



JOHN D CLAIR

# EDGE OF DARKNESS

SANDS OF DUNESTAR





# EDGE OF DARKNESS

A game by John D Clair for 1-4 players, ages 14+

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## COMPONENTS

Your game of *Sands of Dunestar* should include the following. If it does not, contact [customerservice@alderac.com](mailto:customerservice@alderac.com) for assistance.

- 13 Location boards
- 98 Card advancements
- 12 Pit Fighter tokens
- 1 Player Handbook

## INTRODUCTION

*Water means life. The current bears it along, and us with it. It breathes out new life in the green that lines its banks, just as it washes away the dirt -- the mistakes -- of the past. The river has promised us life. Like every promise, it is hope that realizes it for us. But like every promise, despair can rob us of it just as easily. Dunestar is to be a city of hope, filled with potential. Let us resist the temptation to abuse such potential and risk losing the life freely given by the water.*

-Alija Nassirian, Founder of Dunestar, the Third Age

Welcome to the Player's Handbook, your definitive guide to the locations of the city of Dunestar, and to your games of Edge of Darkness using this expansion. Information contained herein is broken down into three primary sections:

- The first section offers one story-based setup, called "Tale". This Tale plays out over several games, called "Chapters", and offer a more thematic way to explore the Sands of Dunestar over a series of consecutive varied setups.
- The second section offers 6 additional stand-alone balanced setups.
- The final section runs through detailed clarifications for all the locations and advancements available in *Sands of Dunestar*. Use this section as needed to clarify abilities and effects as you encounter them.







# TALE: A CHANCELLOR FALLS

With the impending threat of the Blight, the politics of Aegis and Dunestar have become heated and divisive with blame being cast at the Chancellor for letting things get this bad. Riots in the street and calls for the Chancellor to step down are aplenty.

## CHAPTER 1 : UNREST

**DIFFICULTY: HIGH**  
**COMPLEXITY: MODERATE**

*With the Voiceless Guild's rise to prominence once more and the increasing threat of the Blight upon the city, unrest has become the norm. Politics at all levels have become heated and divisive. Riots have broken out in the streets, with cries for Chancellor Nyesha Marks to step down. The Peacekeepers are stretched to their limit working to prevent all out chaos. The situation has become so tense at times that members of the City Watch have been called in to assist as well.*

*In the wake of such instability in Aegis, some parties have turned to allies in Dunestar for assistance. All of the Guilds have begun to forge new connections in the oasis city to better position themselves for whatever the future in Aegis might bring. But some would do well to remember that Aegis' high position in the Realm has long rested upon the strength of her Council and Chancellor. How long with the city's high walls stand when those foundations are undermined?*

Use locations 1, 4, 8, 13, 15, 18, 26, 42, 48 and 50.





## CHAPTER 2: DESPERATE REFORMS

**DIFFICULTY: HIGH**  
**COMPLEXITY: MODERATE**

*In a dramatic move to try and appease the populace of Aegis, Chancellor Marks has become very close with Kadeem Choukri, the ambassador from Dunestar. In addition to orchestrating deals for food and supplies in the wake of the Millhollow catastrophe, there is talk that she is recruiting more soldiers to combat the Blight ... right out of the brutal Pits of Dunestar. She has held meetings with Lars Falco, the Pit Warden, to discuss training a full military unit of Dunestar's best.*

*While some applaud the move as a legitimate attempt to protect Aegis' interests both at home and in the Forsaken Lands, many of the defensive groups within Aegis are upset, seeing the new potential unit as a threat to the work that they have done thus far and the work they desire to do into the future. Those in support of the move tend to paint Chancellor Marks as the pragmatic leader, but those in opposition say she's ready to trade the city's noble history for Dunestar's savagery.*

*Through all the turmoil, it remains to be seen how the Guilds will tip the scales in the court of Marks' popularity.*

Use locations 4, 11, 13, 15, 16, 28, 38, 40, 48 and 50.





# CHAPTER 3: DRASTIC MEASURES

**DIFFICULTY: HIGH**  
**COMPLEXITY: HIGH**

*Chancellor Marks has been murdered! Servants awoke one morning to find her dead in her chambers, apparently the target of a shadowy murder. A group of Investigators have been summoned to find the culprit, and they have begun to shake down suspects throughout Aegis.*

*The natural suspect was the Order of the Blackblade, a group of deadly assassins and remnant of the Wizard King's rule. They were an essential piece of the King's rise to power, and many wondered whether or not they could ever truly be loyal to anyone but him. No one would be surprised to hear that they moved against the new government in an effort to restore the King's throne.*

*In spite of the public's distrust, Trine Vagen, current head of the Blackblade, spoke of their loyalty to the Council in the best interests of the city. In fact, she was also able to identify the poison used on the Chancellor as one drawn from the hearts of the Soulless, the undead force that plagues Dunestair. The only person Vagen knows who is able to perform such a ritual is a twisted soul named Omar Hachim, the Venom Shaman.*

*Did Hachim act alone? Or was he working with someone else to eliminate the Chancellor? If so, was it a player in Dunestair or Aegis? More importantly, how will the Guilds move in the wake of this loss?*

**Use locations 4, 9, 11, 16, 19, 28, 30, 38, 48 and 50.**





# CHAPTER 4: BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

DIFFICULTY: HIGH  
COMPLEXITY: MODERATE

*It's time to elect a new Chancellor from among the other members of the High Council. Each of the other eight individuals have stated their willingness to accept the position, further fueling the rumors and questions about just who was responsible for the death of Chancellor Marks.*

*Now parties in both Aegis and Dunestar have moved to influence the election in their favor. Shadowy politics with regular secret meetings are being run behind closed doors. Everyone from academics to politicians to fishermen have something to say and something to gain or protect. And given the unresolved circumstances that led to the open seat in the first place, distrust and paranoia are at an all-time high. With each passing day, the sky seems to reflect more and more the shadowed speech that frequents every corner of Aegis and Dunestar.*

*It seems that the fate of both cities now lies in the hands of the Guilds as they work to shape the future of the Realm. Will they succeed in driving back the Blight and bringing the light back to these bastions of freedom? Or will they see them devoured as they themselves work to consume them?*

Use locations 2, 9, 12, 16, 19, 28, 39, 47, 48 and 50.





## RECOMMENDED SETUPS

This section includes a number of recommended setups if you are looking for already curated sets. That said, not all of these sets will necessarily be "balanced".

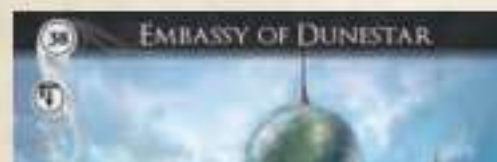
For example, some of them may cause a fairly tight game in regards to Coin while others may have the ability to get lots of Coin. It will be up to the players to identify and determine the best way to exploit or deal with the imbalance.

### JEWEL OF THE DESERT



**DIFFICULTY: MODERATE**

**COMPLEXITY: HIGH**



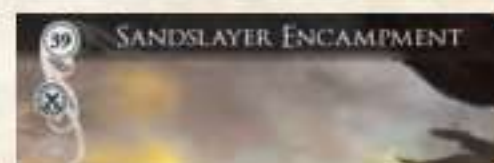
## A THIEF IN THE NIGHT



**DIFFICULTY: MODERATE**

**COMPLEXITY: MODERATE  
COMBATIVE**

*You may replace Debtor's Prison with City Park (30) if you don't want a Combative setup.*





## TALE OF TWO CITIES



**DIFFICULTY: MODERATE**

**COMPLEXITY: MODERATE  
COMBATIVE**

*You may replace Debtor's Prison with City Park (30) if you don't want a Combative setup.*



## UNEXPECTED VISITS



**DIFFICULTY: HIGH**

**COMPLEXITY: MODERATE**





## AWAKENING THE SOULLESS



**DIFFICULTY: HIGH**

**COMPLEXITY: HIGH**

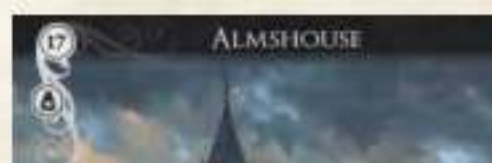


## TO BATTLE!

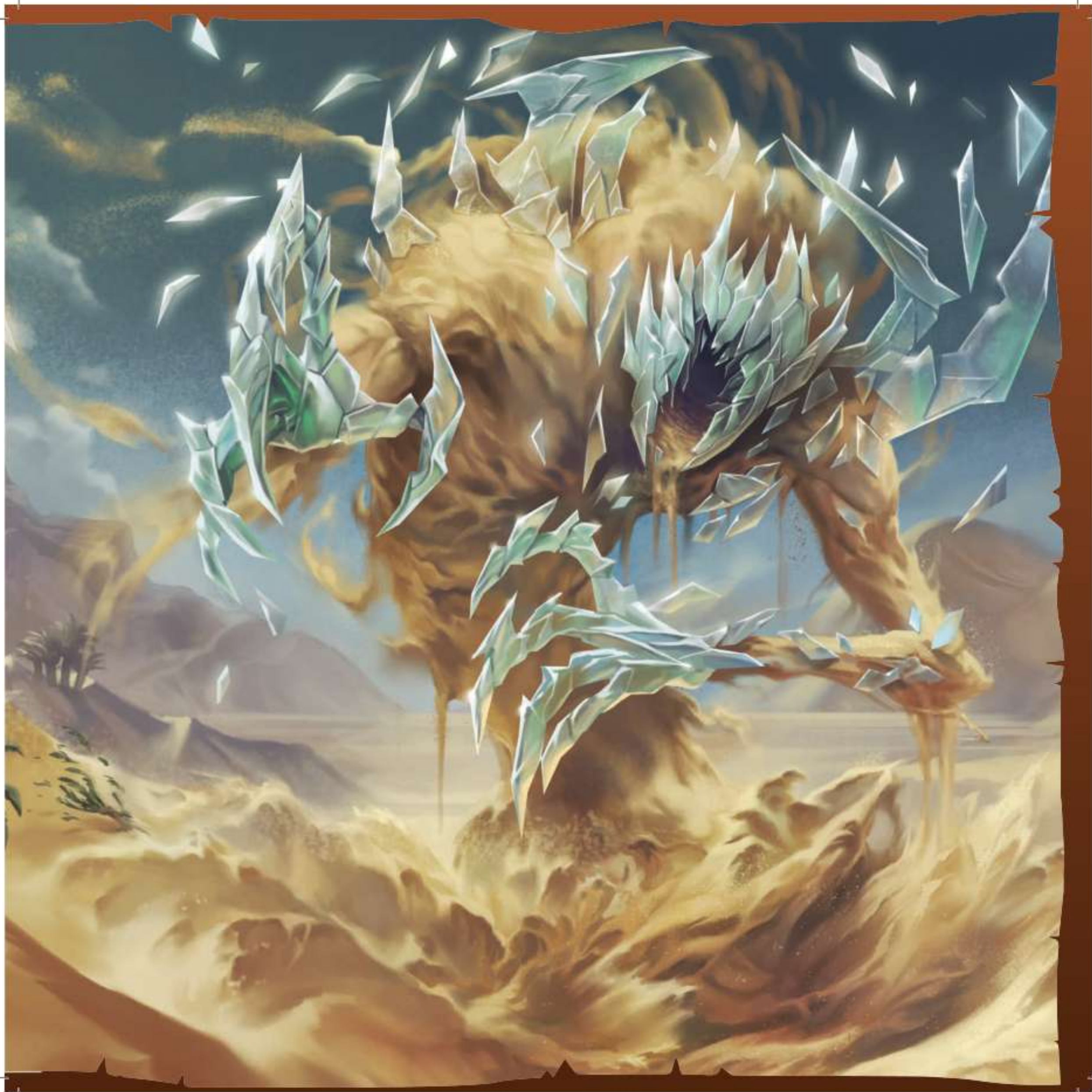


**DIFFICULTY: HIGH**

**COMPLEXITY: MODERATE**









# LOCATIONS AND ADVANCEMENTS CLARIFICATIONS

This section contains all the locations and corresponding advancements in *Sands of Dunestair*, with their abilities and effect(s) clarified.

## Embassy of Dunestair



This location has no ability.

The associated contact's effect (Ambassador) will be doing all the dispatching and returning of to and from the Embassy of Dunestair.

*Art by Alayna Danner.*



This contact has three effects.

You may resolve exactly one:

- Dispatch to the Embassy of Dunestair at no cost,
- OR pay 3 to dispatch 2 to the Embassy of Dunestair,
- OR return 2 from the Embassy of Dunestair to your Trained Agents pool to claim Allegiance of a Neutral card in your hand (and only there).

There are 4 middle and 4 bottom advancements with this contact.

*Art by Andres Garcia.*



This threat contributes to the total of the card it is sleeved in.

This threat has one reward. When you defeat it, you gain 3 .

There are 4 middle and 4 bottom advancements with this threat.

*Art by Andres Garcia.*

## Sandslayer Encampment



This location has an ongoing ability. These abilities are often powerful but very intensive.

In the case of the Sandslayer Encampment, each turn you may pay an amount of based on the number of you have there to at any point this turn. You do not have to hunt threats immediately when you resolve this effect, you may do so later in the turn after using other effects.

If you have no , you must pay 7 ; if you have , you must pay 6 ; if you have 2 , you must pay 5 ; if you have 3 , you must pay 3 ; if you have 4 , you must only pay .

Note that you don't need to have the associated contact (Sandslayer Captain) to , you just need to have . Having at the Sandslayer Encampment makes you pay less .

*Art by Alayna Danner.*



This contact has one effect.

When you resolve it, dispatch to the Sandslayer Encampment at no cost.

There are 4 middle and 4 bottom advancements with this contact.

*Art by Gong Studios.*



This threat contributes 2 to the total of the card it is sleeved in.

This threat has one reward. When you defeat it, you gain 6 .

There are 4 middle and 4 bottom advancements with this threat.

*Art by Damien Mammoliti.*



## The Pits



This location has an additional Setup rule. When the Pits are placed on the Game board, you need to place all Pit Fighter tokens on the Location board.

This location has an ongoing ability. These abilities are often powerful but very intensive.

In the case of The Pits, your with a disk under them (called Pit Fighters) get a bonus when using the ability of Location boards with , and icons, or the effects of their associated contacts. They count as or 2 , whichever is more helpful to you.

For example, you could use the Watchtower Lookout effect to dispatch one Pit Fighter to the Watchtowers. Then, since the Watchtowers has a icon, when a threat attacks you, may return the Pit Fighter and count it as 2 in order to reduce the of the threat by 6 instead of 3.

Another example: You could use the War Council Member effect to dispatch one Pit Fighter to the War Council. Then, since the War Council has a , you may return your Pit Fighter to your Trained Agents pool from the War Council to as it counts as 2 .

A final example: With Peaceforce Headquarters, each Pit Fighter at that location gives you +1 since they can count as 2 . Moreover, when you resolve the effect of the Deputy Peacekeeper contact to return an Agent and choose to return a Pit Fighter instead, it may count as 2 . As a result, you would gain 6 for each of your Citizens in your hand and in your Guild Hall. Even though this last effect has nothing to do with gaining Battle Strength, hunting threats or defending against threats, the Peaceforce Headquarters is a location, so your Pit Fighter ability counts here.

*Art by Alayna Danner.*



This contact has two effects.

You may resolve either but not both:

- Pay 3 to .
- Or pay 6 to and place a disk under that .

with a disk under them are called Pit Fighters.

There are 4 middle and 4 bottom advancements with this contact.

*Art by Alexander Gustafson.*



This threat contributes 2 to the total of the card it is sleeved in.

This threat has one reward. When you defeat it, you gain 4 .

If you fail to defend against this threat, you must remove a from under one of your if possible.

There are 4 middle and 4 bottom advancements with this threat.


*Art by Alexander Gustafson.*



## Beacon of Light



This location has no ability.




The associated contact's effect (Beacon Lookout) will be doing all the dispatching and returning of  to and from the Beacon of Light.



*Art by Alayna Danner.*








This contact has two effects.

You may resolve either but not both:









- Dispatch  to the Beacon of Light at no cost,
- OR return  from the Beacon of Light to your Trained Agents pool and pay 2  to gain the effect of each Citizen currently in the Street as if a copy of it were in your hand.

Note, if any of the Citizen effects you gain are on cards owned by other players, as always, you must pay those players  to use them. If you use multiple Beacon Lookouts to return multiple  you can use all the Citizen effects in the Street multiple times, paying opponents for their effects each time.

Please note that you only gain the effect of the Citizen () not the effects of all contacts on the card with the Citizen.

Remember,  is only useful when you . So, while you may want to dispatch your  on any turn as preparation, you generally will only return them on a turn in which you are hunting threats, otherwise the  will be wasted.

If you have multiple copies of Beacon Lookout in your hand, you may choose the same or a different effect per copy.



For example, if you have 2 copies you have several options: you could dispatch  with one and return  and pay 2  with the other; dispatch 2  to setup for a future turn; or - assuming you already have 2  at the Beacon Lookout and 4  - return both  and pay 4  to gain a copy of each Citizen in the Street twice.

If you were to draw one Citizen from the Street with another contact effect after you have used the effect of Beacon Lookout, you may still use that Citizen for its effect (and all other contact effects on its card).


There are 4 middle and 4 bottom advancements with this contact.

*Art by Sebastian Ciaffaglione.*



This threat contributes 2  to the total  of the card it is sleeved in.

This threat has two rewards. When you defeat it, you may choose either, but not both:

- Gain ,
- OR claim Allegiance of a Neutral card in your hand or the Street.

If you choose the second reward, remember that the top card of the deck is in the Street.

There are 4 middle and 4 bottom advancements with this threat.




*Art by Ray Greaves.*



## Mahj Kennels





This location has no ability.



You will not be dispatching  to the Mahj Kennels. It is possible to dispatch one or more  here resolving effects that can "dispatch  anywhere", but generally there will not be a benefit to do so.

*Art by Alayna Danner.*



This contact has one effect.



When you resolve it, you may pay 2  to gain 2 .


Remember,  is only useful when you . So, if you aren't hunting threats this turn, this effect will not be useful to you.

There are 4 middle and 4 bottom advancements with this contact.

*Art by Guillaume Ducos.*

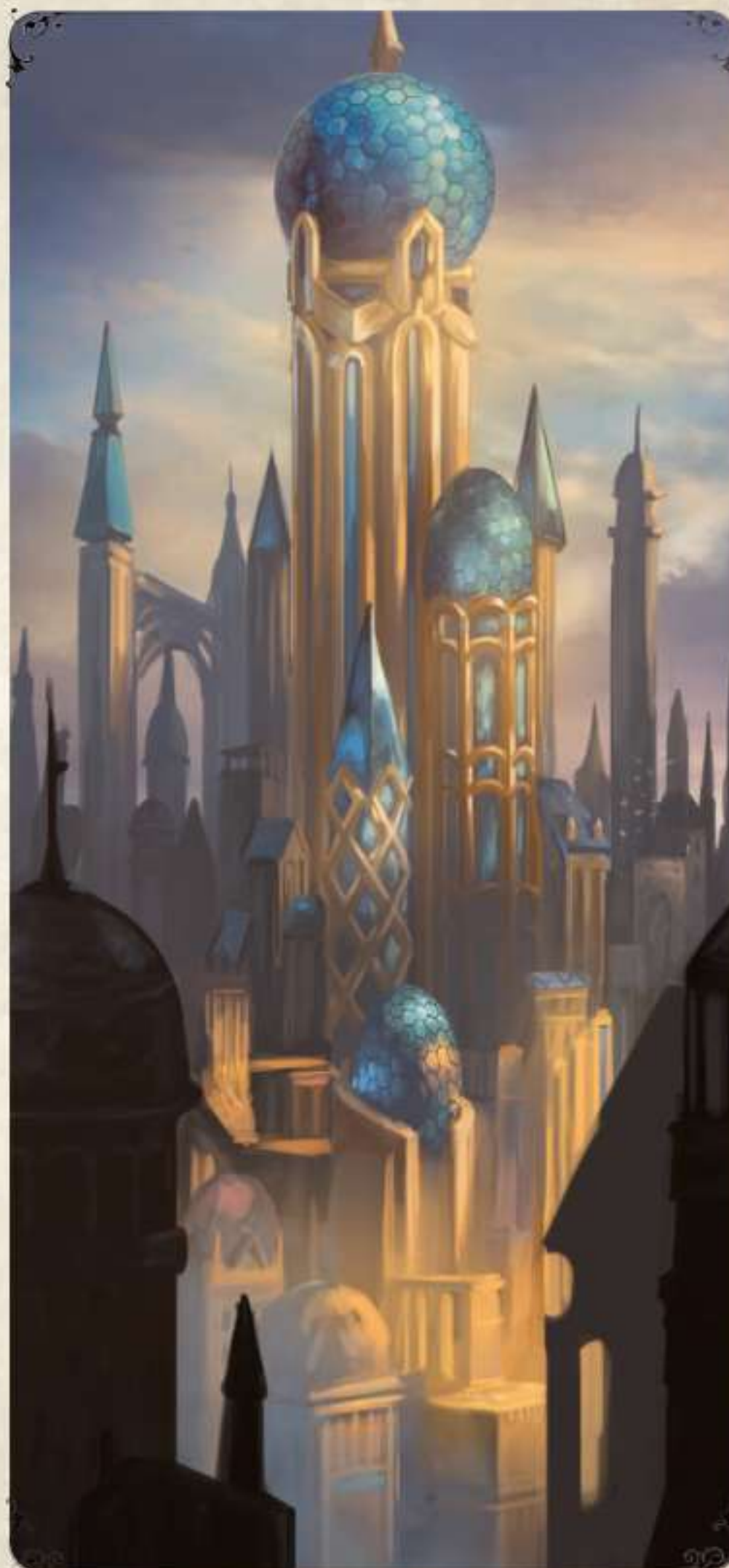


This threat contributes  to the total  of the card it is sleeved in.

This threat has one reward. When you defeat it, you gain .

There are 4 middle and 4 bottom advancements with this threat.

*Art by Martin de Diego Sadaba.*








## The Scale







This location has no ability.




You will not be dispatching  to The Scale. It is possible to dispatch one or more  here resolving effects that can "dispatch  anywhere", but generally there will not be a benefit to do so.

*Art by Alayna Danner.*



This contact has one effect.


When you resolve it, you may use your  as if it were  for the remainder of the turn. It does not however mean it counts as both  and .



For example, if you resolve the effect of Deephollow Militia Chief to return 2 , you can choose to either get the 3  as normal, or get 3  instead.


There are 4 middle and 4 bottom advancements with this contact.

*Art by Gong Studios.*



This threat has a reactive effect: when it is revealed, all players gain 2 .

This threat contributes  to the total  of the card it is sleeved in.

This threat has one reward. When you defeat it, you gain .


There are 4 middle and 4 bottom advancements with this threat.

*Art by Carlos NCT.*

## Sun Vaults



This location has no ability.




The associated contact's effect (Vault Manager) will be doing all the dispatching and returning of  to and from the Sun Vaults.

*Art by Alayna Danner.*



This contact has two effects.



You may resolve either but not both:


- Dispatch up to 4  to the Sun Vaults at no cost,
- OR return 2  from the Sun Vaults to your Trained Agents pool to gain 5 .

There are 4 middle and 4 bottom advancements with this contact.

*Art by Hector Herrena Garcia.*



This threat contributes 2  to the total  of the card it is sleeved in.

This threat has one reward. When you defeat it, you gain 6 .

There are 4 middle and 4 bottom advancements with this threat.

*Art by Guillaume Ducos.*



## Altar of the Soulless God







This location has a reactive ability. This means that the ability can be used when one or more conditions are met.

In the case of the Altar of the Soulless God, the condition is:

- When the Altar of the Soulless God is destroyed per the effect of the Avatar of the Soulless God threat.

When the condition is met, set the Altar of the Soulless God to the side along with any remaining associated contacts (Priestess of the Soulless). As per the rules on the Avatar of the Soulless God, a new location will replace this one. For the remainder of the game, any Priestess of the Soulless already on cards may be now used for either but not both of the following effects:

- Their own second effect (remove up to 4  from the tower),
- OR the effect of the contact associated with the location that replaced Altar of the Soulless God on the Game board.



For example, if the Altar of the Soulless God is replaced by the Mahj Kennels, the Priestess of the Soulless already on cards can either remove up to 4  from the tower, or allow you to pay 2  to gain 2  as if they were a Huntmaster.

*Art by Alayna Danner.*



This contact has two effects.


You may resolve either, or both of them:


- Dispatch  to the Altar of the Soulless God,
- AND/OR remove up to 4  from the tower and set them to the side.



There are 4 middle and 4 bottom advancements with this contact.


*Art by Gong Studios.*



This threat has a reactive effect: when it is attacking and none of the attacked players successfully defends against it, the Altar of the Soulless God location is destroyed. The player with the most  at the Altar of the Soulless God chooses a new location not currently used in the game and replaces the Altar of the Soulless God with it. If there is a tie, choose a location at random.

All  at the Altar of the Soulless God are placed at the new location (this is not movement or dispatching).

This threat contributes 5  to the total  of the card it is sleeved in.

This threat has one reward. When you defeat it, you gain 5 .

There are 4 middle and 4 bottom advancements with this threat.

*Art by Martin de Diego Sadaba.*









## Gates of Dunestar



This location has a reactive ability. This means that the ability can be used when one or more conditions are met.

In the case of the Gates of Dunestar, the condition is:

- Any time a threat attacks you.

When the condition is met, (even if it is not your turn) you may dispatch one or more  to the Gates of Dunestar to give that threat -2  for each. If you reduce that threat  to 0, you successfully defend against the threat and gain .

*Art by Alayna Danner.*



This contact has two effects.


You may resolve either, or both of them:



- Gain .
- AND/OR return  from Gates of Dunestar to your Trained Agents pool.


There are 3 middle and 3 bottom advancements with this contact.

*Art by Isuardi Therianto.*



This threat has a reactive effect: when it is revealed, all players gain 2 .

This threat contributes 2  to the total  of the card it is sleeved in.

This threat has one reward. When you defeat it, you gain 2 .

There are 3 middle and 3 bottom advancements with this threat.

*Art by Isuardi Therianto.*



## Debtor's Prison



This location has two distinct abilities:

- The first one is a reactive ability. This means that the ability can be used when one or more conditions are met. In the case of the Debtor's Prison, the condition is:
  - When one or more of your are moved to the Debtor's Prison using the associated contact's effect (Tax Collector).

When the condition is met, you may pay the active player or for each to move it back to the location it moved from.

For example, if two of your were moved from the Watchtowers by the Tax Collector, you may pay 2 , 2 , or and to return them to the Watchtowers. You could also just choose to have one moved back for the price of or , or choose to move none.

- The second ability is: on your turn, you may discard a card from your hand (and not use any of its contacts) to return all your from the Debtor's Prison to your Trained Agents pool.

*Art by Alayna Danner.*



This contact has one effect.

When you resolve it, you move all of your opponents' agents that are at locations associated with the contacts sleeved on the same card as the Tax Collector you are resolving to the Debtor's Prison.

For example, if the Tax Collector is sleeved in the same card as the University Professor and the Watchtower Lookout, then the of your opponents at Guildmark University or the Watchtowers are moved to the Debtor's Prison.

There are 3 middle and 3 bottom advancements with this contact.

*Art by Carlos NCT.*



This threat contributes 2 to the total of the card it is sleeved in.

This threat has one reward. When you defeat it, you gain 2 . You may also move each of your currently at the Debtor's Prison to any other location.

There are 3 middle and 3 bottom advancements with this threat.

*Art by Christian Chibala.*









## Grand Souk



This location has two distinct abilities that can only be used during your Assembly Phase. This is one of the rare abilities that can be used during the Assembly Phase rather than the Action Phase.

If you have multiple  at the Grand Souk, you may use either, or both of these abilities multiple times during your Assembly Phase turn (assuming you have enough .


- Return 2  from the Grand Souk to your Trained Agents pool to increase your hand size by 1 for the rest of the turn. This means that you can draft one additional card this turn.
- Return 2  from the Grand Souk to your Trained Agents pool to sleeve an advancement from one of the Location boards in play on a card with a free slot in the Street.

Since both abilities affect the cards in the Street, you will usually want to resolve them before drafting so you can maximize their use.

*Art by Alayna Danner.*





This contact has one effect.


When you resolve it, you may dispatch 2  to the Grand Souk at no cost.

There are 4 middle and 4 bottom advancements with this contact.

*Art by Guillaume Ducos.*



This threat contributes  to the total  of the card it is sleeved in.

This threat has one reward. When you defeat it, you gain .

There are 4 middle and 4 bottom advancements with this threat.

*Art by Guillaume Ducos.*



## The Great River



This location has two distinct abilities.

If you have multiple at The Great River, you may use either, or both of these abilities multiple times (assuming you have enough .

- Return from The Great River to your Trained Agents pool to place a card in the Street into your Guild Hall.

This can be any card. It doesn't need to be yours.

- Before drafting during your Assembly Phase, return from The Great River to your Trained Agents pool to place a card in the Street into your hand, then refill the Street. This is one of the rare abilities that can be used during the Assembly Phase rather than the Action Phase.

Note that since you are adding a card to your hand before drafting, you will draft one less card this Assembly Phase.

*Art by Alayna Danner.*



This contact has one effect.

When you resolve it, you may dispatch to The Great River at no cost.

There are 3 middle and 3 bottom advancements with this contact.

*Art by Nyra Drake.*



This threat has a reactive effect: if you fail to defend against it and have 4 or more , you lose 8 instead of moving down on the Defense track.

This threat contributes 2 to the total of the card it is sleeved in.

This threat has one reward. When you defeat it, you gain 6 .

There are 3 middle and 3 bottom advancements with this threat.

*Art by Carlos NCT.*

## Rattlesnake Hideout



This location has an End of Game ability. During the game, it has no ability.

Each player gains 2 for each location other than Rattlesnake Hideout at which they have the most . If there is a tie, all tied players gain 2 instead.

Then the player(s) with the most at the Rattlesnake Hideout gains 4 . If there is a tie, all tied players gain 2 instead.

Note that only count. If you somehow managed to dispatch untrained agents to a location, they do not count. If there are Pit Fighters in the game (or similar effects) those can count as 2 if they are at the appropriate location type when determining majority.

*Art by Alayna Danner.*



This contact has two effects.

You may resolve either, but not both:

- Dispatch up to 3 to the Rattlesnake Hideout at no cost.
- OR move one of your at the Rattlesnake Hideout to any other location.

There are 4 middle and 4 bottom advancements with this contact.

*Art by Gong Studios.*



This threat has a reactive effect: when it is revealed, the player with the most at the Rattlesnake Hideout may gain (if there is a tie, all tied players gain 0 .

This threat contributes to the total of the card it is sleeved in.

This threat has one reward. When you defeat it, you gain .

There are 4 middle and 4 bottom advancements with this threat.

*Art by Guillaume Ducos.*



## DUNESTAR LOCATIONS IN VOICELESS GUILD GAMES

Below is a table referencing all the locations available in *Sands of Dunestar* and whether or not they can be used in Voiceless Guild games, as well as their Difficulty Rating were you to want to calculate your Success Score (see Voiceless Guild Rules).

Number	Location Name	Voiceless Guild Difficulty	Difficulty Rating
38	Embassy of Dunestar	High	3
39	Sandslayer Encampment	Moderate	2
40	The Pits	Easy	1
41	Beacon of Light	Moderate	2
42	Mahj Kennels	Moderate	2
43	The Scale	Moderate	2
44	Sun Vaults	Easy	1
45	Altar of the Soulless God	Cannot use in Voiceless Guild games. Use Gates of Dunestar (46) or City Watch (26) instead.	N/A
46	Gates of Dunestar	Easy	1
47	Debtor's Prison	Cannot use in Voiceless Guild games. Use a random advancement instead.	N/A
48	Grand Souk	Easy	1
49	The Great River	Moderate	2
50	Rattlesnake Hideout	Cannot use in Voiceless Guild games. Use a random advancement instead.	N/A



## CREDITS

**DESIGNER NOTE:** *Edge of Darkness* was a long design process and many folks played multiple iterations of the game. I want to send an enormous thanks to these awesome folks for their time, feedback, and invaluable contribution. These are folks who playtested several times and/or had significant suggestions or contributions to *Edge of Darkness* and other game design efforts that influenced *Edge*.

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Warning: Choking Hazard! Not for use by children under 3 years of age.

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