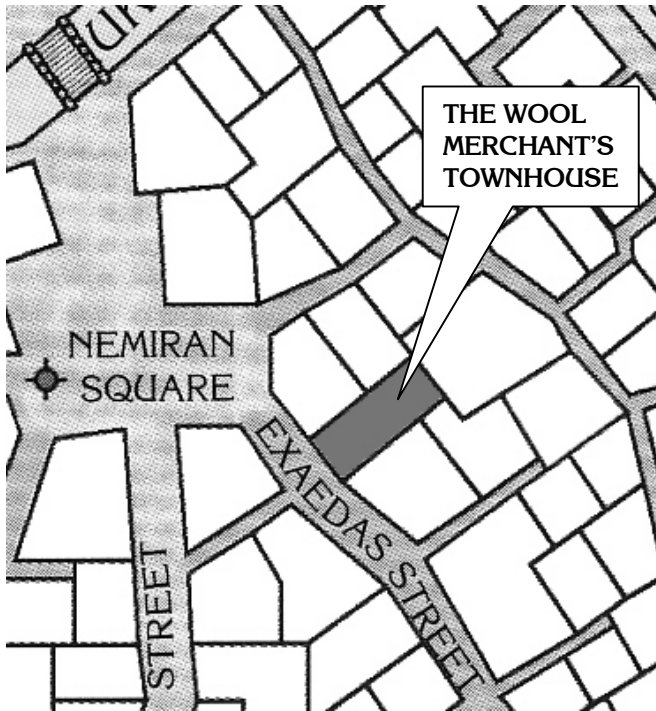


WOOL MERCHANT 1



WOOL MERCHANT

Location: Golotha, Kingdom of Rethem
Holder: Master Garabis of Nereltar
Size: 23 (+/-)

INTRODUCTION

Medieval townhouses often mix the domestic residential function with a commercial business operation. This building is intended as a generic residence, which can fulfil any role required by the GM. Although this townhouse is set in Golotha, residences of this period were generally similar from town to town and city to city. Relocate as required. Also, the owner is described as a wool merchant, but other commodities can easily be substituted. The house can also be used as a noble's residence since it was common to rent out parts of a townhouse (especially rooms opening onto the street) to shopkeepers to generate extra income.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The house is generally a busy place. The owner, Master **Garabis of Nereltar**, is a wool merchant. He and his wife employ three journeymen, two apprentices, six hired hands (a combination of guard, labourer, drover and teamster) and ten house servants. Garabis regularly opens his house to fellow mercantylers and friends visiting the city so there are always two or three guests as well. The couple's two adult sons, and their wives and children, live in Shiran and visit two or three times a year. When

the merchant and his men are away escorting a caravan, this is not a problem. When they are present at the same time as the guests, the house can get very crowded. Straw ticks are brought up from the undercroft, the trestle table is cleared from the hall, and the hall becomes a makeshift dormitory.

The timber-frame wattle and daub townhouse is spacious and in an excellent location. Now over a hundred years old, it requires a great deal of maintenance, which it generally doesn't receive. The merchant prefers to invest his money in more wool. There is a serious case of dry rot in the beams of the sleeping loft and the roof over the servant's quarters leaks badly when it rains. It has been at least five years since the house has seen a coat of protective whitewash and the daub is starting to flake off. The merchant lies to seem oblivious to the problems. It is an act.

Garabis is well aware of the fate of his fellow merchantlyer and guildsman, the clothier **Tiemay of Kaludis**. He made the mistake of advertising his success and attracted the attention of **Sir Zaurial Bisidril**, a powerful and ruthless Agrikan knight. Garabis is determined to avoid the same fate. He maintains a very low profile and has allowed his home to become rundown and shabby. Because of this, and a great deal of success over the past three trading seasons, he is sitting on a considerable amount of silver and gold.

SECOND FLOOR

1. **Sleeping loft** – Overlooking the hall, the loft can be stifling in the summer, but in winter is always warm. The bunk bed and cots are sturdy, well built and the rough bedding is washed monthly. The loft is normally assigned to the merchant's journeymen, but they are the first to be turned out to make room for guests. Each man has a small chest for personal clothing and belongings. There is little of value here.

CREDITS

WRITER

Kerry Mould

MAPS

Patrick Nilsson

ARTIST

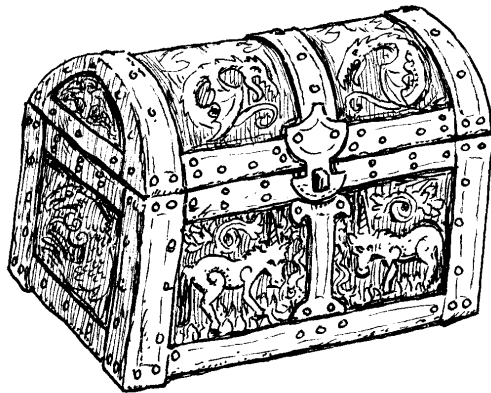
Richard Luschek



WOOL MERCHANT 2

2. **Solar** – Tastefully decorated, with comfortable chairs and a work table, the solar acts as a private meeting room for sensitive negotiations and the merchant's counting room. The fireplace keeps the chamber warm in winter, while the two windows covered with oiled sheepskin let in considerable light. Separated from the rest of the room by a curtain, the merchant has a large four-poster bed appointed with expensive linen sheets, goose down pillows and the finest wool blankets.

Garabis keeps his substantial fortune in a finely decorated, heavy, iron bound chest at the foot of the bed. It is solidly fastened to the floor and he has the only key. The solar is always locked except when he or his wife is present; they both have keys to the outer door.



Only Garabis knows how much money is kept in his chest...

3. **Servant's Quarters** – The merchant has a large staff to keep him and his wife in the style expected of a reasonably successful guildsman. The chamberlain, the merchant's cousin and a former caravan guard, leads the servants. His cousin's wife is the chief domestic. They share a comfortable bed behind the curtain (closest to the heat of the chimney). The roof leaks, so the chamberlain's wife covers their bed with an oiled canvas tarp when it rains. The locked chest at the end of their bed contains a plain but serviceable broadsword, plate half-helm and leather jack. The other servants include a cook, baker, alewife, four domestics and a scribe/accountant (who keeps the merchant's books). They share the other end of the attic. Their room is neat but very plain, with only a few spare clothes hung on pegs. In their limited off time, the servants prefer to down a pint of ale at one of the local watering holes rather than hang about the quarters where the chamberlain (or his wife) could spot them and give them more work.

FIRST FLOOR

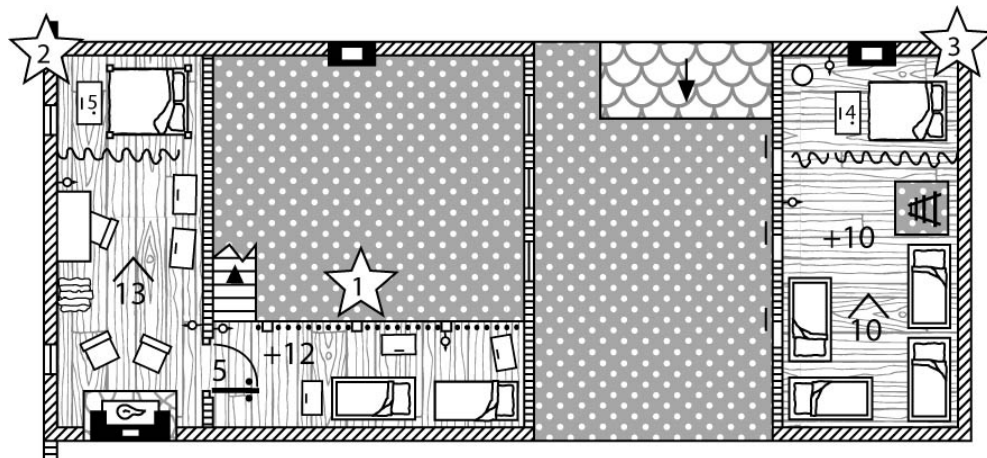
1. **Shop** – In addition to buying and selling large lots of wool, Garabis has a lucrative business selling retail woollen goods, including blankets and clothing. The storefront is the domain of his wife, **Jileana**. Aided by one of the journeymen, she retains contract workers (mostly poor women) throughout the city. Jileana provides them with raw wool to card, spin and weave into finished goods, for which she pays them a pittance. She then sells the items from the shop for a healthy profit. The store is especially well known for its selection of wool blankets. Made with only the highest grade and softest wool, the basic crème coloured blanket features Garabis' trademark four broad stripes (black, yellow, red and green) woven into the blanket brightly coloured dyed wool. Known as "Boka Bay Blankets," they come in several sizes and are frequently cut up to make clothing, especially winter coats.

2. **Passageway** – Large double doors, secured with a heavy crossbar, lead from Exaedas Street to a dark, narrow cobbled passageway (just wide enough for a two-wheeled cart). The passage provides access to the hall entrance and courtyard.

3. **Hall** – The large hall is two stories high with a good fireplace. It can seat twenty in a pinch. Three large windows on the second floor face northwest into the courtyard and let in some light during the day, though most illumination comes from the fire and torches. Two meals a day, a cold breakfast and a hot supper, are served, though the food must be brought across the courtyard from the kitchen. The two cots are supposed to be for the apprentices, but more often are used by the master's many guests. During the day, the cots, tables and benches are stacked under the stairs and the room becomes a sorting, folding and packing room for receiving and dispatching shipments of wool, blankets and clothes. At night, the hall is transformed again into a dormitory for additional family members or guests. Because of the room's multi-purpose nature, it is rarely, if ever, empty.

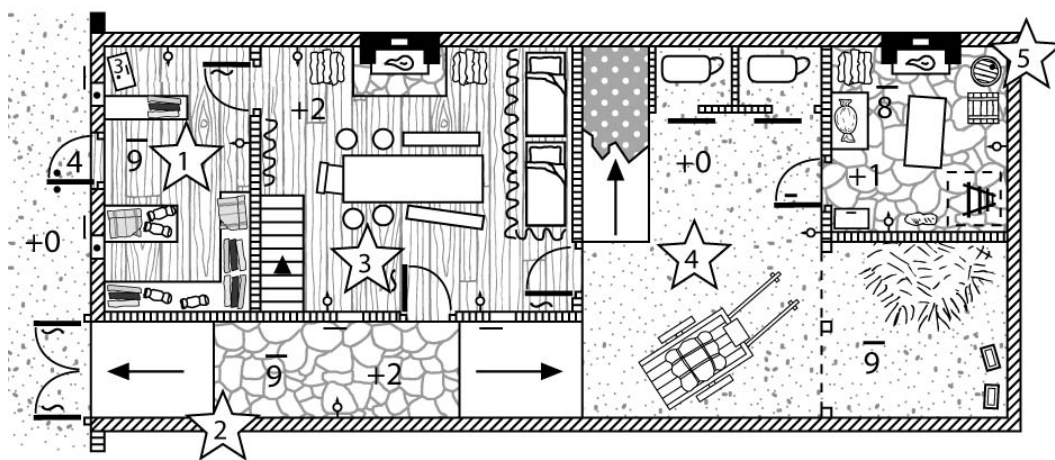
4. **Courtyard** – The house, kitchen and the walls of the adjacent houses border the small courtyard. Just large enough for one of the two wheeled carts Garabis uses to transport his bales of wool and other goods, it allows items to be unloaded out of sight of the many prying eyes on the street. Overhead are several clotheslines. On fine days, the domestics are kept busy hanging the wash. The two outhouses are kept clean and the pots emptied regularly. The small stable is reserved for the master and his wife's fine brown palfreys. The light horses used by the journeymen, draft horses for pulling the carts, mules and two additional carts are kept with a business associate on the edge of town.

WOOL MERCHANT 3

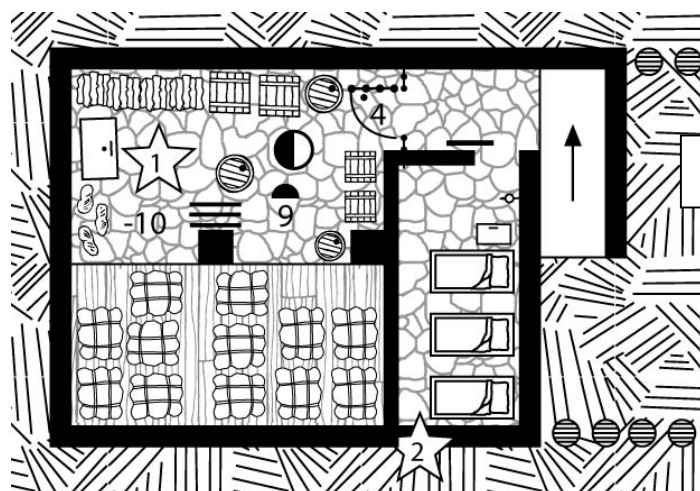


2ND FLOOR

SCALE FEET
0 10 20 30



1ST FLOOR



UNDERCROFT

THE WOOL
MERCHANT'S
TOWNHOUSE

WOOL MERCHANT 4

Lacking drainage, exposed to rain and constantly churned by the horse's hooves and the cart's wheels, the courtyard is almost always muddy. Jileana has asked her husband repeatedly to cobble the yard, but he has strenuously protested the cost. His only concession has been a small stone curb to keep water from running down the stone ramp leading down to the undercroft where his precious wool bales and other products are kept.

5. **Kitchen** – A timber-frame waddle and daub building, the kitchen was built separately from the main house due to the risk of fire. Originally, the back of the property was bordered by gardens. Over the years, the gardens were filled in with other houses and now houses on either side connect the main house with the kitchen. Because of this, the lady of the house (like most medieval people) worries constantly about the risk of fire.

For the number of people it serves, the kitchen is small, crowded and there is little storage. Because of this, food must be bought fresh daily and the servants often overflow into the passageway to work. Protected from the rain, cobbled with stone and free of mud, the passage is frequently lined with boxes and barrels of provisions, benches, stools, laundry tubs and gossiping servants creating a serious traffic hazard to be negotiated.

UNDERCROFT

1. **Storage** – A broad ramp leads down to the vaulted stone undercroft. Inside, a strong iron gate with a large padlock protects the merchant's substantial and valuable inventory. The quantity and type of wool and wool products varies considerably during the year as the merchant brings in bales of wool to Golotha from the countryside. Here, it is converted to finished goods by his wife's small army of contracted spinners and weavers. Although the undercroft is paved with stone, to avoid the damp the wool is kept up off the floor on wooden platforms. The boards in the corner opposite the door are cunningly hinged. They lift to reveal a small coffin like niche big enough to hide a large man. Garabis is the only one who knows of its existence or its purpose. It is currently empty. Firewood, barrels, crates, chests and hanging meat fill the rest of the room. Despite the stone curb at the top of the ramp, a constant rivulet of muddy water and horse urine finds its way down the ramp and under the gate to the drain in the middle of the floor.

2. **Barracks** – With three bunks, this basement barracks for the hired hands is cramped and a bit damp, but it is clean and relatively comfortable. Although the pay is strictly average, the hands are well treated and fed from the master's table, making the positions highly sought after. Most of the workers are young men, as it is a hard and dangerous life that uses men up quickly.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Go find my husband. The merchant is a notorious drunk. He has been gone on another bender for two days. At wit's end, his wife hires the PCs to search all the warehouses and taverns in the city, find him and bring him home. This task may lead them to the "Noose and Jester", Garabis' favourite drinking hole.

Get rid of that bitch. The merchant's wife is convinced her lousy, two-timing bastard of a husband is having an affair. She hires the PCs to follow him, rough him up and teach him some manners. There is a substantial bonus if his mistress is never seen or heard from again.

That's a bit of a twist. The merchant is not a drunk or having an affair, both are an act. He is actually a highly skilled Kandian agent. Devious and hard to follow, he eventually confronts the PCs and demands to know why they are following him. Amused at the answer, he offers them twice the money his wife offered if they eliminate the Morgathian AND Agrikan agents who have also been following him. More jobs may follow.

Save me! While the PCs are travelling on a main road, a young man, covered in blood, comes running around the corner, brigands in hot pursuit. Combat ensues. Afterwards, the wounded journeyman asks them to take him to his master. Although happy to have his man back, he hires the PCs to recover the stolen cargo.

Help please. The PCs come recommended. There have been many robberies on the roads/river lately. The PCs are hired to provide an additional escort to the merchant's wool convoy/shipment either to or from Golotha. The GM may use this ploy to relocate the PCs a considerable distance.

Collect the protection money. The PCs are either hired to collect protection money from the merchant or to protect him from the racketeers. Either way, he is tired of extortion and has no intention of paying. The PCs will have to protect the house and the merchant as he conducts his normal business. There is a spy in the house.

Were you expecting a message? The PCs are hired to take a message to the merchant (mundane mercantile information or secret messages). When they arrive, they are invited to stay until the merchant is ready to send a response. During the night he disappears. His wife is frantic and hires the PCs to find him.

It's a second story job. A disgruntled former servant approaches the PCs and tells them he knows of a merchant who keeps a significant amount of silver and gold in his house. He offers to split it with them if the PCs help him rob the place. If successful, the PCs are at risk of the Lia-Kavair finding out and demanding their share.

MASTER GARABIS OF NERELTAR

The son of a mercantylor, **Garabis** was born in Menekod, in what was then part of Rethem. His mother deserted him and his father when he was three. Raised on the road, he travelled with his father's caravan as it plied its trade across the region. He learned to ride at age six and is an accomplished rider. At 5'5" tall, he is not a large man, but he is charming, good looking, rich and popular with the women. An intelligent man, he is hard of hearing and will cup his hand to his ear in loud rooms. His father was a hard drinker and Garabis picked up the habit. He drinks beer mostly, often to the point of passing out. Living in Golotha has given him a healthy dose of paranoia and he is wary of strangers. He usually has one of his hired hands escort him when he goes out.

A lusty man, he met his wife **Jileana** when he was still a journeyman. They fell in love and were married. They have two sons, now adults, who live in Shiran. Both are married. Garabis has three grandchildren (two girls from his eldest son, one boy from his younger son). Now in his mid-forties, he has appetite for sex remains undiminished. Due to his wife's lack of interest, he has taken a mistress, **Myselene**, half his age. She lives on Purl Street. He rents her the third floor of a house and supports her in moderately luxury.

His lifelong experience in the wool business has given him many contacts throughout Rethem, Kanday and Tharda, including the **Lorjan brothers**, [D1] & [F23], with whom he is close friends and business partners in several leather and horse-trading ventures. He is very successful, in no small part due to his wife's considerable business acumen and nose for shrewd investments. His primary business has always been buying raw wool in the countryside, transporting it to Golotha, processing it and then selling the finished product. He has recently diversified somewhat, adding a 25% share in his cousin's iron mining operation near Weseda. He owns three two-wheeled carts, several draft and riding horses, four rental properties and shares in two large talbars.

GM OPTION

Garabis doesn't have a mistress and he is not an alcoholic. Both are acts. He is a Kandian spy. Sir Owain Chahryn recruited him in 698TR, shortly after the Peace of Selvos reopened the border. Since then, he has monitored the activities in southern Rethem, noting troop movements and the activities of the noble families. A skilled actor, no one, not even his family, knows of his activities. Garabis suspects the Morgathians and Agrikans may be on to him. He requested protection and **Sharal** was sent to act as his bodyguard. He is considering hiring additional "local contractors" to deal with the problem.



MASTER GARABIS OF NERELTAR

Master Mercantylor – born 4 Peonu 675

Str	12	Eye	14	Int	16
Sta	13	Hrg	07	Aur	13
Dex	11	Sml	13	Wil	15
Agf	13	Voi	15	Mor	08
Cml	15	Sunsign – Cusp Ulandus/Aralius			

Combat Abilities: End 13 Mov 13

Skills: Rhetoric 77, Intrigue 81, Mathematics 53, Law 28, (Acting 76), (Oratory 62), (Awareness 60), (Stealth 55), (Heraldry 52)

Languages: Harnic 75, Orbaalese 75, **Scripts:** Lakise 83

Ritual: Halea 15, **Piety:** 20

Combat Skills: Initiative 56 (71), Dodge 65 (69), Unarmed 56, Riding 84, Club 39 (66), (Dagger 61)

Daily Armour / Weapons: Fine long sleeved cloth tunic and hose; Leather cap and shoes, Dagger, Iron capped walking stick (club)

*** Optional Skills:** If the spy option to the left is selected, some of Garabis' skills are improved and additional skills are added. These are indicated in parenthesis.

Medical: Alcoholic (moderate or faked if a spy).

WOOL MERCHANT 6

Mistress Jileana

Master Garabis' wife, **Jileana**, was and still is extremely attractive woman. The real power behind the throne, she is an exceptional businesswoman, responsible for Garabis' many shrewd investments. She is merciless in dealing with her contract workers but always honours a contract. Jileana frequently carries large quantities of silver and so is always escorted by a journeyman or hired hand. She has begun to suspect her husband is having an affair. A bit of a nag, Jileana is annoyed that her husband is not doing proper maintenance on their house and unaware of his fear of drawing attention to himself. She is planning to do major renovations during his next extended trip, including having the house whitewashed, the courtyard cobbled and repairs done to the structure.

Journeymen

Garabis has three journeymen. **Taryris** is son of his cousin in Weseda. Cocky, arrogant and lazy, he has no loyalty to his master, but needs his recommendation to be promoted and so obeys out of self-interest. The son of a travelling merchant who frequents Golotha, **Maen** spends every free moment with his girlfriend. He likes his master, but his true loyalty is to his father. **Jerge** is very quiet, hardworking and muscular. He is carrying on a gay affair with the scribe. Occasionally they take a room at the Trident Inn. He is extremely loyal, but fears someone will discover his secret, making him vulnerable to blackmail.

Apprentices

Malan is the younger of Garabis' two apprentices. Just a boy, he is clumsy and scared of the hired hands. He hates his apprenticeship and would prefer to be a scribe. He has no particular loyalty to the merchant, but is dependant on him for everything. **Aralid** is secretly from a Morgathian family. He slips out of the house at odd hours to attend services. His loyalties are to himself, the church, then his family and finally to the merchant.

Hired Hands

The six hired hands are a combination of guard, labourer, drover and teamster in the employ of the merchant. Garabis has equipped each man with a kurbul half-helm, quilt byrnie; spear, round shield and axe.

Haeri is the senior hand. A big burly fellow, with red hair and a beard, he has never married and has been with the merchant for eight years. Very loyal, he is a good bowman. **Raerin** is a slim man with a receding hairline. Haeri's younger brother, he is loyal and an average bowman. **Baid** is a former fisherman from the north. He has a broad accent and is a simple fellow. He has no loyalty to the merchant, working only for pay. **Keles** spend three years as a mercenary, but took this job

because it was safer. He has his own falchion and is skilled in its use. He is reasonably loyal. **Urvin** is missing his front teeth. He is mouthy, drinks a lot and is a brawler with no self-discipline. Completely amoral, he would sell any secret for the right price.

Garabis recently hired the sixth hand, **Sharal**, with no local references. No one knows much about him and he keeps mostly to himself. He has an affinity for horses and has quickly assumed the role of unofficial ostler. His loyalties are completely unknown. Secretly, he is an Erken (chosen man) of the Chequered Shield sent gather intelligence on Golotha. If the GM is using the spy option, he is also acting as Garabis personal bodyguard.

Caravan

Garabis' normal caravan consists of three two-wheeled carts with two hired hands alternating riding on the cart and leading the draft horse. The merchant and the three journeymen ride escort on horseback. The two apprentices walk or ride on the back of the cart. Each cart can carry five sacks of wool (364 lbs each) plus various assorted camp equipment and provisions.

House Servants

The chamberlain, **Adis**, is Garabis' cousin. An older fellow with white hair, he is meticulous and extremely loyal to his master. His wife, **Cymarsi**, is the head domestic. A self-confident, bossy woman she is also loyal and trustworthy. The cook, **Beriena**, is big woman. Nasty and vicious to the domestics, she sucks up to the chamberlain and merchant. She is a good cook, if a bit temperamental. **Alane** is the household baker. A nice girl she is Cymarsi's unmarried younger sister and perhaps the most loyal person in the whole household. The alewife, **Dersi**, is a bit scatterbrained, self-important and nosey. She is basically loyal but likes to gossip and sometime leaks private details without realising it.

There are four household domestics, three young women (**Apella**, **Elenia** and **Bela**) and one young man (**Bogen**). The women do the cleaning, washing and waiting on the master and mistress. A shrewd bargain hunter, Bogen knows the city well and does the shopping for the household. He is secretly skimming a portion of the money he is given to buy provisions. Although dishonest, he is basically loyal.

Vorfyn is Garabis' scribe and accountant. Very literate and well read, he is a skilled mathematician with a fine clear hand. He suspects how much the merchant has in his chest. Vorfyn owes everything to the merchant, so is very loyal, though he feels he is underpaid and deserves better quarters. He is secretly having an affair with one of the journeymen, Jerge.