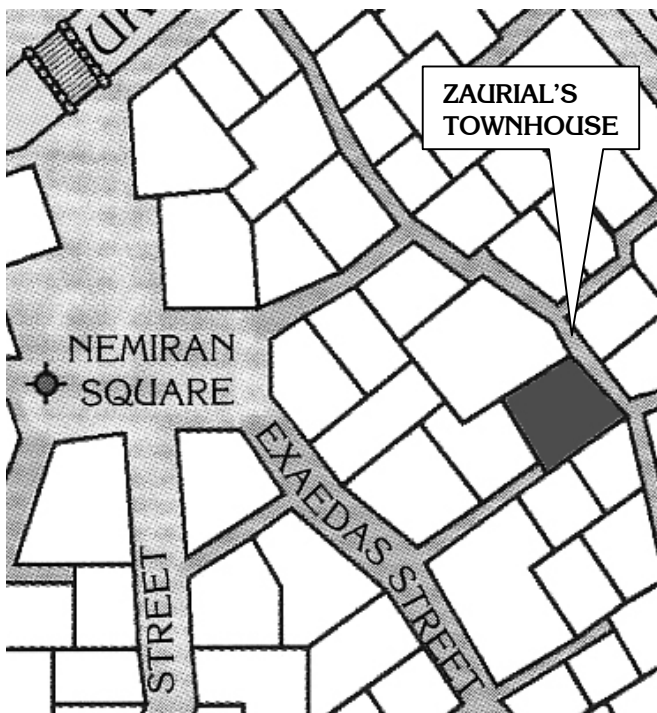


ZAURIAL'S TOWNHOUSE 1



ZAURIAL'S TOWNHOUSE

Location: Golotha, Kingdom of Rethem
Holder: Sir Zaurial Bisidril
Size: 16 (Master and retinue)
Others: 15-21 (Servants and slaves)

INTRODUCTION

This article contains floor plans and a description for a large, luxurious nobleman's townhouse in the city of Golotha, Rethem. It also contains a separate detailed description of the house's master, Sir Zaurial Bisidril, nephew of the Agrikan Primate of Hârn, his retinue and household. This allows the GM to re-use the townhouse in any city and with the occupants of his or her own choosing. Sir Zaurial and his retinue can also be used separate from this location as NPC opponents or allies for any campaign in western Hârn. Sir Zaurial acts muscle for the Agrikan church and his clan and therefore travels widely, making him an excellent reoccurring villain.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Zaurial's townhouse is located in the Nemiran District, the fashionable nobles' enclave of Golotha. Just a short walk from Nemiran Square, the house has easy access to Dedergon Gate. From there, it is just three-quarters of a league to his family estates, across the bridge in Anerath Hundred. There he maintains his primary residence at the family estate, Vinarsa Manor. Zaurial spends about a quarter of his time at his townhouse. He uses it to escape

his elder sister's ever-watchful gaze; He parties with his cronies and remains close in the event his uncle requires his services.

This large residence is composed of a pair of stone two storey buildings joined by a small courtyard. The building facing the street is built on an undercroft. Windows are small and heavily barred, as per Golothan custom. The main entrance is off a small side street through a passageway to a tiny courtyard. The entrance is protected by a substantial iron gate. The roof is covered with red clay tiles to guard against fire.

The townhouse was built for **Tiemay of Kaludis**, a wealthy and successful clothier. Tiemay imported finished cloth from across Hârn and Lythia and resold it to other clothiers and chandlers from across Rethem and upriver in Tharda. A savvy merchant and astute businessman, he made large profits for many years. When his previous residence on this lot was destroyed by fire, Tiemay decided to build a larger and more ostentatious home. This display of wealth was to be his undoing.

Soon, caravans carrying his goods were raided; cargos were stolen off the docks in bold daylight raids. Desperate, he invited a powerful Agrikan lord, Sir Zaurial Bisidril, for dinner in hopes of arranging "protection" for his cargo. Impressed with the residence, Zaurial agreed to extend his protection to Tiemay's cargo, provided he pay him 25% of his profits and sell him his house for less than half it cost him to build it. Outraged, Tiemay refused.

A week later, while escorting a cargo of cloth to Coranan, Tiemay was attacked by bandits. He, his son, journeymen and apprentice were skinned alive and nailed to trees and their cargo stolen. Wisely, his widow agreed to sell the house to the kind Lord Zaurial, for a quarter its value, when he came to "pay his respects."

Since then, the residence has been the home and general flophouse to Sir Zaurial and his retinue when they are in Golotha. His retinue includes his cousin, five knights, three squires and six men-at-arms sworn to his

CREDITS

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ZAURIAL'S TOWNHOUSE 2

service. The household consists of an ostler/overseer and his apprentice, cook and numerous short-lived slaves. Several large and ferocious mastiffs and the retinue's horses round out the company.

The house is notorious for riotous parties lasting until the early hours of the morning and piercing screams from its private torture chamber. Since Zaurial is the nephew of the Agrikan Primate/Chancellor of the Heptarchial Council, a lay brother of the *Warriors of Mamaka* (who provide the city guard), accompanied by a large and vicious retinue of hardened killers and one of the most skilled and deadly fighters on Hârn, no one has found it prudent to complain.

Somewhat surprisingly, the townhouse is spotless. Despite the frequent parties and number of people, horses and dogs coming and going, the master does not tolerate filth. The ostler/overseer drives the slaves hard to keep up with the work. They are up before dawn and work late into the night until he is satisfied the house meets the master's demanding standards.

FIRST FLOOR

1. **Servant's Quarters** – This room has been converted into a guardroom and barracks. It has a raised wooden floor. Because of this, the room is warm and dry, making it very popular with the men-at-arms.

2. **Kitchen** – The kitchen has a spacious work area, though it can become crowded with the massive quantity of food and wine demanded by his lordship's large retinue. The fireplace is large enough to roast a whole pig or sheep and often does. Unfortunately, the room has no windows and can become unbearably hot and humid when meals are being cooked. The door is rarely closed, except in the evening. The cook sleeps in a dirty, flea infested cot in the corner of the room.

3. **Stables and Ostler's Quarters** – The passage from the street leads directly to the stable doors. The building is barely large enough for seven warhorses. The stall nearest the quarters is used to store tack and feed, leaving little room to work. Most of the cleaning of tack and grooming is done in the courtyard. Due to the warhorses' voracious appetites, the stable can only hold one day's store of hay and feed. Fresh provisions are delivered daily. Each morning the ostler's apprentice takes the horses across the Dedergon Bridge to the ostler's common to graze and exercise. A local teamster has a standing contract to bring his small cart to townhouse each morning. The ostler supervises while the slaves muck out the stables and load the dung into the cart. He enjoys using his horsewhip to encourage the slaves.

The Ostler and his apprentice occupy the small room with a bunk bed just off the stables. The men have little in

the way of possessions other than their clothes and a few tools of the trade. The room has no window and so is quite dark and dingy. Special care has been taken to blend the new stonework, which conceals the backdoor, with the existing walls. Since the ostler and his apprentice arrived after the work was done, they are completely unaware of the secret exit.

4. **Back Door** – Accessible only by a ladder from the master's bedchamber, this secret door leads out into the back alley. Built after the new master took possession of the house, it is intended as a means of escape in an emergency. The door is carefully concealed from the outside and strongly secured from the inside with two heavy iron drawbars.

5. **Courtyard and Passageway** – A strong iron gate, barred by a large lock and a heavily barred inner door secure the only access from the street. The wide, arched passage has a hard packed gravel floor and is watched by three arrow slits. A guard is present about half the time.

Crammed between the two buildings, the courtyard is tiny. Neatly gravelled, the slaves sweep it daily and keep it meticulously clean. The large household shares a single privy below the stairs. The pot is taken down to the river and dumped daily. Despite this, the privy is a foul place.

SECOND FLOOR

1. **Main Hall** – The centre of activity in the house is the hall. The large fireplaces and vaulted ceiling are designed to impress visitors with the owner's wealth. Five windows, three overlooking the street and two overlooking the courtyard add considerable light during the daytime. A raised dais, with a head table, dominates the room. The second door leads out the back of the room to the master's private solar.

2. **Private Hall** – This large, comfortable room was originally used as an office and private meeting room for the master and his family. It has been converted into sleeping quarters with five single beds. It now serves as a barracks and private club for the nobles. The knights can often be found here playing dice.

3. **Small Bedroom** – Intended as the children's nursery, the smaller of the private bedrooms is now home to the master's cousin. Although not terribly large, the room has fine oak panelling and a door that locks.

4. **Great Chamber** – This room has always been the domain of the master of the house. Fine wood panelling, a fireplace, a window and a large four-poster bed are bold symbols of its owner's wealth and power. The window looks out over the courtyard, allowing a clear view of the entrance passageway. The peephole is directly above the secret back door, to ensure the coast is clear before using the exit. A hatch in the floor opens to reveal a ladder

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ZAURIAL'S TOWNHOUSE

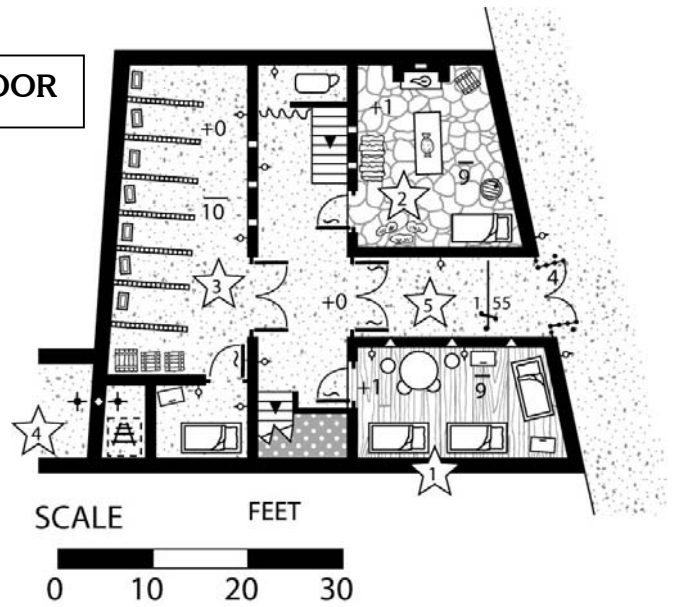


The coat of arms of the Bisidril Clan...

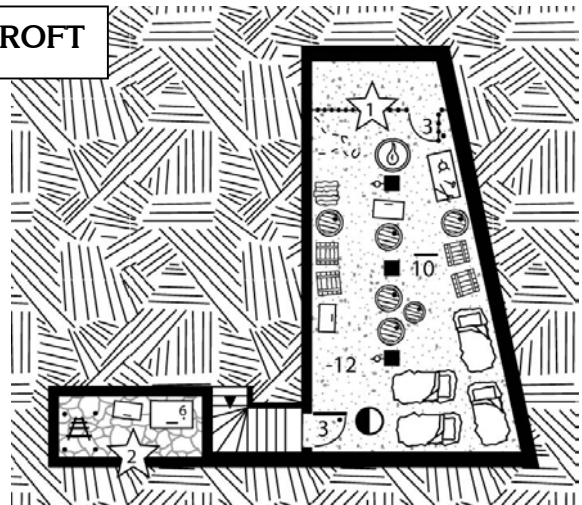
2ND FLOOR



1ST FLOOR



UNDERCROFT



ZAURIAL'S TOWNHOUSE 4

descending from the corner of the room to the secret back door. It was obviously added recently, as the floor planks do not match the rest of the room.

5. **Solar and chapel** – This private room allows the master to retire from the noise and chaos of the hall for private discussions. This room also acts as his private chapel with an altar and rail for prayer. Large, comfortable chairs and a brazier allow quiet discussions to take place in considerable comfort. A side door leads across an enclosed bridge to the master's private chamber, allowing him to come and go without going through the hall.

UNDERCROFT

1. **Storage, slave quarters and dungeon** – Due to the high water table, the storage area is cold and dank. The cook buys food at the local market on a regular basis and stores most of the food in the kitchen itself. The storage area contains several barrels of wine (some truly excellent vintages), beer and ale. On order of the master, a dozen barrels of salt fish and crates of preserved food are kept in event of siege or famine. The last time one was opened, most of the food was rancid. The rations are now rotated regularly and the old food is fed to the slaves. The last batch was so foul that several of the slaves died.

When the new master took over the house, he replaced the servants with slaves and assigned their quarters to the men-at-arms. The slaves were moved into the undercroft. The slaves are shackled to their beds with little clothing and no blankets. They must huddle together for warmth. Few slaves live more than six months.

The far end of the cellar has been converted into a torture chamber and cell. The lord is a master torturer and loves his "art." He can draw a session out for days. The screams of the victims ensure none of the slaves dares try and escape. The cell usually contains one or two guests of the master, future projects for his art.

2. **Treasury** – This room is obviously of recent construction. Dug at the same time as the secret exit was built, the excavated material was snuck out under loads of dung from the stables. Located below the ostler's quarters, it is the natural low spot beneath the stables. Horse urine soaking through the stable floors finds its way into the room causing it to reek badly. The entrance hatch is beneath the floor of the secret room. It is covered by several inches of hard packed dirt. Only the master and his cousin know its location. The large chest contains a substantial portion of the master's personal wealth. He keeps his ill-gotten gains and spoils of victory here, out of sight of his elder sister. The smaller chest contains several high quality weapons wrapped in oilcloth.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Hey, that's my sister! Zaurial and his cronies have snatched a girl off the street and taken her back to the townhouse. There is a large party planned for tonight and she is the "main attraction." The PCs are enlisted (hired/begged/cajoled etc) into mounting a very fast, very deadly rescue.

Clan War. The Bisidril Clan has more enemies than friends. Someone is very annoyed at them and wants this cesspit cleaned out. Make it fast though; the *Warriors of Mamaka* are just a call away. This is only suitable for a very strong party or one with plenty of assistance. Adjust the number of Zaurial's retinue accordingly.

Anyone seen [insert PC name here]? Sometime during the night, one of the male PCs has gone missing. He has been taken by slavers and sold. Pelly has bought him to work at the townhouse. He is scheduled for "gelding" in days/hours.

I want my house back. The widow of Tiemay of Kaludis hires the PCs. She wants revenge for the death of her husband and son and she wants her house back. She is willing to pay in gold. Successful PCs will earn the ever-lasting enmity of the Agrikan Primate of Hâm. Is this a good idea? This is ideal for PCs desperate for lots of cash and planning to leave the country anyway.

Message for Sir Zaurial. Strangers to town, the PCs are hired to deliver a message to the townhouse. The master takes offence to the content of the message and throws them in his dungeon. Now how do you get out?

Ahem, that is my sword! A wealthy family from Coranan, Tharda, hire the PCs to "retrieve" the heirloom sword carried by Sir Buell. Strangely, he doesn't want to give it up. Stealth and surprise are advised.

Come to the party. The PCs meet a friendly young squire at a local inn and are invited back to the townhouse to carry on the party. Once there, numerous drunken (and very dangerous) Agrikans surrounded them. They don't take kindly to someone wanting to go home early. The PCs are expected to participate in all sorts of morally offensive behaviour, at sword point if necessary.

Maps anyone? One of Zaurial's many enemies wants information about his townhouse for future reference. They are especially interested in the private quarters and undercroft. The PCs are hired to infiltrate one of the many parties and make a map of the house.

Observe and report. There have been many strange activities at the townhouse of late. An unnamed patron wants the house watched and detailed records kept of who comes and goes on what business. The patron is Zaurial's sister, Lady Miriam. Unless they are extra careful, Zaurial's men will spot them and give chase.

ZAURIAL'S TOWNHOUSE 5

SIR ZAURIAL BISIDRIL

Born into the powerful Bisidril Clan, Zaurial grew up in a strict Agrikan household. Strength, discipline and fearlessness were emphasized. He received little love from his mother and frequent beatings from his father. Nurturing his rejection and hate, he trained relentlessly, driving himself to the edge of endurance. By the time he was twenty-one, he had emerged as one of the best fighters on Hårn. Since, his victories in tournaments, combat, feuds and duels have honed his deadly art.

His uncle, Klyrdes Bisidril, is clan head. Childless, he has selected Miriam, Zaurial's elder sister, as heir to their family's wealth and influence. He also appointed her steward of the family estates during his frequent absences. Perhaps surprisingly for an Agrikan, Zaurial thinks his sister is a better governor and heir than himself. It was his mother who ensured the clan prospered, as his father was unpopular with his uncle and a poor administrator. Like their mother, Miriam is a hard, cruel taskmistress, squeezing the peasants ruthlessly. Considered evil personified, Miriam is greatly feared by many.

Freed from the burdens of administrating the clan estates and able to draw on the substantial family treasury as required, Zaurial lives only for war, killing and Agrik. Loved by his men, hated by his enemies, he has little sympathy for the weak. He believes the best thing in life is to crush your enemies, drive them before you and hear the lamentation of the women. He hates women, preferring to rape and torture them.

A skilled warrior and master swordsman, he is a man of honour to those he respects. Zaurial has a stern gaze, is not ease to impress and can smell strength in a man. He wears a full suit of chain mail with a giant fur cloak and carries a silver broadsword. A gold medallion around his neck openly declares he is a lay brother of the *Warriors of Mamaka*, placing him above the law. Despite the fact the Bisidril Clan have more enemies than friends, he proudly displays the sable field and three gold lions on his shield and surcoat. A wealthy young noble man, he insists his residences be kept clean and patronizes the Bridgetower Inn for its fine wines and cultured company.

THE SWORN BAND

Charismatic, strong, wealthy and powerful, Zaurial attracts followers with ease. He choses his men carefully and accepts only the best. Powerful blood oaths, shared danger and much spilt blood have bonded these men together in life and death. Their loyalty to their master and each other is absolute. In return he treats them as blood brothers. His men love him and will follow his lead no matter where it takes them.



Zaurial is the right arm of his uncle, the Agrikan Preme...

SIR ZAURIAL BISIDRIL

Rethemi Knight – born 3 Agrazhar 687

Str	16	Eye	12	Int	11
Sta	15	Hrg	10	Aur	09
Dex	18	Sml	12	Wil	13
Agl	16	Voi	14	Mor	09
Cml	13	Sunsign	– Angberelius		

Combat Abilities: End 15 Mov 16

Skills: Oratory 93, Rhetoric 89, Intrigue 63, Foraging 76, Survival 81, Heraldry 38, Physician 48, Torture 88, Weaponcraft 54, Horsecraft 56,

Languages: Harnic 83, **Scripts:** none

Ritual: Agrik 31, **Piety:** 30

Combat Skills: Initiative 105, Dodge 97, Unarmed 94, Condition 96, Riding 102, Lance 99, Broadsword 112, Mace 92, Battle axe 79; Dagger 88, Kite Shield 107, Crossbow 83

Daily Armour / Weapons: Plate ¾ helm; Very fine (AQ+2) chain mail hauberk, leggings, cowl and mittens; Kite Shield; Quilt gambeson; Fine cloth tunic and leggings; Thick fur cloak with hood in cold weather; Leather calf boots; Lance, Broadsword*, Mace, Battle axe, Dagger, Heavy crossbow.

*** Magical Broadsword “Agrik’s Fury”:**

WQ +3; Heavy weapon, requires Str 16+ to wield, B4/E7/P4 damage; Silver finish, does not rust or tarnish; Burns with red flame when fighting Laranians, +2 fire damage to every successful hit; Executioner’s weapon, forces amputation roll, at +5, on a K4 or K5 strike to the neck.

Mental Disorder: Sadism (moderate)

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ULANKH JONZTER BISIDRIL

The son of Zaurial's youngest aunt, Jonzter life has been abnormal from conception. His mother was a fanatic Agrikan priestess. Determined that her child would be great, she arranged to conceive him during a special ceremony. In 698TR, during the Ukhila (Octennial Games) at the Feast of Balefire (8 Agrazhar), she was tied to an altar and impregnated by eight high priests in a ceremonial orgy in front of the entire congregation. Unfortunately for her, the plan did not take into account Klyrdes' (her own brother) fanaticism. Eight months and eight days later, late in her pregnancy, she was seized and brought back to the temple. On the very same altar, while she pleaded for her life, Klyrdes cut open her womb and pulled Jonzter from her. He was bathed in his mother's blood, as she burned alive as a sacrifice to Agrik.

Jonzter was raised to be a priest of Agrik from birth. His noble lineage, family wealth and power meant he was denied nothing. A series of guardians protected him through his childhood, though many met bizarre and unexplainable deaths. Their indulgence resulted in a depraved, violent and vengeful child, emotionally scarred and psychotic. The last and most influential of these protectors was an Ulanxh (free priest) of the Clerical *Order of the Fuming Gate*. He began teaching Jonzter invocations at an extremely young age, twelve. Jonzter's rapid progress and extraordinary skills convinced the cleric that he was a direct emissary of Agrik himself. The priest told Jonzter this, feeding his delusions. This idea has resulted in Jonzter suffering frequent hallucinations and recurring nightmares.

At sixteen he joined the *Order of the Fuming Gate* (his mother's order), in large part to spite his uncle (Primate and member of the *Order of Mamaka*). Already a highly trained, he proceeded quickly through the rank of Agnichari (Acolyte) to Heruchai (Lieutenant) of the Aperagris (Master of High Discipline). He claimed to have received visions directly from Agrik and began to make prophetic statements. Many of the other priests and acolytes began to defer to him, threatening the status of the Viriahn (High Priest) and his ally the Senesharil (Grandmaster). They declared him insane and had him cast out. Only the secret intervention of his uncle, Klyrdes saved him from being killed.

Since that time, he has been living with Zaurial, the only member of his clan who will have him. Crazy, given to weird rants and prophecies, he is seriously psychotic with an insatiable blood lust. Only Zaurial's iron grip and frequent beatings have kept him (barely) in line. Klyrdes keeps close tabs on him through Zaurial, just in case he actually is an emissary of the Immortal Warlord of Balgashang.



R03

Jonzter is either the emissary of Agrik or insane...

ULANKH JONZTER BISIDRIL

Outcast Agrikan Priest – born 16 Peonu 699

Str	11	Eye	17	Int	14
Sta	12	Hrg	15	Aur	17
Dex	13	Sml	14	Wil	12
Agl	09	Voi	08	Mor	03
Cml	10	Sunsign	– Aralius		

Combat Abilities: End 12 Mov 09

Skills: Rhetoric 74, Intrigue 66, Mental Conflict 79, Oratory 87, Folklore 97, Embalming 48, Physician 53, Torture 82, Law 32, Drawing 42, Heraldry 38, Alchemy 70, Tarotry 38

Languages: Harnic 81, Azeryani 81, Surikal 44

Scripts: Lakise 85, Zerim 85

Ritual: Agrik 84, **Piety:** 231

Combat Skills: Initiative 79, Dodge 40, Unarmed 69, Riding 58, Sickle 64, Mace 73, Knight Shield 69, Dagger 51, Whip 72

Daily Armour / Weapons: Fine cloth tunic and leggings, Ring mail byrnies; Fur cloak with hood in cold weather; leather calf boots; Sickle, mace, knight shield, dagger and horse whip.

Invocations:

Common II	<i>Commune</i>	Agrik II	<i>Thunder of Armahnh</i>
Common III	<i>Awe</i>	Agrik III	<i>Flame of Gashang</i>
Common III	<i>Endure</i>	Agrik III	<i>Mamaka's Cry</i>
Common III	<i>Tongues</i>	Agrik III	<i>Torturer's Insight</i>
Common III	<i>Truthsense</i>	Agrik III	<i>Touch of the V'hir</i>
Common IV	<i>Divination</i>	Agrik IV	<i>Crimson Dance</i>
Common IV	<i>Curse</i>	Agrik IV	<i>Flames of the V'hir</i>
Common IV	<i>Revelation</i>	Agrik IV	<i>Intimidation</i>
Common IV	<i>Summoning</i>	Agrik IV	<i>Lord of Fire</i>

Mental Disorders: Psychopathy (severe), megalomania (moderate), sadism (moderate). Because of these disorders, Jonzter suffers frequent visual and auditory hallucinations and regular nightmares.

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ZAURIAL'S RETINUE

Zaurial's Sworn Band has a strength of fourteen. It varies by two or three, depending on losses and recent recruitment. Occasionally he will detach some men for other tasks. There is no regular pay, but Zaurial covers all expenses, is generous with gifts of money and weapons and divides all booty (according to rank).

ELITE AGRIKAN KNIGHTS (5)

Sir Gerrin, Sir Buell, Sir Derue, Sir Hadden and Sir Brak

Str	15	Dex	15	Wil	15
Sta	15	Agl	15	Mor	09

Combat Abilities: End 15 Mov 15

Combat Skills: Initiative 95, Dodge 85, Unarmed 70, Riding 95, Lance 95, Bastard sword 90, Mace 90, Dagger 80, Kite shield 95

Daily Armour / Weapons: Plate $\frac{3}{4}$ helm; Mail hauberk, leggings, cowl and mittens; Quilt gambeson; Leather calf boots; Kite Shield; Lance, Broadsword, Mace, and Dagger.

AGRIKAN SQUIRES (3)

Squire Vos, Squire Sedore and Squire Barton

Str	14	Dex	14	Wil	14
Sta	14	Agl	14	Mor	09

Combat Abilities: End 14 Mov 14

Combat Skills: Initiative 75, Dodge 75, Unarmed 61, Riding 89, Lance 75, Bastard sword 75, Mace 71, Dagger 67, Knight shield 75, Crossbow 57

Daily Armour / Weapons: Plate half helm; Ring mail byrnie; Quilt gambeson; Leather gauntlets and calf boots; Knight shield; Broadsword, Mace, Dagger, Crossbow.

ELITE AGRIKAN MEN-AT-ARMS (6)

Lasher, Trotter, Hotch, Ja-Jo, Slim and Talker

Str	13	Dex	13	Wil	13
Sta	13	Agl	13	Mor	09

Combat Abilities: End 13 Mov 13

Combat Skills: Initiative 90, Dodge 75, Unarmed 82, Riding 75, Spear 90, Sword 85, Dagger 80, Knight shield 90, Crossbow 90

Daily Armour / Weapons: Plate half helm; Mail byrnie; Quilt gambeson; Leather gauntlets and calf boots; Knight shield; Spear, Broadsword, Dagger, Crossbow.

Swore Knights

Five knights are sworn to Zaurial's service. He likes to refer to them as the "degenerate but deadly." Their scarred bodies and cold, self-confident aura speaks volumes. The knights share the private hall.

Sir Gerrin Staenbridge is stylish and handsome, a man of wit and learning and a professional killer. He has a manor and has an arranged marriage with a wife and two children. Quietly homosexual, he rarely visits his family, preferring the thrill and excitement of life in Zaurial's retinue. Hard riding, fighting and the company of men give purpose to his life. An outstanding swordsman and duellist, he is second in command of the Sworn Band when Zaurial is absent. His preferred weapon is the bastard sword (ML 108).

Sir Buell Golka has travelled widely. Known as the "grey man", he has the ability to blend into any crowd. He has used this ability to great effect spying for Zaurial. He has visited Kanday and Tharda numerous times. He carries a fine broadsword, the heirloom of a prominent, now dead, Thardic nobleman. Sir Buell is an excellent lancer (ML 98), second only to Zaurial.

Born to a Laranian family, **Sir Derue** was banished from Kanday for a series of brutal rapes and murders. In Coranan, he converted to Agrikanism and fell in with a group of mercenaries heading for Golotha. There, he met Zaurial and the two became fast friends. One night, in a drunken confession, Sir Derue revealed his real name and history to his master. Zaurial now uses the information to control and manipulate him. He is a fine rider (ML 100).

A bit of a dandy and a devil with the ladies, **Sir Hadden Pineo** joined the company for the adventure and the glory. Politically naive, he rarely considers the consequences of his actions and lives for the moment. Blindly loyal to Zaurial, he will follow him wherever he leads, even unto death. Subtly has never been his trademark and his weapons of choice are a massive black mace (WQ +2, +3 to blunt dmg) and a blood red shield.

An impressionable young man and an ardent Agrikan, **Sir Brak Araku** is the youngest son of a very minor branch of the royal family. Brak's father felt his son needed real combat experience; the primate suggested service with Zaurial's household. Now twenty-three, the right side of his face is covered with lines of scar tissue he wears like a badge of honour. Utterly devoted to his new master, he would kill his own mother if ordered to. His family ties make intrigue as natural as breathing (ML 82).

Squires

Chosen for their ambition, lack of fear and quick wits, Zaurial and Gerrin's squires are as deadly as they are young. In addition to their masters, the squires assist the other knights as well. They sleep on cots in the main hall.

Twenty-four, **Vos Lidtkie** has been with Zaurial for three years. Of noble birth, his clan was on the losing end of a vicious feud. Captured and sold into the Pamesani games as a gladiator, he earned his freedom, and the attention of Zaurial, by winning eighty-eight straight bouts in three years. He can use almost any weapon put in his hand (+20 ML to all Combat Skills listed).

Sedore Tuer is Zaurial's newest squire, just sixteen. The second son of the bailiff of Timrola Manor, his family have been loyal servants of Clan Bisidril for decades. Sedore hopes to earn his knighthood in combat. A fanatic Agrikan, Sedore prefers a mace (ML 81). He is also a pyromaniac and definitely a little unstable. The other squires keep a close eye on him.

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A boyishly handsome eighteen, **Barton Foley** is Sir Gerrin's personal squire and lover. An angelic face, blonde hair and blue eyes cannot disguise the cold stare of a hardened killer. His left hand, lost in combat at age 14, has been replaced with a hook. Covered by a leather sheath except in combat, he keeps the inner curve razor sharp by daily stropping with a honing stone. A plate vambrace protects his left arm, leaving his hook free to entrap an enemy's sword. In his right he wields a delicate but deadly short sword with considerable skill (ML 85).

Men-at-arms

Zaurail has also attracted a small group of veteran men-at-arms to his service. He accepts only the toughest, most skilled fighters into his service, but once accepted, he fits them out with little regard to cost.

The sergeant and senior man-at-arms is **Lasher**. Old scar tissue twists his mouth into a slight perpetual sneer and he speaks with a foreign accent (possibly Azeryani). He refuses to discuss his past, but is an ardent Agrikan. His primary weapon is a broadsword (ML 95).

After a rival lord wiped out his family, **Trotter** travelled to Golotha to become a man-at-arms. His desire for vengeance still burns hot and he often takes it out on innocent victims. He uses a combination of axe (ML 90) and dagger in a high effective and unique fighting style he developed himself.

Caught raping his younger sister, **Hotch** was forced to kill his mother and father and flee for his life. Furtive and unsavoury, he is stealthy and deadly with a dagger. He acts as Zaurial's primary scout. He uses a broadsword or spear (ML 90) in combat.

Ja-Jo loves to sing and has a strong deep baritone. His habit of chanting Agrikan hymns while fighting has thrown off many an opponent. He considers the mace his best weapon (ML 90), but he is actually very good with broadsword as well.

Most strangers dismiss **Slim** as little more than a scribe, a role he frequently performs for his master since he can read and write fluently and speaks six languages. Behind his thin intellectual face and lanky frame is a vicious, hardened street fighter with unexpected sinewy strength. His mild appearance and blinding speed catches opponents off guard and unprepared, frequently allowing him to strike first with either his dagger or short sword.

A badly healed sword blow to throat has left **Talker** unable to speak and in constant pain. It is difficult for him to eat or drink. Slim is his best friend and is teaching to read and write. A huge man, he wields a heavy steel mace (ML 80) with ease. He is the best crossbowman (ML 98) in the company.

Servants

A long time servant of Clan Bysidril, **Pelly** was sent to take care of the house and tend his master's horses. An ostler by trade, he also serves as the caretaker when Zaurial is not present. A cruel sadist, he also acts as overseer of the house slaves, a role he relishes. He is responsible for purchasing replacement slaves, a frequent event. He is missing his left eye, the result of a vicious kick from a warhorse.

Seven feet tall, **Kerik** is Pelly's apprentice. Dull and slow-witted, he is immensely strong, equally able to deal with struggling horses or slaves with deceptive ease. He has a disturbing cackling laugh. He is the victim of many cruel torments and practical jokes by Zaurial's men.

The threat of poison is a constant hazard in a place like Golotha, so Zaurial chose **Bogen** with great care and pays him very well. The chief cook and food taster, his entire family lives in Vinarsa and would be killed immediately if anything happened to his master. He is an excellent cook with a taste for animal blood in his dishes.

Animals

Zaurial's retinue includes a dozen war-trained male Mastiffs. The dogs regard the company as their pack and Zaurial as the alpha male. They roam freely and are extremely territorial and protective of the house. They are fed better than most noble's servants.

Zaurial's entire company is mounted. Seven of the warhorses, including his favourite, **Razor**, and those of the knights and Jonzter, are kept at the house. The nine mounts for the squires and men-at-arms are left with the ostler at the Bridgetower Inn. Great care and attention is lavished on the horses.

Slaves

The household requires numerous slaves. Eight to twelve female slaves do the domestic work, including laundry, kitchen work and cleaning the house. They also provide sexual entertainment for the master and his guests. Four to six male slaves do the heavy work of hauling water and provisions and cleaning out the stables and courtyard. Pelly gelds the males to make them more biddable, a popular form of entertainment for the master and his guests. All of the slaves are branded and collared when they arrive at the house. They are kept naked to make it harder to escape and more accessible to any whom chose to use them. Anything less than complete and utter submission will earn the slaves a trip to the rack. Those that survive the master's artistic talents never resist again. It is rare that a slave survives more than a few months given the long hours, hard labour, harsh living conditions and rancid food.