

# DESPERATE PRISON BREAK

Our security is top-of-the-line. None have escaped our cells and all are brought to justice. We can also keep your valuable treasures safe in our secure vault.

Jacken, Jail Chief

## LORE

**MEDIEVAL JUSTICE IS** prompt and harsh. In a world where travel is slow and dangerous, and in which the crown's justice may be days away from the scene of a crime, people are left to fend for themselves. Thus, individuals hold each other accountable and do what is necessary to make sure criminals are arrested on the spot. Most often than not, a wrong-doer is seized by their neighbors and held under arrest until the bailiff comes. Then, the criminals are transported to the city jail under the barracks, to await trial and the king's justice.

## JAIL IMPROVEMENT

**FIFTEEN YEARS AGO**, the capital's main jail was located in the castle barracks. A squat, windowless, stone building where criminals awaited swift justice. Alas, despite its relative security measures, it was a time when numerous escape attempts occurred per year, many of them being successful. It brought shame to the jailing complex and the crown as the prison breaks became a common occurrence. As a desperate attempt to curve this situation, the crown offered a hefty bounty to mage-users to reinforce the jail and prevent convicts from so easily attempting to escape. Jacken, a mage who became renowned in a decade-long war, was chosen to improve the prison. Jacken placed abjuration wards, reinforced the iron bars of cells, crafted clever magical alarms, and designed deadly traps. In a matter of months, it became clear that no one could escape from this jail anymore.

## SECONDARY BUSINESS

**IN TIME, JACKEN** became a trusted force in the castle and was given more leeway in his business. The mage came up with the idea of crafting a secure vault and charging influential individuals for its use. He quickly earned the favor of merchant princes, nobles, and even crime lords. Jacken charges them a monthly fee for keeping their valuable goods in the vault. Jacken carries the only key to the portcullis to access the vault. At this time, the most valuable item in the chamber is a magical, glowing, sentient blade. It was placed there by the prince himself. The weapon was retrieved from a faraway tomb and is meant to be his sword when he becomes king.

## THE PRISON BREAK

**THE CHARACTERS ARE** under arrest for past crimes! Their gear is confiscated and they are imprisoned in Jacken's jail, in the capital. The characters must take advantage of a mistake by their jailers to escape. While they attempt this prison break, the sword in the vault pleads to be freed too. Will the characters comply?

## FEATURES OF THE VAULT

### Tier 1 Adventure

**Light.** The sconces and braziers in the underground jail are changed continuously by servants and guards.

**Chamber Ceilings.** All areas have 15-foot-tall, flat ceilings made of undecorated, plain hewn stone.

**Antimagic Fields.** Areas 6, 7, 11, and 12 have a magic-impeding field. Casters must succeed on a **Will** roll or have their spells fizzle away and become wasted.

**Silent Alarms.** Jacken placed magic wards in areas 6 and 11. Any time a creature enters these areas he is alerted. A **Detect Magic** check reveals the wards and the outgoing signal when it is sent to Jacken.

### 1. BASEMENT COMMON AREA

The long stairs from the barracks lead to an open area with several wooden doors and another descending stairway. The characters may remember this area if they were brought to the prison while conscious.

The doors lead to two bedrooms for jail guards, two archives that contain legal documents and logs of all who have been incarcerated here, a room with three short-swords and a chest of spare clothing, and the trap room (area 2). Four **thugs** guard this room. They chat and play dice games. Their posting is a boring one.

### 2. FAKE BEDROOM

This room is a clever distraction to robbers. The varnished oak door features a high-quality lock (**Burglary** check) to give the impression that it holds something of importance. There is a table with wine casks and a bed within. Stepping on the rug by the table triggers a pit trap that leads to a slide and into the spiked pit in area 6. Creatures that fall lose 1/2 their HP (**Reflexes** roll).



### 3. JACKEN'S STUDY

*A clay vase on a plinth by the far wall seems to capture the attention. A low hum comes from inside it.*

The empty vase radiates a faint magic aura (**Detect Magic** check). The trinket is a prototype of the charm jars in area 4 and foreshadows their functioning. A mage can study it for 1 Dungeon Turn (10 minutes) to learn it is intended to enrapture an individual so that it abandons any action to worship it indefinitely and that a strong will, or pouring salt in one's mouth prevents this effect.

**Treasure.** The secret vault is revealed by pulling the west shelf. It contains 350 sp, a pound of salt, a *spell scroll of cure wounds*, and a copy of Jacken's spellbook.

### 4. ROOM OF JARS

Three jars by the south wall glint in the warm light. The magic in them causes humanoids to abandon reason and kneel by them (**Will** roll); one person per jar. A handful of salt in the mouth also prevents this mind trap.

### 5. CHIEFS' QUARTERS

The north chamber belongs to Jacken and the other one to his second-in-command, Luka. Each of the rooms contains a bed, a wardrobe, and a leather pouch of salt on the night-tables. Jacken's room also has access to a vault-like room with two illusory chests (**Will** roll). Touching any of the ethereal chests causes a fire-jet to erupt from the wall (**Reflexes** roll). Creatures in its way lose 1/3 of their Hit Points as the searing fire passes by them.

### 6. SPIKED PIT

A 10-foot-deep, iron recess on the floor contains sixteen steel spikes. Creatures that trigger the trap in area 2 may become impaled in these spikes while the jailers come to extract them and put them in a cell in area 7. A hole on the west wall climbs on a steep incline to area 2 and may be used as a rather risky escape route (**Climbing** check).

### 7. THE JAIL AND CELLS

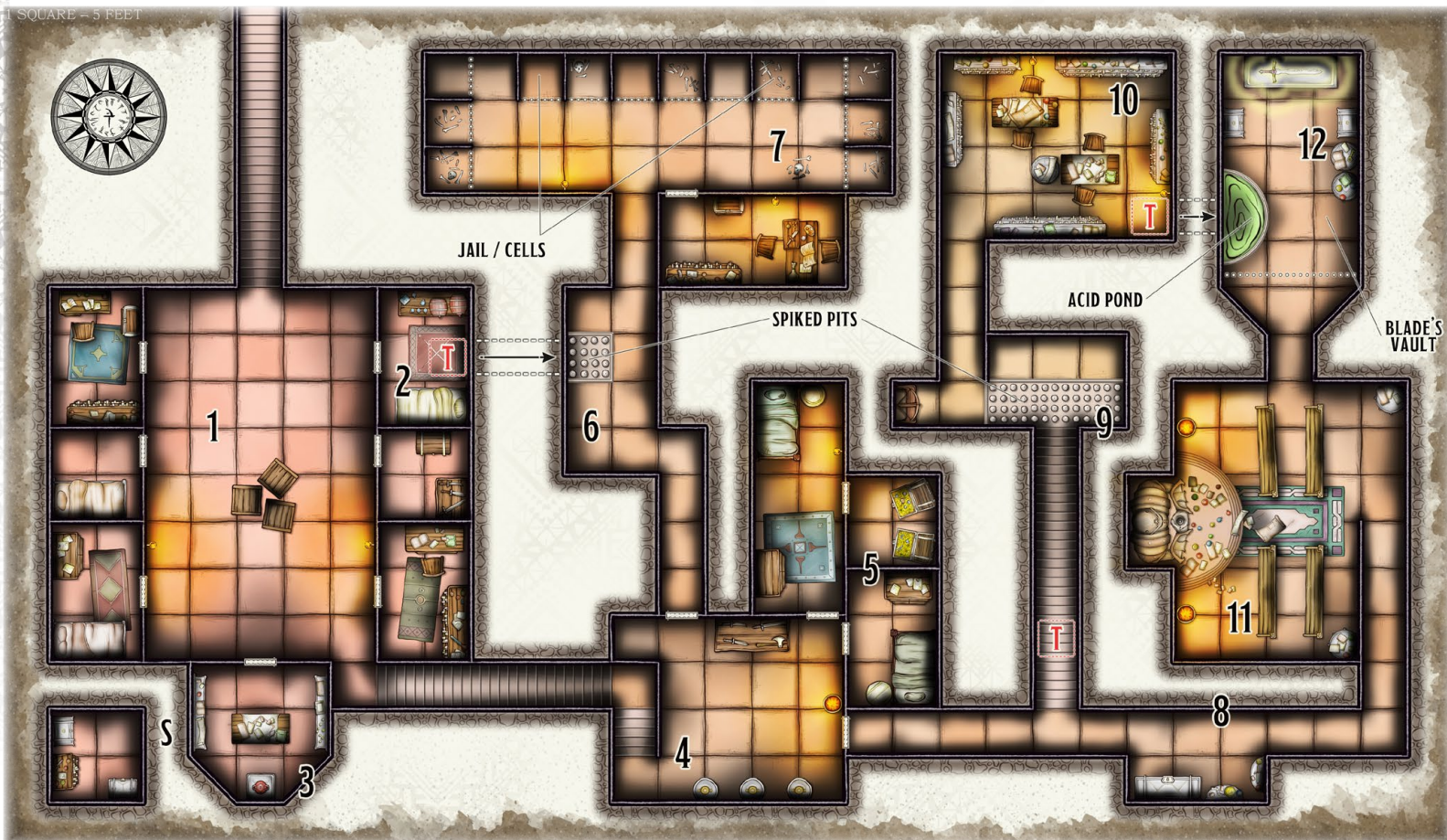
*Twelve, 5-foot, square cells line the chamber's walls. Numerous bone remains lie scattered in some of them. Testament to the lousy treatment they received.*

The cell room is the area where the characters begin this desperate adventure. There are two **guards** at all times and the watch changes twice a day. Each character is imprisoned in a different cell, they have to either trick or take advantage of the guards somehow to make it out of the cells. Some of their gear is tucked away in the jailer's office in a wooden chest. But anything of real value and all magic items and armor were stored in area 12.

Luka (**thug**) and another **guard** are in the side office filling out paperwork and contracts for vault clients. They can hear everything that happens in the cell's chamber.

### 8. SIDE ROOM OF REMEMBRANCE

Creatures that come through this area are subject to a unique spell that makes them remember something they forgot to do somewhere else, compelling them to return immediately and abandon this area (**Will** roll).





## 9. SLIDING STAIRS TRAP

This stairway leads to area 10. However, when a creature steps on the seventh or eighth step, a perilous trap is activated. In a moment, all steps slant downward, forming a slide-like tunnel that drops all creatures into the 10-foot-deep spiked pit below. The only way to avoid this grim fate is by holding onto the walls for dear life and climbing in either direction (**Fortitude** roll).

Creatures that fall into the pit lose half their HP. In addition, an automated crossbow shoots poisoned bolts at any creature that climbs out of the pit or down from the shaft (**Reflexes** roll). Creatures struck by the bolts lose 1/4 of their HP and become poisoned for 1 hour.

## 10. JACKEN'S PRIVATE LIBRARY

Jacken, the mage, keeps a great collection of arcane lore and literature here. He is the only visitor to this area, except for a few colleagues he has invited here from time to time. Jacken is here most of the time while the characters are imprisoned in area 7 and may be alerted by the alarm spells when they roam south of the cells.

Stepping on the corner triggers a pit trap that leads to a slide and into the acid pond in area 12. Creatures that fall lose 3/4 of their Hit Points (**Reflexes** roll).

**Treasure.** The entire collection is of great interest to other spellcasters and collectors, it has a value of 15,000 sp but the logistic puzzle of carrying everything out without being noticed makes it nigh impossible.

## 11. THE ARCANES FOCUS

*The statue of an armor-clad knight in an alcove overlooks the chapel-like chamber. The shifting glow from behind the helmet makes it look alive and breathing.*

A **Detect Magic** check reveals a webbing of magic auras merging from the statue. A mage can analyze the auras for 1 Dungeon Turn to learn that all of the spells in the jail find their source here. The statue's chest can be carefully dismantled (**Burglary** check) to reveal the arcane core that powers all of the wards and spells; removing it disables them all. Failing this check causes a 10-foot-wide, magical explosion that destroys the core and deals damage equal to 1/2 of the creatures' Hit Points.

## 12. THE VAULT

The characters' valuable goods are stored here along with the magic blade, *Silver Wings of Morning*. It has a prime objective to seek glory and adventure. It sees in the characters an opportunity to achieve its goals. It beckons them telepathically to retrieve it and claims to be able to lead them on a path of glory and power. Only the strongest can lift the portcullis (**Fortitude** roll).

**Treasure.** The vault also contains 1,200 sp, 9,600 cp, and a collection of custom-made jewelry worth 6,000 sp.

## CONFRONTATION

**WHILE JACKEN (MAGE)** starts the adventure in area 10. He is alerted of the characters' prison break attempt and may confront them in any area the GM deems appropriate. The best places for this encounter are areas 1 and 11. When Jacken appears, he is accompanied by two **thugs**, a **guard**, and two **shadows**. The mage is desperate if he is aware that the characters plundered the vault in area 12. Such a robbery would crash his reputation and earn him enemies in all echelons of the capital.

## DEVELOPMENT

**THE CHARACTERS REACH** the end of this adventure and face the consequences of their deeds.

If the characters manage to escape, their prison break becomes a legendary event that draws the attention of many entities, many of whom might seek them for job opportunities. The sword, *Silver Wings of Morning*, chooses a daring, dauntless character to be its partner. The character's possession of this weapon must remain a secret as the royal family soon sends investigators to track down the whereabouts of the prince's sword.

