

# The Barony of Severac

(*Greg Dzi*)

The Barony of Severac lies between the cities of Méore and Quadrille, at the tip of the peninsula by the Mergeld Sea, ruled by the Baron Enguerrand. At its heart is the city of Varnais, a busy thriving port that dominates the maritime trade passing through the Glaive and the Mergeld sea.

The Barony was once a land of verdant, bright, open plains, far removed from the dark moors of today - a grim place roamed by the ghosts of those slain in battle.

The remaining land consists of villages and hamlets scattered between Varnais and the border. Some are abandoned - the villagers perhaps departed for the city for the promise of a better life.



The Baron Enguerrand rules with the backing of the Merchant Guilds of Varnais. It's said that the king treats him with too much respect for what he is supposed to be: his vassal.

Varnais has a fleet of merchant vessels that can be found trading in nearly every sea as far north as Katorheim and south to Ibrahim. To ensure their security and that of the Barony, Enguerrand has as many warships at his disposal.

## The City of Varnais

Varnais is a bustling city and port that has doubled its size and population in a few decades.

The port district is a third of the total size of the city, the rest being the fortress, the merchants, and common districts.

Many nobles prefer to live a decadent and easy courtier's life, full of debauchery and the occasional tourney, selling off their lands and possessions to fund their idle lifestyle.

The merchants have taken over the positions once held by the nobles in Varnais, or to say, taken the "burden" of managing their lands and wealth off their lazy hands.

There are still a few nobles who hark back to the old days when they ruled. Fewer still are the ones who openly oppose the rule of the merchants in Varnais.

Either you work for the guild in the city or you're part of them. Even though slavery is outlawed in Chaubrette the merchants have found a way to reinstate it with their harsh business laws: you work for us or you are cast out of Varnais into Le Chancre.

The Sleepless Port, as Varnais is called, is always crowded with sailors, merchants and dockers, breaking their backs for a few pennies.

Varnais is more accurately two ports. The Outsiders port is where foreign ships, and those not affiliated to a merchant guild, dock. The access to this port is easily removed and its destruction would leave the city still defensible. The Inner port is more secure. To enter, you have to pass a series of defensive towers, armed with ballistae and catapults. It is alleged that the Baron employs the services of Magicians and Selentine War Mages. As the heart of the city, if the Inner Port falls, the rest of the city would share its fate.

## Le Chancre

Outside the city walls, there is a labyrinth of crude shacks and decrepit hovels, which to explore you have to trudge through a thick layer of mud and foulness.

This shanty town is called le Chancre (the Canker.) From a distance, it looks like an outgrowth of foul lesions, makeshift hovels stuck to the city's walls, growing outward.

Disease spreads amongst its population, trapped between the impregnable walls and the dark moors. It's been put to the torch in the past, but it grows back as newcomers arrive to the city attracted by the chance of a better life. The glamour disappears when they realize they can't go back to their former life and have to survive in this foul pit.

This situation is not without benefit for the industrious who don't bother with morality (and who does in these troubled times?). Galley captains find in le Chancre an endless source of oarsmen, and though most of them will fast wear out, they can always be replaced. These poor souls constitute a convenient levy in case of a land invasion.

The shanty town provides military defence as it slows down the enemy and can easily be burnt down.

It has been said that the only reason it exists to this day is because the Baron has a need for it.

There are mutterings in the dank huts of le Chancre that it should not be this way, and that there should be an uprising.

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