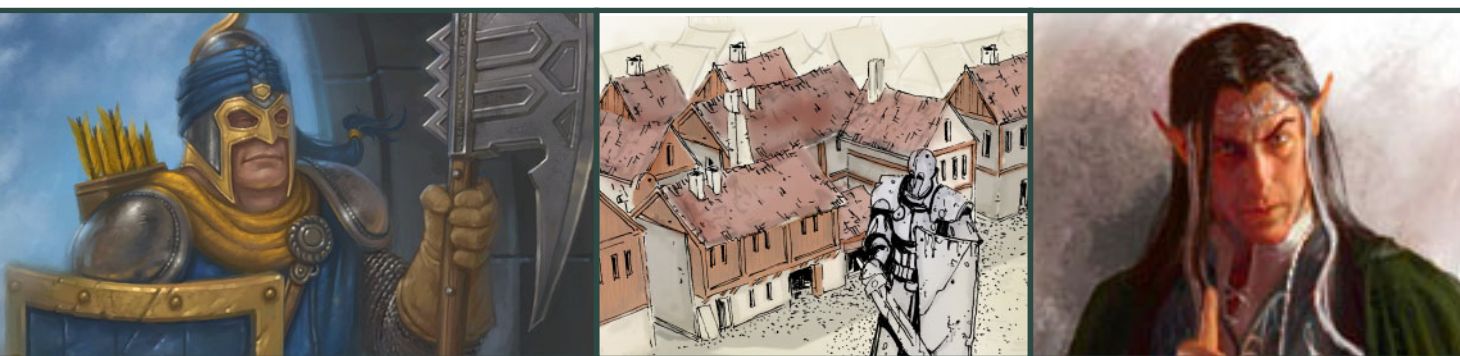




Chapter 10: MIDTOWN

If Ptolus has a heart—though most would say that it doesn't—it is Midtown. This is the crossroads of Ptolus, where common folks rub shoulders with the not-so-common, where everyone goes in order to get anywhere else, and where all newcomers to the city inevitably end up first.



Locator Map

MIDTOWN IN BRIEF

Area: 320 acres
Population: 12,000
Primary Function: Residential
Primary Social Class: Low to Middle
★ Watchhouse: Tavern Row and Oak Avenue

Midtown is the most cosmopolitan area of what is almost certainly the most cosmopolitan city in the world. The largest district in the city, Midtown is bounded by the King's River on the north but where the river dips south (at Carver Lane), the border veers north to Golden Elm Way to run along the Necropolis wall. Farther east, Midtown continues right up to the Cliffs of Lost Wishes and the Warrens, and to the south the district ends at Iron Street. The boundary between Midtown and the South Market is rather vague—it amounts to a diagonal line drawn between the north end of Carriage Row and the ramp up to Oldtown. The western border then runs north up along Dalen's Cliffs.

Midtown is actually twice as big as any other district of Ptolus. Frequent motions have come before the City Council to subdivide it into two separate districts. Holding up the motion's passage, however, is the furious debate among merchants, business owners, and city administrators as to exactly where the new border should go. If the par-

ties ever manage to settle this issue, this division likely would happen.

Perhaps most significantly, Midtown is where the delvers and adventurers live, congregate, make their plans, and return with their treasures.

THE FLAVOR OF MIDTOWN

Midtown may be the most purely "Ptolus" section of town. This is where adventurers come, where a lot of nonhumans live—in essence, this is the hub of the city. "Everything passes through Midtown," the saying goes.

The streets are about ten feet wide—fifteen feet wide in a few places, and Center Street, which traverses the entire district on a diagonal, is a full twenty feet wide. Regardless of their width, the streets are almost always crowded with locals going about their business and others just passing through to get to one of the Market wards, the Temple District, the Guildsman District, or Oldtown.

The smell of cooked meals mixes with the odor of garbage and sewage at times, but

often the rainwater clears away the nastier refuse. A dog barks as one walks by, tethered to a hook in the door of a house. Children kick a ball around in front of the adjacent house. Across the street, a vendor with a wooden cart full of apples and pears sales her wares for a few coppers. The streets are full of people carrying things: their washing, freshly bought bread, a child or two, their trash to dump into the river, or a stack of newly printed broadsheets for distribution—and that's just for starters.

RUNNING MIDTOWN

Chances are, the player characters will spend a lot of time in Midtown—perhaps even the majority of their time in Ptolus. Adventurers congregate here, get supplied, sell loot, share information, and depart for the undercity. Running Midtown likely will become very familiar to you.

Best of all, there are very few restrictions on what you can do with Midtown. Any kind of person, from beggar to noble, from thief to priestess, from powerful mage to savage barbarian, can be found in here, if only just passing through.

A campaign set in Ptolus can use Midtown from the time the player characters are 1st level until they are 20th. If the players seem more interested in exploring dungeons than in the intrigues of the city, Midtown—specifically Delver's Square 4—can serve as a "mini" version of the city. That is to say,

Delver's Square offers just about everything an adventuring group needs: a weapons shop, an armorer, an outfitter's, a tavern, a place to sleep, a place to sell loot, and even a small temple.

When the PCs are in Midtown, particularly in Delver's Square, don't hesitate to toss any kind of strange encounter at them. In many ways, the area around the square is the strangest part of town. It is not out of the ordinary to see someone with a troll cohort, a dire bear companion, *ioun stones*, or riding a flying carpet. Or all of the above. A good rule of thumb when running Midtown is to make sure the player characters are not the strangest folks in the district. If one of the players has a minotaur PC, people should be surprised to see the minotaur, but not completely thrown for a loop. A minotaur fighter is certainly no stranger than the local ogre-mage cleric with a collection of *ioun stones*, for example.

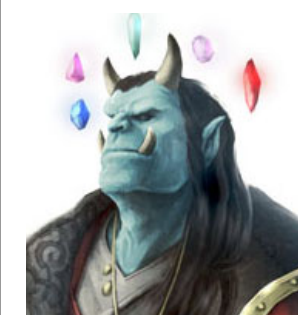
THE PEOPLE OF MIDTOWN

Nonplayer characters in Midtown are more likely to be nonhuman than those encountered in other sections of town. They are also far more likely to be adventurers, or to have levels in a non-NPC class—although such characters are still the exception, even here.

People in Midtown seem even more jaded to the supernatural, the monstrous, and the strange than are standard residents of Ptolus.



Delver's Square, page 151
(map, page 153)



Ptolus' most famous ogre-mage is a gregarious and ultra-confident cleric named Urlenius (page 344).

WORD ON THE STREET

A motion before the City Council right now would split Midtown in two, as it's currently so much larger than the other districts in town. Popular opinion is that the motion won't carry.

"Put simply, Ptolus is the focus of all significant evil in the world."

—Sheva Callister, adventurer

