



"Kaiin Players' Guide": Bonus Chapter

Kaiin Old Town

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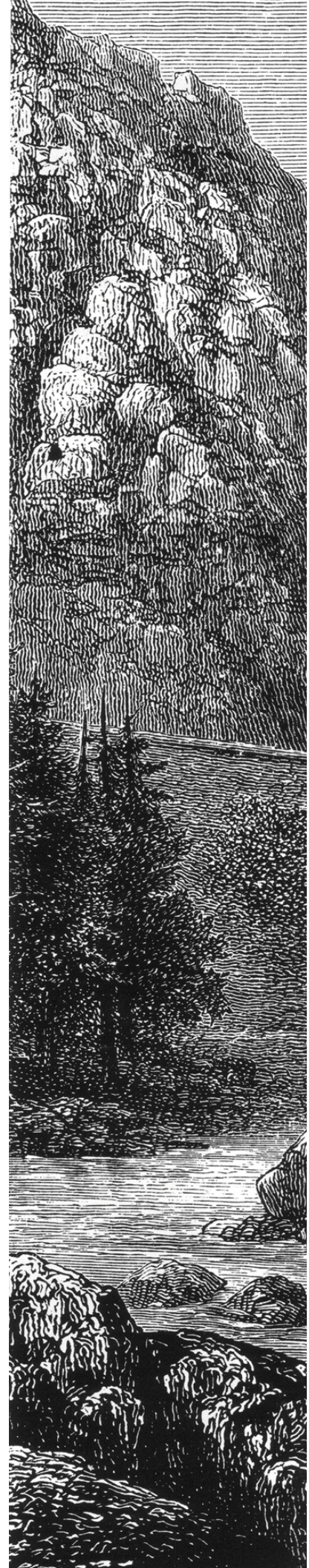
"A gray wilderness of tumbled pillars, weathered blocks of sandstone, slumped pediments with crumbled inscriptions, flagged terraces overgrown with rusty moss. Lizards, snakes, insects, crawled in the ruins; no other life did he see."

- Jack Vance, Liane the Wayfarer

On First Glance

Kaiin's "Old Town" is a large expanse of crumbling ruins, toppled pillars, broken statuary, and moss-choked terraces that stretch north of the city's Fringe district. It is hedged in between the bay and the Porphiron Scar - which eventually swings around in a loop to meet the towering rocks of Keak Point. The Old Town used to be relatively popular with the more intrepid treasure-seekers, who braved the dangers of half-men, odd beasts of the ruins, ancient magical traps, ghosts, and forgotten curses. However, since the arrival of Chun the Unavoidable this place has largely been abandoned for such purposes, though self-styled heroes still regularly attempt (and fail) to find and slay the formidable Chun. In addition, since losing one of his nephews to Chun two years ago, Prince Kandive has declared the place forbidden to all, on pain of death.

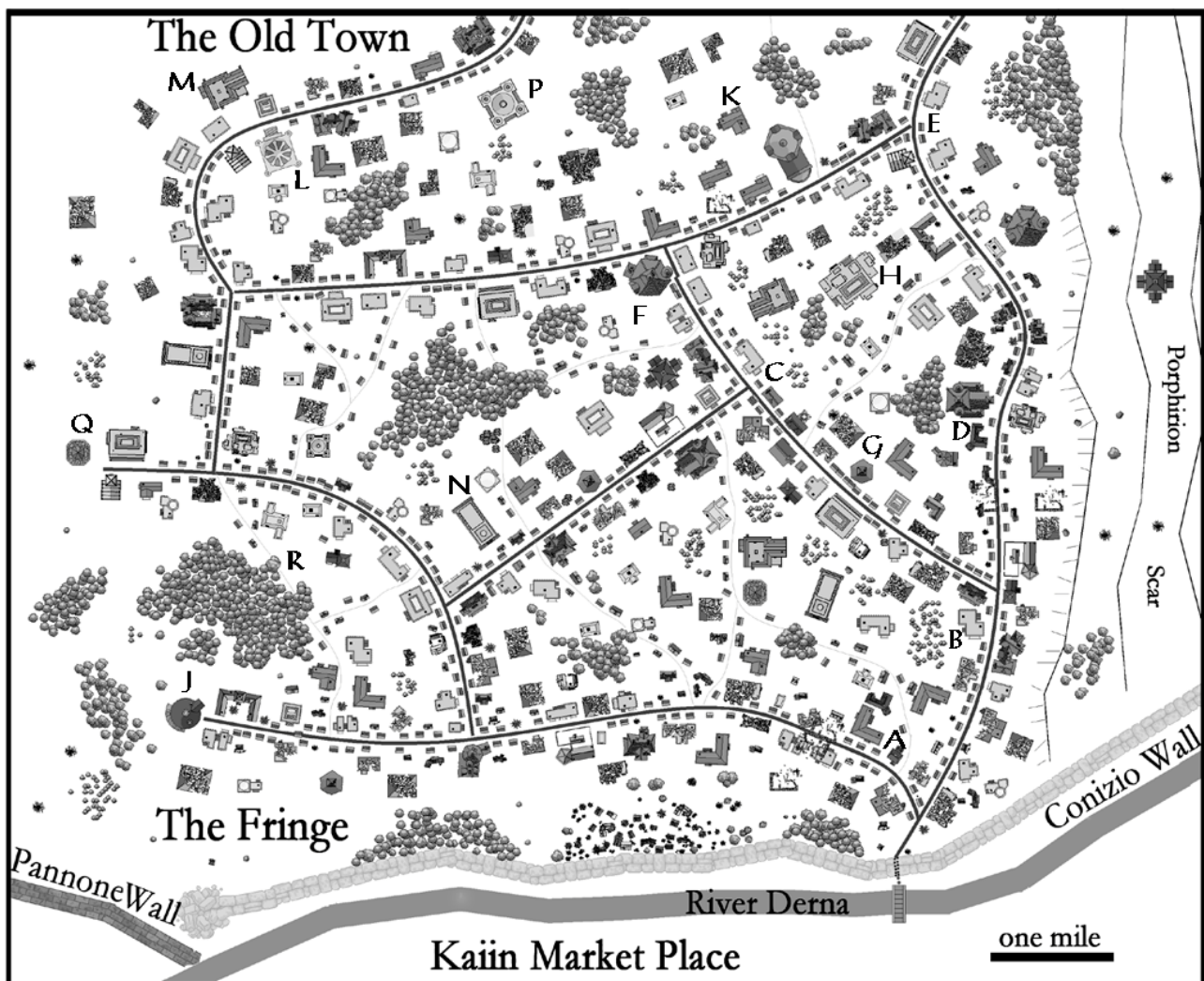
Nonetheless, those wise to the ways of the criminal underclass know that some tomb-robbers still brave these ruins in order to seek that elusive grand haul that will set them up for life, and apparently some occasionally return with a find that at least turns a profit. Also, it is



Kaiin Old Town

believed that certain beggars from The Fringe take refuge here when Kandive's Vigils make one of their sweeps against the undesirables of the city's borders. Thus it is clear that whilst Chun may not be avoidable, he is presumably sometimes fallible, bribable, or simply disinterested. As they say: 'where opportunity beckons - blind avarice lurches close behind'.

It is possible to enter the Old Town with ease only by passing through The Fringe. However, should one be used to adverse conditions one may instead climb down the high Scarp to the east or north (risking a fatal fall onto the unremitting gorse-covered stones below). Otherwise one might even attempt to land a small vessel on the razor-sharp rocks at the Old Town's western edge. (This must be done at night to avoid the attention of the Harbor Vigils.) The ruins of both the Old Town and The Fringe are of mixed quality, generally speaking being fields of rubble interspersed with numerous building shells of variable integrity. The occasional edifice remains notably intact, though usually only one or two stories high and terribly weathered. Although the Old Town is apparently even older than The Fringe, the latter place has been more extensively plundered for building materials.





Didactic Overview

Occasionally, Kandive masses his Vigils and raids The Fringe - in an attempt to stamp out the bandits and to drive away the beggars who offend the refined sensibilities of the city's wealthy. Kandive has most of those apprehended imprisoned, executed or exiled. Of course, the Vigils are incapable of arresting everyone, even though they claim to sweep The Fringe clean.

Many of the beggars are able to take refuge in the borders of the Old Town. For some reason Chun tolerates this; some say that clearly the beggars lack sufficient quality of eyeball to inspire his interest. (*Chun himself has remained reticent on the manner of this distinction.*) At any event, the beggars cower away the days or weeks following a raid, eking out their survival through catching rats and chewing upon semi-edible weeds and wild tubers. As soon as these sad indigents believe the army of Vigils (an organization Kandive can only afford to create rarely) has been disbanded, they skulk back and begin to rebuild their crude shacks and shelters.

One might wonder why none of these desperate Fringe folk have plundered the Old Town for themselves? The answer is simple: the deadly ghosts make short work of pathetic scavengers, and none but experienced adventurers dare such feats.

Research Notes

In the story of Liane the Wayfarer (DE, p60) it is made clear that Liane is known in Kaiin and that he knows Kaiin well enough to find his way directly through twisting streets to the Magicians Inn. However, although the folk at the Magicians Inn know of Chun and are terrified at the very mention of his name, Liane has never heard of Chun (DE, p59).

One way to reconcile these points of view is that Liane has not been to Kaiin for some years. Let us say a maximum of five or six, since he still appears to be a relatively young man and has no expectation that the Magicians Inn will no longer be in operation.

Though he is clearly not known there by patron or staff, we can assume that he chose to visit an inn where he would be unlikely to meet any enemies, and therefore that he was never in the habit of frequenting the place even when he did visit Kaiin.

Likewise, talk of the terrible Chun has not yet reached Liane in the countryside. Even with the notoriously parochial nature of the Dying Earth, Liane is active only a day's journey (DE, p59) away from the region's major city. Thus, we may assume that Chun's residence in the city, though implied to be a well-known fixture to the residents, is actually comparatively recent.

Given the reticence of the populace, loath to discuss Chun openly, news of his arrival may have spread comparatively rapidly in Kaiin, but could have taken far longer to be known outside the city. A minimum figure of around three years seems reasonable. Inhabitants do not willingly discuss Chun; also, Liane is so full of himself that he rarely indulges in deep conversation with anyone. Combined, this means that Chun could have been living in his current fashion for that long or slightly longer without Liane hearing about it. Lith's query to Liane as to whether he has heard of Chun also implies the creature's comparatively recent arrival



Inhabitants

Most folk believe that Chun the Unavoidable is currently the only permanent inhabitant of the Old Town. [Note: Most folk do not in fact care to speculate any further.] In any event, this is almost correct. Chun is the only entity of note here as far as the regular citizenry are concerned.

However, it appears that Chun also allows various pitiful scavengers to exist here unmolested all year round, as long as they do not dare to steal anything from the ruins (other than rodents, small amounts of rubble to use as building stone, and loose firewood). This apparent level of discernment is an illusion; few beggars ever approach the Place of Whispers and thus never become legitimate prey for Chun.

Sometimes desperate half-men will also wander into the ruins seeking prey, making a base here from which to make sorties into The Fringe; however, this is rare, as the local beggars are adept at setting up deadfall traps and spiked pits to quickly deal with such predators. Such intruders are rarely the more intelligent members of this genus (such as deodands or erbs), but usually more bestial representatives such as the gaun, ghoul or hoon.

Chun seems also to resent such company, judging by the rent half-man corpses occasionally found near the Place of Whispers. (However, he disdains such eyeballs, leaving the bodies intact.)

Contacts

The few humans here live only on the southern edge of the Old Town. They will know only some of the landmarks in this section, and will not be encountered deeper into the ruins. Some of the encounters suggested here will be found in highly specific locations only (rather than wandering the ruins).

Old Town Beggar

"Have pity, noble persons. Spare me a morsel of bread, or a crude copper coin."

The lowest of the low, addled and desperate, shunned even by their own kind due to hideous disfigurements or some manner of insanity. Nobody moves into the Old Town unless they have absolutely no other choice. Such a person may know the locations of a few of the landmarks, but by description rather than name (as with the half-men below). The few beggars of the Old Town dwell on its south fringes, barricading themselves into one of the stouter ruins in order to survive the night.

Old Town Hoon

"Grnaar, Grnaar; I hunger for man flesh!"

This aging buck hoon wandered into the Old Town a few days ago, having been nearly slain by a younger rival who usurped his dominance in a forest to the north. If beaten, bribed (with tasty flesh), or captured and threatened with death, it might be able to lead PCs to one of the notable landmarks, but not Chun's lair.

Game Statistics: Intimidating 6, Penetrating 8, Ferocity 12, Dodge 10, Health 12, Athletics 9, Concealment 4, Perception 5, Stealth 4, Tracking 7, Wherewithal 10.



Old Town Gaun

"Schnaff, Schnaff; I smell human - fresh for the eatin'!"

This prodigiously strong creature has resided in the Old Town for months. Whenever it slays a human it carefully leaves the eyeballs for this area's acknowledged senior.

(Although it must be said, for ease of this process the gaun simply rips off the heads of its prey and places these grisly trophies atop the nearest prominent section of ruined wall. As with the hoon, with sufficient convincing (of the raw flesh or extreme violence options), the gaun might lead explorers to any of the major landmarks, including (only if left with no other choice) to where Chun has his residence.

Game Statistics: Intimidating 7, Wary 8, Strength 15, Sure-Footedness 12, Health 13, Athletics 7, Concealment 3, Perception 4, Stealth 3, Tracking 10, Wherewithal 9.

Old Town Leucomorph

"Schlobber, Schlobber."

A few unintelligent leucomorphs live amongst the ruins, dining regularly on the local wildlife. This variety of leucomorph is a large and unusually resilient globe of repellent sinewy flesh that lurks in corners or perches atop broken lintels - waiting for suitable prey to come within range of its flailing fleshy tentacles. Rare rumor suggests the first of these things were vat-bred here in the Old Town, and that those similar beings abroad on the Dying Earth are their lesser descendents.

Game Statistics: Speed 13, Dodge (Undulate) 9, Health 10, Concealment 9, Perception 6, Stealth 7, Tracking 8, Wherewithal 9.



Various Other Local Creatures

"Growl, Hiss, Buzz etc etc."

Large snakes, lizards, and pestilent insects also dwell amidst the ruins of the Old Town. The imaginative GM can bring these to vivid life as alternate hazards and opponents for exploration parties. For instance, the lagak is a lizard the size of a large dog with teeth like a hoon's; and the wozzor is a bee-like insect the size of a man's head. Some suspect both of these creatures to be vat-created entities originally constructed by wizards when the Old Town thrived (since no travelers have found their like elsewhere).

