

## SURVIVING IN CORANAN

### ON 1 DENNARIUS A DAY

Survival in an urban environment is a great source of adventure and mystery, especially if the character is new to the city. Cities are expensive. In a low-fantasy<sup>1</sup> campaign money is scarce. So how can a player-character survive in an urban environment?

### Floogy the Beginner

Floogy, a foreigner, has come to Coranan to rest, recuperate and figure out where to go from here. He gets the standard spiel at the gates about dangerous places, people and things not to do in town. Floogy has some knowledge of metallurgy and has worked in the mines for a year and a day<sup>2</sup>; so he walks to the first metalsmith's shop he finds in the market square and asks for a job. He has a strong back and knows how to tell an ingot from a finished rod - and thus is hired as a labourer. He is promised 1d per day.

After a long discussion with his new employer, he finds out the employer's chief sword smith, Juwal of Uning, has a room for rent. They dicker and she agrees to let him live with her for 2d per 10day. His rent includes one free, hot meal with her family each day. Unfortunately for him, Juwal's husband Vaynder of Husnar is a horrible cook. Meals for the rest of the week cost him 5d (mostly bread, some vegetables from the market place, a bit of cheese and ale each day). That leaves him with 3d each 10day for clothing.

#### Costs:

Rent of a room + 1 hot meal each tenday: 2d

This is a good deal. An inn would charge 2f a night for the rental of a sleeping space (probably on old or soiled straw) in a common dormitory room. That's 20f or 5d a 10day. The inn may not include one cheep meal (bread and cheese) with the room.

- 
1. By low-fantasy I mean a campaign that is more realistic than a standard hack-and-slash, slay the dragon, take the gold and buy the farm upon which to retire.
  2. If a serf or slave spends a year and a day in a mining town, or other "free" town, they are then considered free. Floogy was probably a serf or a slave and is now free.

#### Drinks:

Ale, Beer or Cider 1f/pint

This he has to get from an inn (as they are the only official brewers in town). Beer is approximately the same price. Since the city's water is probably not safe to drink, Floogy has to drink ale or beer.

#### Foods:

Bread 1f/loaf, Cheese 1d/lb

A meal of Ale/Beer/Cider, Bread and cheese would cost 3f (1 pint of liquid, 1 loaf and 1/2 lb of cheese).

Vegetables could be included by the pound for another farthing. So each meal should cost around 2d with food left over from day to day, meal to meal. Assuming he only eats one meal away from Juwal's table, that's still 20d in food for a 10day. He can get a cheep meal for 1f at an inn (10 days, 1 meal per day = 10f, or 5d)

#### The Lessons:

Floogy enters town without a d to his name. By finding a job and a room to rent - rather than staying in the Inn, he's managed to survive on his income (1d per day). It doesn't offer him a lot of money for other things - but there's a lot one can do in town without money. There are minstrels and performers on the streets (not everyone gives them coins after all). One can go to an inn or tavern and nurse a mug of ale or beer or cider for a night - and listen to storytellers or bards who might be performing at the local inn. Now he just has to figure out what he should do with the rest of his life.

### Beded the Extravagant

Beded is a mercenary. Having recently returned from an unsuccessful raid into Kanday - he does not have money to burn. With a pack-mule full of goods<sup>3</sup> to sell, he arrives in Coranan. With no one from the Bonding House at the gate, he is escorted to the Bonding House in Kotros Square where his goods are assessed. Beded is a good barterer, and

- 
3. Booty from his previous adventure. It's a wide variety of clothes, some weapons, camp supplies and other stuff he has no use for.

he's fortunate enough to get reasonable evaluations on his goods for tax purposes. Unfortunately his spare cash only just covers the cost of the hawking tax on his goods.

He then spends the rest of the day going to various shops, merchants in the square and back allies trying to cash all of his goods into coin. Many merchants offer him chits instead - but he refuses them, preferring to carry up to 200d on his person rather than deal with the 1/10th surcharge when he tries to use the chit with another merchant or an Inn.

When he finally gets everything sold, he has over 300d. He places the money with an ursurer and takes out only 10d per tenday. That leaves him with 30 tendays to find a new job (after subtracting the Ursurer's fees of course).

To assure he has enough money for meat in his meals and to care for his arms and armour - he could offer his services in the market and dockside as either a bodyguard or a labourer. Both pay reasonable rates and offer the benefit of contacts that may lead to a more profitable job in the future.

### Costs:

Rent of a room + 2 meals each tenday: 6d

He finds a small house north of the Pamesani Arena with rooms for rent. He barter the rent of a room for 1d per tenday, payable each month with the first month's rent paid in advance. The family allows him to eat with them for 1f per meal. This means he can live and eat two meals a day for a cost of 6d per tenday, leaving him 4d per tenday to eat out and pay for incidentals.

### Other Foodstuffs:

The price is fair and the meals will be filling, but probably will include little or no meat. Beded is use to finer fair and thus will probably eat out a few times a tenday.

### The Lessons:

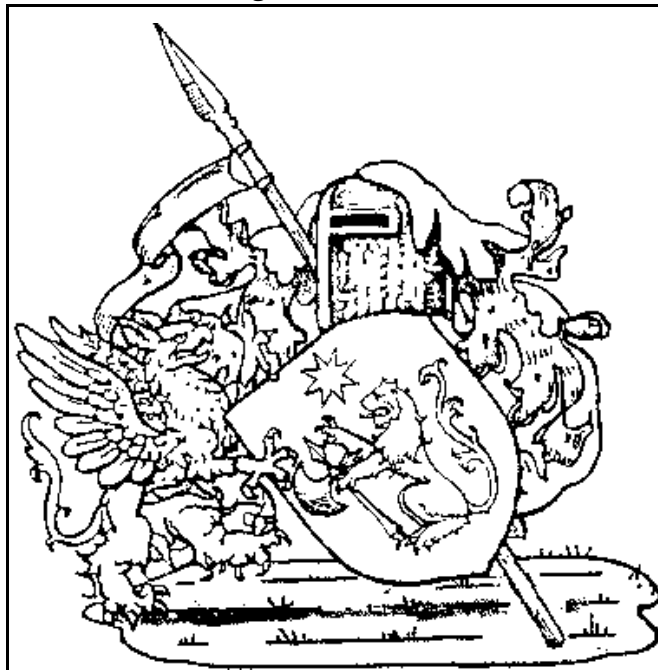
Beded does not, initially, need a job - although he may find one for the benefits more money would provide. Still he does not find an Inn in which to stay as that is too expensive. His method allows him to live within his means.

### Where to Stay

As the above examples state, living in an Inn is costly. The meals and foods available are probably better than those in a boarding house - but if money is a problem, it will be unlikely that the PC can live in an Inn for long.

If the PC is a member of a guild, they can stay at the guild house for a pittance, or find a room to rent with a local master or one of his employers. Prices, unlike those of an Inn, are not standard and will be negotiated between the renter and the owner of the building. There are no listings, nor single places one can go to find out who's renting rooms. Instead the PC should explore the neighborhood, asking at local inns and people on the street.

Even in Coranan, most folk will be helpful with directions - although there are places one should never enter alone, and getting an accurate answer could cost a farthing or two.



While there are more mercenaries in the city than Red Guard soldiers - the Red Guard's red and gold uniform and crest are easily recognizable. Visitors should remember that the Red Guard charges a minimum of 10d for their offering of assistance.

### What/Where to Eat

Ideally, if the negotiation has gone well, at least one meal should be included with the rent in a boarding house or guild house. If it is not, the PC should have access to a hearth in his room. If he does not - then he's in trouble.

Without a hearth - he can't cook and thus will be reduced to buying his meals at an inn or tavern. Prices in such places range greatly - from 1f for a cheap meal to 12+d for an expensive or exotic meal. While many people will probably eat the occasional

meal at an inn (to hear a local storyteller perform, listen to a minstrel, or just be with people), the majority of the meals should be made and eaten at home.

Food prices differ greatly depending on the season. The cheapest place to buy food is in the markets direct from farmers, although it does take more time. As the first sample illustrates, a home made meal (cold or hot) is cheap. Stews do not have to have much meat in them. The stew can be turned into a soup by just adding water and animal fat.

A truly adventurous PC can try making bread at his hearth, but usually will only manage to make oat-cakes or muffin-like bread on a hot hearthstone. Baking actual loaves requires a more even heating than most hearths can provide.

Ale, Beer or Cider is drunk instead of water. Wine is imported and expensive. Cider is commonplace and is cheapest in Coranan by the Barrel. Unfortunately there are no preservatives in the drinks - so an open barrel will only last a few days. Inns brew ale, beer and cider daily and cell it in a variety of sized containers. PCs will probably have to buy a pottery jug and have it filled with a daily ration of liquid from the local Inn.

## Finding a Job

Once the PC has lodgings, and a source of food and drink the next question is where can they find a job. This is where Guild membership comes in handy.

Guilds provide a place where members can network. In return for paying a monthly or yearly fee - members have access to the guildhall, the occasional meal, and most importantly - they have access to the shop owners, who are often guild masters. Guild members will be hired before others, even if the job is not guild protected (such as in the case of labourers).

If the PC is not part of a guild, the Guild of the Mangai provides a common place for masters and merchants to request workers as well as meet and discuss business. A non-guild member can go to the Guild of the Mangai and have his services listed. If he's lucky he may only have to wait a few days for someone to come into the Guild of the Mangai and hire him. The guild charges the employer a few ds for this service, thus it is only popular if the employer can find help no other way.

## Armour and Weapon Upkeep

Unless both armour and weapons are kept wrapped in cloths, well oiled and well protected (say in a locked chest) - they will degrade. If they are used in combat they will degrade faster.

There are numerous ways for a PC and GM to record this degradation (damage, rust, wear & tear etc.). Regardless how it's recorded - it costs money to repair it. Assuming the PCs keep their arms and armour in good shape and have it repaired regularly - it should be considered part of the cost of daily living.

Even in Coranan it's not recommended people wander about fully armed and armoured- unless of course that's what they're paid to do. It tends to attract unwanted attention from thieves, the watch and others.

In my campaign I charge my PCs 1d per tenday for upkeep and a few more ds a month for repairs. We do not keep strict track of how much damage the armour and weapons receives, but it does count in their character's accounting.

## Clothing

Similar to Armour and Weapons, clothing requires upkeep. If the PC cannot sew, it may be a skill worth learning. Rather than buy clothes, it would be cheaper for the PC to purchase the cloth from a merchant or local weaver and then pay a clothier to make the clothes from the cloth. Remaining pieces of the bolt of cloth can be stitched into a quilt or sold to the clothier to help offset the cost of the clothes. The finer looking clothes have embroidered collars and sleeves (in part to help hide the wear, and in part to look stylish). Colors are expensive, as is fine work (like embroidery). Expensive clothes tend to have many layers - with the outer layers being brushed clean. Only the underclothes are washed regularly.

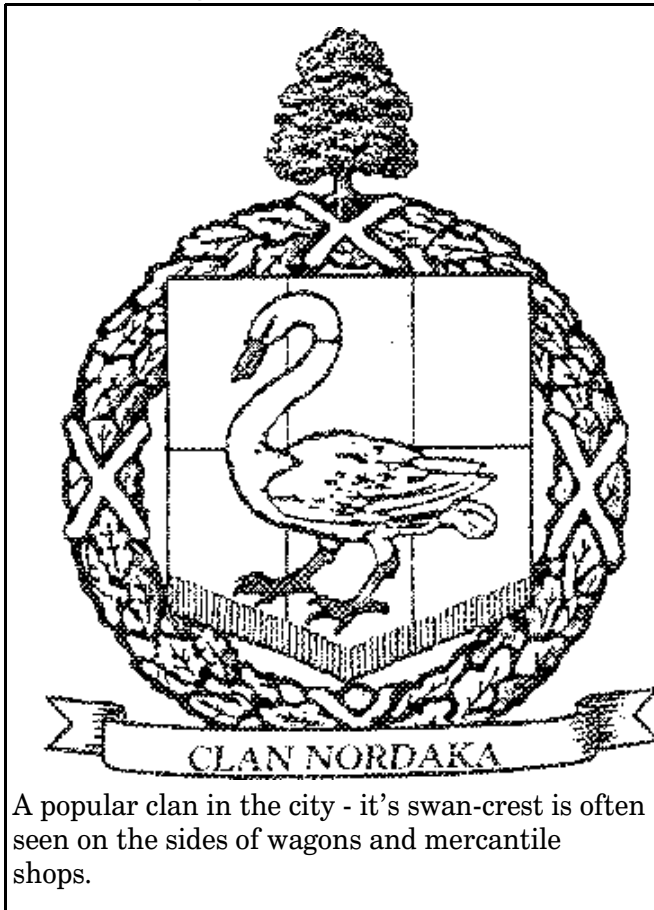
If the PC doesn't want to spend at least a day washing his clothes - he may have to hire a local washer woman; which is another person he'll have to dicker with to get a good price.

**Entertainment**

Aside from the price of a courtesan or two - there are other forms of entertainment in Coranan. The Pamesani Arena holds games twice monthly and cost anywhere from 1f to 20d to get a seat, with the average seat being about 2d. The games last about three hours, but have been known to run for up to five hours on the rare occasion.

Inns commonly have bards and storytellers performing. While there are no posters telling visitors about upcoming performances, the innkeeper and his staff will quickly inform visitors of the local news - including which bard or storyteller will appear at which Inn - whenever asked.

The market is a source of entertainment with occasional plays, poets and storytellers in good weather. Even in bad weather there will be a few stalls out with goods for sale.



A popular clan in the city - it's swan-crest is often seen on the sides of wagons and mercantile shops.

**So Welcome to Coranan**

**The Standard Spiel:**

Here we are happy to have any foreigner visit for a time. His coin (so long as it's not Rethemi) will be treated fairly. Life here is grand and there is much to spend one's time and money upon.

Our marketplace is open from dawn until dusk and allows coin transactions as well as barter. Please note if you intend to barter with goods instead of coin, we recommend you visit the Bonding House in Kotros Square to get the goods assessed and pay your taxes in advance. It will make your trading so much easier in the long run.

Our fair city has numerous inns and taverns available for fine dining and good drink. We recommend you stay away from Aranol's and the Apple inns - or at least tell your Innkeeper you're going there and perhaps hire a gladiatorial body guard to accompany you.

The Pamesani Games holds events twice each month either in the mid-afternoon or early evening. The Mid-afternoon games are suitable for children, being beast-vs.-man or beast-vs.-beast games. And the evening games are a more adult entertainment, often being man-vs.-man games. Combatants are usually either Agrikan warriors with a grudge, or gladiators. Betting is welcome and untaxed so long as it occurs within the Pamesani walls. Donations to the Agrikan order of the Demon Pavashu the Insatiable, the order that runs the Pamesani games, is always welcome.

The courts are held over in a small, rustic, castle with seating for about 200 in its courtyard. The Palace of Pentacles asks that, if you come to hear a case, you stay for the entire day's case, and please arrive early or send a slave to reserve your seat. Standing room is available for roughly an additional 200, but you will have to stand with freedmen and slaves. A fee of 1d is charged if you do not have a slave and still wish a seat reserved. That fee is not returnable. To find out which arguments are being made on which day, you can ask the local legionnaires stationed at the door to the Palace.

Guided tours of the Red Domes of Coranan, our house of government, are available for a fee. We cannot promise you will actually meet a senator, and you cannot attend or listen to a session, as most of them occur behind closed doors, but you can walk its majestic halls and hear the bloody history of the place.

Please be careful when visiting our more rustic places. Gladiatorial escorts are available for a small fee up front. These gladiators will assure your stay in the city is a safe one, although we are not responsible for lost or damaged goods or people. Thank you and enjoy your stay.