



JUSTICE SQUARE

AN INTRODUCTION

THRONGS OF PEOPLE FILL THE SQUARE OUTSIDE THE courthouse, waiting for the entertainment to begin. The buildings around the square are shabby, their facades covered in grime, flaking paint, and crumbling plaster. The streets are strewn with litter, empty crates, and horse dung. The smell of street food, unwashed locals, and humanoid feces makes for a uniquely rich aroma, so thick you can almost taste it in the air. The people seem just as rundown as the district they live in. Their clothing is worn and tattered, grey with dirt and grease. Although diverse in their appearance almost all the locals look gaunt and have sallow sore expressions. You take all this in while being led from the courthouse in chains, your guards alert, scanning the crowd for signs of danger.

The trial was a sham, your guilt decided beforehand. The evidence against you fabricated, while your defence was ignored. Now you have only one chance to escape the gallows and the so-called justice handed to you and your friends. The bard. You're sure he wouldn't just abandon you, surely he'd come up with a plan for your escape. And yet he wasn't at your trial, you found no secret note in your last meal and no magical message was sent. Climbing the steps of the gallows you curse his name, it looks like he's abandoned you and run off with the party gold.

You look out across the crowd as the hangman slips a rope over your head. It dawns on you this is probably the end of your adventures, and then you hear it. A screeching call in the sky above, you look upwards, along with most of the crowd and the guards, to see a large creature diving towards the gallows, wings at its sides. At the last moment, it pulls out of the dive, and with a great gust of wind and feathers, a griffon lands awkwardly on top of the gallows. Riding the griffon is a dishevelled but grinning bard. "Release my friends good sir" He demands of the hangman while brandishing an ornate-looking wand at the guards. "Stay back or I'll incinerate every last one of you blighters!" He shouts dropping a bag of weapons at your feet. He winks at you before turning back to the guards, waving his Wand of Water Breathing at them threateningly. You grab your weapons and prepare to fight your way free.

NOTES AND TIPS

- 30x30 Map grid
- This map can be used for an encounter themed around a public hanging or as simply a square that happens to have a courthouse and gallows in it.
- The courthouse could also be used as a temple.
- Escaping an execution or rescuing someone from the hangman's noose can make for an exciting scenario.
- Remember guards will probably have crossbows and even some magic at hand to prevent escape attempts.
- An NPC the party needs information from is about to be hung. How to plan a rescue without becoming criminals yourselves?
- The area is open enough for a major fight. Maybe a large flying

monster like a Chimera, Manticore, or even a Dragon has been harassing the city? The citizens have left a few cows out in the square to lure the beast and the party is hired to deal with it.

- At night something lurks around the Gallows, haunting the square. Some kind of specter or ghost lives under the gallows and hunts down anyone that takes the job of Hangman.
- The party is hired to make sure a notorious criminal is finally hung for their crimes. No one comes to watch the execution for good reason. The person has escaped before and rumour has it they can not be killed. The party is hired as extra security. Mostly anything could turn up to disrupt the execution.

VARIANTS

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