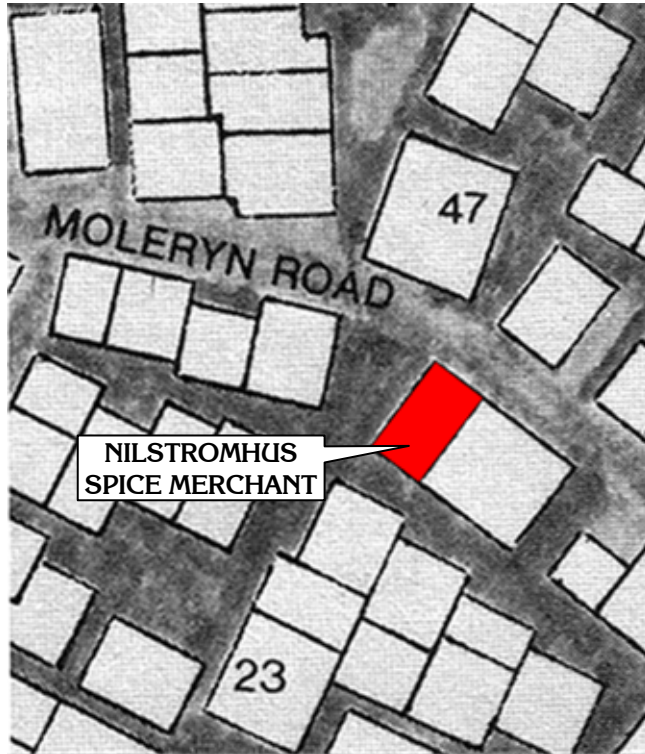


SPICE MERCHANT 1



NILSTROMHUS – SPICE MERCHANT

Location: Kuseme, Thardic Republic
Holder: Master Fydanar Nilstrom
Size: 4 (Master, 2 Journeymen, 1 Apprentice)
Others: 7 (3 Wives, 2 Daughters, 1 Son, 1 Guard)
Quality: ☆☆☆☆☆ (Excellent)
Prices: High (110 – 130%)

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Just across the river from Coranan on Moleryn Road, Nilstromhus is a well known and popular spice shop. The proprietor, a wily Ivinian mercantylar named Fydanar Nilstrom, has lived in Tharda for twenty-six years. He arrived in 694TR at the age of twenty-five representing his uncle's trading network. He rented a small house in Coranan and began investigating the local market. A talented mercantylar, Fydanar soon discovered an opening in the market, there was no good, steady supply of exotic foreign spices. Given the sometimes abysmal quality of meat and fish, strong spices are necessary to cover up the taste of salt and rot.

Fydanar approached the local Mangai and argued that since spices were not herbs or medicines they should not be monopolized by the apothecaries. Mercantylers should also be able to sell spices. It helped that the leader of the

Apothecary's Guild, Fargil of Krunos, was known to be a stuck up elitist and was unpopular. A few carefully placed bribes to the right people and the Mangai accepted his argument, supporting his plan to open a spice shop.

Using funds he had earned in his youth on a number of successful expeditions (some might call piracy) he purchased a mercantylar's franchise from the local guild. He opened his shop in 695TR and began to import and sell spices. His uncle's vast trading network meant that he could provide a wider selection of spices at better prices than the Apothecary's Guild and so he became the supplier of choice to the wealthier clans and senatorial class.

In 712TR after Kuseme was returned to the Thardic Republic, Fydanar decided to build his own home and shop. Never one to over pay, he avoided the outrageous property prices in Coranan by buying cheap land across the river in Kuseme. He built a spacious home for himself, his family and employees. Stoutly built of stone, Fydanar home is a traditional Ivinian clan house, unofficial Ivinian embassy and private temple of Sarajin. Ever conscious of his position as a wealthy foreigner, outsider and follower of a strange religion, his home is built like a small fortress with small, heavily barred windows, robust iron covered oak doors and a slate roof.

FIRST FLOOR

1. **Sales room.** This room is the heart of Fydanar's business. Here he deals with customers and displays his wares. During the daytime, he is always present, sprawled in his comfortable overstuffed chair like a king on his throne. Customers are invited to relax, sip some exotic tea (imported at great expense) and inspect his wares. A large heavy chest in the corner holds his rarest and most expensive spices in addition to his (substantial) portable wealth sorted into many heavy bags of silver coins. Besides himself, he usually has an apprentice to select and bring the spices to him, an armed guard standing watch, a

CREDITS

WRITER

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journeyman delivering spices throughout the city and his youngest son fetching tea and doing odd jobs.

2. **Store room.** Fydanar's large array of spices are all carefully sorted and inventoried on shelves in the back room. Small bags containing one to six ounces of spice repackaged for sale. When new shipments arrive, this room is often filled to overflowing with large sacks of spices. A large tapestry in black velvet depicting a man with an outlandish hairdo and snarling lip, given as payment of a debt, hangs in the store room. Fydanar finds it particularly ugly and refuses to let it be hung anywhere else. He regularly concludes his business dealings with the phrase "Can I interest you in buying a tapestry?" Most would agree it is spectacularly tacky. His wives find it funny and frequently jibe him (in a friendly way), "Have you bought any more tapestries today?"

3. **Main Hall.** If the sales room is the heart of the house then the hall is its soul. It is always full of life. Fydanar's three wives, Forissa, Nadonna and Merlael work here happily. All former slaves, they were bought and freed by their husband who truly loves and treasures them all. Rescued from drudgery and hard labour, instead they now have a life of health and happiness. Forissa, the senior wife, has a beautiful voice and loves to sing. Her joyful tunes are a constant accompaniment to Fydanar's day.

SECOND FLOOR

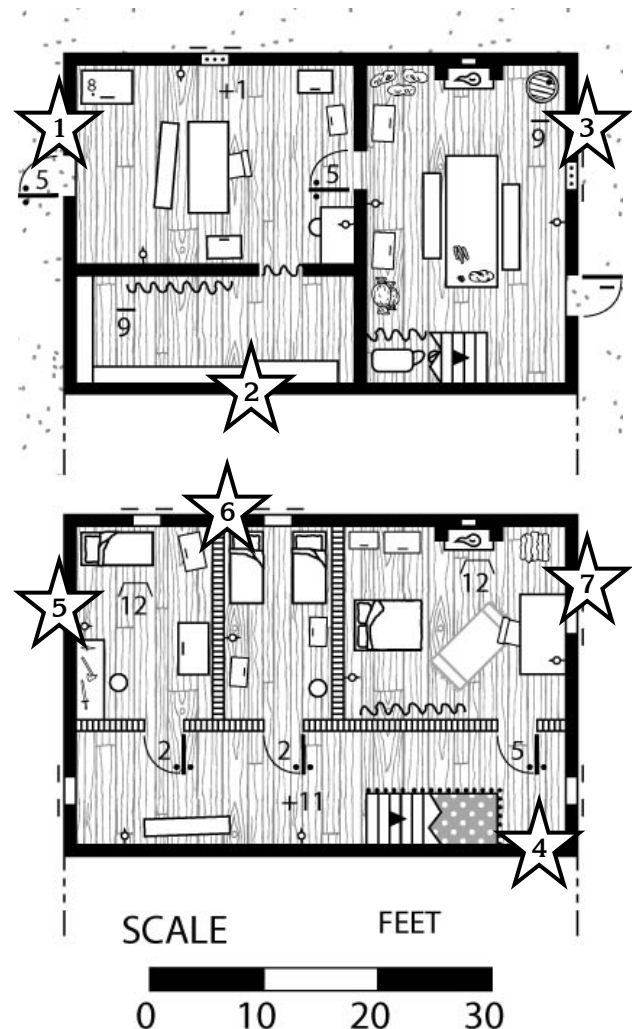
4. **Corridor.** The upstairs hallway serves triple duty. During the day, it serves as a work area. Taarin, the young apprentice, uses it when he is transferring spices from the large shipping sacks to small packages suitable for sale. Fydanar tolerates no waste, so Taarin lays out a canvas sheet to catch any spillage and sweeps it up into the last package. During the night, bedrolls are laid down and the corridor serves as a sleeping area for the master's two daughters and young son. Several times a year it also serves as a temple to Sarajin, especially during the Ilbengaad Festival and Bjarri's Feast, when the city's small Ivinian community gathers at Fydanar's house to celebrate their faith. A pair of hand axes mounted on the wall is the only outward display of the household's religion.

5. **Guard's room.** Due to compact and highly valuable nature of spices, the presence of large amounts of coin and the continued enmity with the Apothecary's Guild, there is always the danger that someone will try and rob the house. Fydanar has suffered six attempted robberies in the eighteen years he lived in Coranan. Twice he killed the thieves, the other four times he and his journeymen were able to drive them off. After the last attack, he hired an out of work Ivinian mercenary recommended by a fellow merchant. Well paid, fed and with an easy job, Turis is overjoyed to be working for one of his own countrymen.

Over the last four years, he has become a member of the family and the younger brother Fydanar never had. Besides acting as a guard, he is arms master to the young men of the household. His room is simply furnished.

6. **Junior wives' room.** Nadonna and Merlael share this room. Fydanar visits them regularly and they have no cause for complaint. The room is bright and cheery with colourful blankets decorating the beds. Each woman has her own chest with a selection of fine clothing befitting the wives of a rich merchant. When she is not in the hall, Nadonna can often be found here embroidering.

7. **Master's room.** The finest room in the house is reserved for the master. This spacious room has its own fireplace, a good quality double bed for Fydanar and Forissa, a table under the window where the mercantyleer can do his accounts and a pair of chests for the couple's good clothes. Seven diamonds (value £24) are hidden in the hollow leg of the writing table. They are Fydanar's emergency reserve. No one knows of their existence except the master himself.



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SPICES FOR SALE

Fydanar keeps a large stock of spices, some common and some extremely rare. A list of those spices normally available is shown here:

Spice, Alum	16d per ounce
Spice, Colombine Powder	20d per ounce
Spice, Ginger	30d per ounce
Spice, Pepper	36d per ounce
Spice, Bdellium	40d per ounce
Spice, Cinnamon	40d per ounce
Spice, Keddryth	45d per ounce
Spice, Galingale	50d per ounce
Spice, Camphor	50d per ounce
Spice, Nutmeg	50d per ounce
Spice, Mace	50d per ounce
Spice, Cardamom	50d per ounce
Spice, Cumin	50d per ounce
Spice, Anise	60d per ounce
Spice, Cloves	60d per ounce
Spice, Grains of Paradise	60d per ounce
Spice, Frankincense	70d per ounce
Spice, Nard	100d per ounce
Spice, Myrrh	150d per ounce
Spice, Ginseng	170d per ounce
Spice, Lashu Powder (rhubarb)	180d per ounce
Spice, Turmeric	180d per ounce
Spice, Marthyn	200d per ounce
Spice, Saffron	360d per ounce
Sugar	60d per pound
Tea	35d per ounce

his brain. He is as sharp and wily an old trader as can be found in Coranan. He has a battleaxe, brigandine byrnie (now much too small), plate half-helm in the large chest in his room. His round shield hangs above the bed. He carries a dagger with him at all times.

He keeps in close touch with his clan in Ivinia and buys most of his spices through them. Their extensive network gives him access to spices from as far away as Molnasya. Fydanar can be aggressive and extremely intent, but he speaks slowly, as if translating his sentences in his head. This is an act, after twenty-six years he speaks Harnic fluently with a distinct Thardic accent.



MEMBERS OF THE HOUSEHOLD

Fydanar is a wealth man and he supports a large household in considerable comfort. However, his ongoing rivalry with the Apothecary's Guild and his status as a foreigner has made him quite leery of hiring Thardic servants. Thus, his household (with the notable exception of his wives) is made up of Ivinians and his own kin.

THE MASTER – Fydanar is a heavyset man, now fifty-one years old. He was a formidable fighter in his youth and still can be dangerous if provoked, however too much good food and fine wine has caused him to become fat and slow. Only a fool would think that this has affected

FYDANAR NILSTROM

Ivinian Mercantyle

Str	11	Eye	13	Int	12
Sta	18	Hrg	12	Aur	10
Dex	09	Sml	16	Wil	13
Agf	08	Voi	09	Mor	12
Cml	12	Sunsign	–	Hirin	

Combat Abilities: End 14 Mov 08

Skills: Riding 60, Rhetoric 95, Intrigue 90, Mathematics 76, Law 62, Foraging 48, Survival 44, Heraldry 24, Physician 22, Weaponcraft 22, Seamanship 27, Piloting 33, Weatherlore 45, Drawing 24

Languages: Ivinian 71, Harnic 71, **Scripts:** Runic 81, Lakise 81

Ritual: Sarajin 11, **Piety:** 25

Combat Skills: Initiative 66, Dodge 40, Unarmed 36, Battleaxe 70, Broadsword 60, Dagger 84, Round shield 60

Daily Armour / Weapons: Fine cloth tunic and leggings, cloak with hood, fur cap in cold weather; leather calf boots; Dagger.

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BODYGUARD – A mercenary from Lokis, thirty-one year old Turis is Fydanar's bodyguard and confidant. A skilled huscarl, he was happy to take service with such a wealthy merchant. He was tired of the travel and poor treatment he received when people found out he was Ivinian.

Normally, he only wears a thick cloth tunic, plate half-helm and carries round shield, but he has a quilt gambeson and chain mail hauberk in the chest at the foot of his bed which he dons if trouble is expected. The town guard frowns on him wearing it in public. He has been tasked by his master to instruct the journeymen and Fydanar's youngest son in the weapons of their homeland.



TURIS DALINSEN

Ivinian Huscarl

Str	16	Eye	10	Int	10
Sta	13	Hrg	12	Aur	12
Dex	14	Sml	09	Wil	17
Agl	13	Voi	11	Mor	11
Cml	10	Sunsign – Aralius / Feniri Cusp			

Combat Abilities: End 15 Mov 13

Skills: Riding 90, Foraging 52, Survival 56, Heraldry 28, Physician 22, Weaponcraft 38, Seamanship 42, Piloting 22

Languages: Ivinian 73, Harnic 45, **Scripts:** none

Ritual: Sarajin 14, **Piety:** 22

Combat Skills: Initiative 96, Dodge 65, Unarmed 56, Battleaxe 77, Hand axe 77, Spear 73, Dagger 71, Round shield 71

Daily Armour / Weapons: Good cloth tunic and leggings, cloak with hood, Plate half-helm; leather calf boots; Spear, hand axe, dagger, round shield.

THE WIVES AND CHILDREN – All three of Fydanar's wives are freed slaves. **Forissa** was the first and is the unquestioned leader. Now forty-six, she has borne her husband three strong, healthy sons. The two eldest, **Taaga** and **Sorinal**, are teenagers and have travelled to Ivinia to do their apprenticeship with their father's cousin. Her youngest, **Bjarri**, is only twelve. He is extremely bright with blond hair like his mother. **Nadonna** is the second wife. She has two teenage daughters, **Elesbeth** and **Lise**. Both girls are strong, intelligent but rather plain. **Merlael** is the youngest wife at just twenty-six. She has had three miscarriages and is pregnant again. She hopes this child will survive. The miscarriages would have been unbearable without the support of the other wives. All three wives speak some Ivinian (ML 55). The children are completely bilingual.

JOURNEYMEN AND APPRENTICE – Fydanar has two journeymen and one apprentice. All are Ivinian. When his uncle died, his cousin took over as Clanhead and chief trader for the Clan's intricate web of trading posts and ships. Fydanar sent his sons to learn the Ivinian way of life and the world of trading. In return, his cousin has sent three young members of the clan to Coranan to learn Harnic and the ways of the Misty Isle. The two journeymen are **Soris** and **Jnaar**, strapping lads in their early twenties. Turis is educating them in the military arts while Fydanar teaches the art of trading with the locals.

Taarin, the apprentice, arrived only three months ago with the last shipment of spices. Only fourteen, he cannot speak Harnic and is frightfully homesick and lonely. He and Bjarri have become inseparable friends.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Part of the Profits – The PCs come recommended. Fydanar wants to see if there is enough demand to open another shop in Shiran. He offers the PCs a 1/3 cut of the profits if they escort Soris to Shiran for the next fair. The Apothecary Guild in Shiran has no intentions of allowing Fydanar to break their monopoly.

Time for You to Leave – The local guildsmen have finally had enough. This Ivinian scum is cutting too deeply into their profits. They hire the PCs to convince him to leave by any means possible. Non-violent means first, but if he doesn't take the hint, then perhaps more "persuasive" means might be required.

Just a Pinch of Thyme – The PCs patron is throwing a big party. The cook needs a number of rare spices to complete the preparations. The PCs have been dispatched to buy the spices from Fydanar. Unfortunately, the spices they need are stuck on a ship in Kuseme Haven and can't be unloaded because of a Teamster's strike.