

The Dragon Under Caerleon

Caerleon (“*Keer-lee-on*”) is an ancient county in the Welsh marches of Henry II’s England. It is a battle-torn region and is steeped in legend and magic. Underneath Caerleon, a terrible red dragon sleeps in enchanted slumber. In thirteen years, that spell will end and the dragon will wake.

The players are gathered by the octogenarian witch Annie Crook. Annie is unaware of the dragon, but is troubled by recent portents of doom. She is gathering a troupe of scholars, heroes, and adventurers to save Caerleon.

The Dragon Under Caerleon is a playtest setting and story for *Ars Minimae*.

Locales

Haunted Ruins

The abandoned ruins of a Roman fortress are the most visible landmark in Caerleon. Built on a hill crest, they loom over the whole county. Larger than life, these ruins are notorious. Nearby farmers swear that they are haunted. Those farmers are correct.

The original fortress was a camp for a Roman legion. Those Roman soldiers guarded the undisturbed slumber of Cadwalader, a mighty dragon sleeping in the ancient caves beneath the hill. When the legions abandoned Britannia, a 4th century Roman magi Marcus cast an illusion making the ruins unreachable and giving them their eerie reputation.

See the opening story, *Better Left Sleeping*, for details of the ruins.

Witch’s Grove

This apple orchard grows dense and wild. It is the home of Annie Crook, its guardian and the titular witch. She has cultivated the grove from her gardener’s cottage for decades.

Annie originally took up residence in the grove because of its valuable magical produce. Each summer, one of the apple trees grows a golden apple imbued with raw magic. A magi can distill power from this apple to obtain a pawn of viz.

Over the decades, Annie has become fond of her orchard and all of Caerleon. She does not know that the orchard’s power is derived from Cawalader, the dragon sleeping underneath Caerleon. If Cadwalader dies or departs, then the grove will cease to produce magic apples.

Outside of the Witch's Grove, there is a small village. Its peasants are respectful and fearful of Annie. This village also contains the Cat's Paw tavern - the establishment where the troupe first meets in *Better Left Sleeping*.

Howl Castle

Black soot still marks the sides of this great stone castle. A collapsed section of wall has been temporarily reinforced with rubble and a wooden palisade. Several weather-beaten siege machines stand outside of its flooded moat.

Howl Castle is the headquarters of Lady de Clare, the Norman lord of Caerleon. She and her husband captured it one year ago from Morgan Howl - an elf-prince now hiding inside the River Wye. William, Lady de Clare's husband, has departed for a tournament in London.

Lady de Clare is a capable leader, but unfamiliar with Caerleon. She has a variety of troubles with various powers of the new territory and with raids from Morgan Howl's Welsh knights.

The castle was originally built by Morgan Howl. It is situated along the River Wye and part of the river has been diverted to fill a moat around Howl Castle.

The Burh

This walled town is the most urban settlement in Caerleon. Its merchant councilors have a royal charter and regulate themselves independently of Lady de Clare.

The Burh is a hub of trade, travel, and skilled crafts. Peasants from all over Caerleon come to its market day. Pilgrims journey to visit St. Cadoc's tomb. Travelers from far away come to the Burh to buy rare materials available nowhere else in England.

In exigency, the people of the Burh can raise a militia with dozens of longbowers and pikes. The stone walls of town have a single fortified gate.

Some of the merchants and artisans of the Burh include:

- Woolsie is the cloth merchant and the richest man in the Burh.
- Sheba is a bookbinder and bookseller. She has an unusually comprehensive inventory of texts, vellums, inks, and curios.
 - Sheba is secretly a *paper devil*. She enjoys tempting humans into sins of intellectual distraction.
- Ebenezer and his family are bow-makers. Their skill is important to the strength of the town militia and to its independence.
- Johanna is a baker and owns a windmill built on a nearby hill.

- Hock is a vagabond peddler. He's laid out his miscellaneous wares in the corner of the common.

It costs a silver penny to enter the town. Woolsie's daughter, Gillie, has a booth outside the town's gate and collects this. She has a crossbow that she uses to threaten any cheapskates.

St. Cadoc's Tomb

Built inside the Burh, this church is the most famous in Caerleon. It is the not-so-restful grave of St. Cadoc. Cadoc was killed by a pagan while conducting a Mass six hundred years ago. Not deterred by his mortal wound, Cadoc continued the Mass to the final Amen and then walked four hundred paces through the church and into his underground tomb.

The skeleton of St. Cadoc is still animated by the strong personality of the saint. Though ambulatory, Cadoc refuses to leave the underground chamber where he fervently waits for resurrection. Pilgrims and living priests have richly decorated and illuminated this tomb.

Cadoc's animation is a miracle and cannot be ended except by the Divine. Cadoc can be an unconventional source of advice but will not willingly leave his tomb. He is a strict pacifist and can easily be pulled into still-animated pieces by rowdy characters.

Cadoc and the Divine are not particularly hostile magi, considering them just another part of the secular world.

The Hedges

Crossed by lanes and dotted with peasant villages, almost all of Caerleon is cultivated farmland. Most people live between the hedges, working common fields that feed the whole county. Other settlements and locations are ambiguously placed somewhere in the Hedges.

Lady de Clare collects her rents in-kind from the farmers of Caerleon. Having only recently taken control, her tax collection is pretty irregular.

Morgan Howl's Island

Defeated in the siege of Howl Castle, Morgan has fled into the River Wye. He or any of his allies known to the spirit of the river (a giant salmon) can dive into the Wye and vanish into a hidden world.

The hideaway is an island in an endlessly broad version of the River Wye. It is always noon on this island and always the hottest day of summer. Insects buzz in the lush greenery and rush of the river.

Characters arrive on the island by emerging from the depths of the surrounding river. They can see the small docks and villages of the fish-headed fairies native to the island.

Morgan keeps a lavish mansion here. He lives there with his closest knights; plotting revenge on the Lady de Clare and the Normans who stole Caerleon from him.

Momma Mahoraga Caravan

A family of travelers is currently passing through Caerleon. A flamboyantly decorated and merry group, Momma Mahoraga's family works as mummers, acrobats, and freaks.

Tom-tom, Mahoraga's daughter, is the boss of the caravan. A juggler and acrobat, she wears a bright red and green costume with trailing ribbons. Mahoraga is secluded inside of her wagon which is dark and choked with aromatic smoke.

Few of the caravan travelers know that Mahoraga is really a great serpent whose coils fill her wagon. Extremely old, Mahoraga can influence the minds of the weak willed and usually presents an illusion of a silent, veiled woman. Characters who meet her can roll *Wit* to pierce this illusion.

Mahoraga can see much of the present and parts of the future. She has brought her family to Caerleon because she has foreseen that it is her fate to meet the character's troupe here.

The Situation, Fronts, and Progressions

There are four primary fronts in Caerleon: the sleeping dragon Cadwalader, the hostile elf-prince Morgan Howl, the Norman liege Lady de Clare, and sinister Italian necromancer Lodovico Lazzarelli.

Each front could be a source of conflict and stories for the troupe. Each also can provide progression by changing Caerleon by advancing their agenda. Feel free to focus on conflict, alliances, or other interactions with fronts that the players find interesting, the others can fade into the background.

The Sleeping Dragon, Cadwalader

Cadwalader is the dragon sleeping under the Roman fortress. In thirteen years, Cadawalader will wake and devastate all of Caerleon. The troupe was invited to Caerleon by Annie Crook to investigate the earthquakes, rains of toads, and other omens of this approaching doom.

Cadwalader serves as a clock for the adventure and should encourage the players to spend their seasons preparing for a grand battle or more clever solution to the dragon problem.

Some story hooks, secrets, and progressions related to Cadwalader include:

- Cadwalader's slumber was induced by a *Mead of Thousand Year Slumber* brewed by Morgan Howl in 233 A.D.
- A band of Briton warriors and their petty queen Aine, drank the same mead and slumber in a chamber near the dragon. They swore an oath to defeat the dragon when it wakes.
- Three years before the dragon wakes, sages from Persia will arrive to observe and record "Cadwalader's pure flame cleanse Britannia."
- A group of foolhardy thieves from London arrive and scheme to steal from Cadwalader's hoard.

Usurped Elf-Prince, Morgan Howl

Morgan Howl is a vainglorious and irrational elf who has had a peculiar fascination with humans ever since they first dug him out of his barrow mound. He loves to imitate human custom and swings wildly in mood between paranoia, generosity, and vanity. He's been intermittently lord of Caerleon since saving the county from Cadwalader in 233 A.D. at the behest of the Briton queen Aine.

Morgan Howl is a natural spellcaster but his hairbrained schemes never profit from his powerful magic. He was styling himself as prince of Caerleon before being overthrown by Lady de Clare and fleeing to an island supernaturally hidden within the River Wye. There, he plots his revenge upon and wallows in fear of Lady de Clare. The Welsh locals, especially those with fairy ancestors, are fond of him despite his illogic and annoying eccentricities.

Morgan Howl might be an enemy or ally of the troupe depending on the game.

Some story hooks, secrets, and progressions related to Morgan Howl include:

- Welsh riders, fish-headed fairies, and other allies of Morgan Howl often emerge from the River Wye to rob travelers, farmers, and servants of Lady de Clare. The troupe might attempt to stop these raids, or alternatively to lead one.
- Morgan Howl hatches only the most unlikely plans against Lady de Clare. Secretly, he is irrationally afraid of her. The troupe might defeat Howl's plan to ruin de Clare's marriage or alternatively, help Howl transform all of her knight's horses into cats.
- The spirit of the River Wye is a giant salmon and a close ally to Morgan Howl. The troupe would need to somehow pass this salmon to reach his hidden island.

- Morgan Howl hopes that Cadwalader will kill Lady de Clare. He is not inclined to recreate his magical *Mead of Thousand Year Slumber* unless Caerleon is restored to his control.

Norman Liege, Lady de Clare

Lady de Clare is the Norman lord of Caerleon. Heir to great territories in England, Ireland, and Wales, she is one of the most powerful people in Britain. Lady de Clare is widely admired for her education and political influence - she is even a close friend to King Henry! Her husband, William Marshal, is a knight errant and famous tournament winner.

Lady de Clare attacked Howl out of sympathy for the people of Caerleon who suffered under Howl's absurd laws. Her goals are to establish a sensible (Norman) administration and finally capture the elusive elf.

Some story hooks, secrets, and progressions related to Morgan Howl include:

- Various monsters and powers of Caerleon trouble the power couple.
- They really want to catch Morgan Howl and stop his raids.
- William is a famous tourney knight and wants to organize a local contest.
- The couple have trouble with the overly pious, skeletal Saint Cadoc.

Italian Necromancer, Lodovico Lazzerelli

A magus with a sniveling serpent-like demeanor, Lodovico Lazzerelli is a skilled necromancer. He is extremely inconvenienced to be so far from his native Venice and misses no opportunity to complain about the weather, people, or food. He is less forthcoming about his mission: a search for the missing poems of the 6th century Welsh bard Taliesin.

Resolutely prejudiced, Lazzerelli is unfailingly polite to fellow magi and social elites. Towards others, he is haughty and distrustful. He's generally fearful of the clergy given the distasteful nature of his magic. Despite his lack of scruples, Lazzerelli is unlikely to attack or betray the troupe first. He could be an enemy or a transactional ally of the troupe.

Some story hooks, secrets, and progressions related to Lazzerelli include:

- Lazzerelli claims to be looking for Taliesin's poems out of historical interest. In truth, he believes that poems encode a secret spell to "enslave the senses" of Cadwalader. He hopes to use the dragon to conquer Caerleon, or perhaps all of Britain.
- Lazzerelli's magic is mostly *Regio Corpus* spells. Lazzerelli can't control the spirits of those buried in consecrated ground or otherwise protected by the Divine.
- The locations of Taliesin's lost poems are:
 - In a codex used to replace a broken leg on Morgan Howl's throne.
 - Written on the inside cover of Annie Crook's cookbook.

- Memorized by St. Cadoc
 - Among an anthology of poems collected by Lady de Clare
 - Inscribed on an amethyst hidden in Cadwalader's lair
- Lazzarelli could ask the troupe to help him obtain any of Taliesin's poems - especially the poem memorized by St. Cadoc.
- Lazzarelli is transported in a sedan chair carried by four veiled and animated corpses. He replaces these servants with fresh cadavers whenever he can find bodies without the protection of proper burial.

Opening Story: Better Left Sleeping...

Scene 1: The Cat's Paw Tavern

Our game opens on a gray February morning. Chill clouds sweep across the Welsh landscape of Caerleon. The roads have turned to sludge. Travelers sheltering from the rain and mud have packed into the smokey interior of the Cat's Paw tavern. A few characters stand out in the crowded public house.

<Do you care to describe your characters?>

Other individuals inside the public house:

- Bernard is the publican and bartender. His wife Trudy brews the beer.
- A trio of Norman knights, Gwen, Eric, and Enide are drinking themselves into a stupor.
- A supercilious Italian, Lazzarelli is huddled in a corner. His nose is dripping and he periodically sneezes due to an unpleasant cold. He is dressed in black silks and generally miserable.
- A portly priest, Brother Gui, is nursing a beer.

Story Guide Moves

- Bring the players together, get them introduced to each other
 - The publican Bernard could seat the players uncomfortably close together.
 - Bernard could ask what brings the player to Caerleon.
- Make trouble with the Norman knights
 - One of the knights asks a player what they think of elves. (The knights despise / warn about the elf-prince Morgan Howl)
- A supernatural guide from Annie arrives
 - This is likely an animated apple tree. Grown and twisted into a roughly humanoid shape, it cannot speak but gestures to the players to follow it.
 - If the players are confused, it presents a letter from Annie.

Let folks roleplay as long as they like. If the players look towards you or the scene slows, make one of the moves above.

Scene 2: The Witch's Grove

From the Cat's Paw tavern, a trail leads through fields and into a tangle of apple trees. Potentially led by an animated tree, the troupe eventually arrives at a cottage at the heart of the orchard.

Annie is a red-cheeked and elderly woman. She wears gardening overalls and is never without her trowel. She has retired from magic in her old age, but once was proficient in the *Regio*, *Creo*, and *Herbam* arts.

Annie has lived in Caerleon her whole life and genuinely cares for the land and its people.

Scene of visiting Annie - she explains that:

- “awl the birds have left Caerleon. We’ve had terrible earthquakes. And rains of newts!”
- “There’s something bad coming for Caerleon. Something old and dangerous.”
- “Ey think it’s something in the ancient ruins on Caerleon’s hilltop. Ey’ve ne’er been able to reach those ruins - some powerful magick hides them.”

Annie offers the players three suggestions:

1. “There’s three paths that occur to ole’d me.”
 - a. “If you all are clever enough, head straight to the ruins on Caerleon’s hill and puzzle your way through the spell.”
 - b. “Else, Ey’ve ea’rd that another ally has come to Caerleon. A powerful oracle, the Momma Mahoraga is camped by the River Wye.”
 - c. “Finally, if you’d put your trust in the feudal lord then you might petition the Lady d’Clare. She’s severe, but it’s in e’r interest to pacify e’r new fief.”

During the interview with Annie, an earthquake shakes the troupe. Boulders tumble from Caerleon hill.

Scene 3: Attack on the Road

This scene can be run whenever the players are traveling between locations. Consider running it whenever the action is lagging. It can be dropped entirely if the players aren’t interested in combat.

Before you, the muddy trail leads between two low chalk hills. As you pass, a scream rises in Welsh and arrows fly from the hills.

Ask everyone to roll *Finesse*:

- Those who succeed can act before the arrows strike.
- Those who have mixed success can act, but will be wounded.
- Those who fail cannot and are wounded.

The attackers are six Welsh archers led by a haughty knight named Gerald. Gerald is a fairy and has an eel’s head under his helmet. They’re loyal followers of Howl and enemies of any

Normans. They'll parley with friends of the elf-lord (after shooting first) and flee if met with overwhelming force.

Scene 4: The Momma's Troupe

Fiddle song and lantern lights rise from a circle of wagons camped in a bend of the Wye. Flamboyantly costumed and merry, the troupe looks like a group of mummers, acrobats, and freaks.

As you examine the troupe, you see:

1. A woman (Marion) is stringing up a small puppet theater. For a penny, she'll perform a show depicting the Normans beating up a crowned elf.
2. A juggling woman wearing a bright red and green costume. This is Tom-tom, Mahoraga's daughter and the boss of the caravan.
3. Conjoined brothers stirring a large cookpot. Hugo and Cabret are happy to gossip.

Rumor Table:

1. Momma Mahoraga eats rats. (true)
2. Only Tom-tom ever sees Momma Mahoraga. No one else ever goes into her wagon. (true)
3. Momma Mahoraga is dead and Tom-tom is only pretending to take orders from her. (false)
4. Momma Mahoraga can predict the future. (true enough)

If the players ask around or cause trouble, then Tom-tom will confront them. She'll allow the players to consult Momma Mahoraga, but only if they prove they are powerful magicians. She requests a magic trick from the troupe.

Scene 5: The Momma's Wagon

Momma Mahoraga secluded herself in a large wagon carved with mysterious writing (*Sanskrit verses claiming that titanic snakes turn the axis of the earth*). The heavy wooden door is locked and the key kept by Tom-tom.

When the players enter, they find a dark, cramped space filled with aromatic smoke. Have everyone roll *Wit*.

- Those who fail see a small, veiled woman sitting cross-legged at the back of the claustrophobic room.
- Those who partially succeed realize that there is an illusion spell affecting the wagon.

- Those fully succeed pierce the illusion. The woman does not exist and the room is much larger than it appears. Instead of tight walls, coils of snake-flesh press on all sides. A giant, three-eyed snake head looks intelligently towards you.

Mahoraga speaks directly into the minds of characters:

- *Welcome young ones. What brings you to my wagon?*
- *There is much I could tell you of your hearts' false desires.*
- *My family has journeyed many weary miles to tell you of your doom. I must tell you exactly what I have come here to say.*
- *My bargain is eternal and unchanging. One question I'll answer truly, in exchange for one favor of my time and choosing.*

Mahoraga can see much of the present and parts of the future. She has brought her family to Caerleon because she has foreseen that it is her fate to meet the character's troupe here.

She might reveal:

- The Roman god Terminus is guarding the ruins.
- Disaster will strike in exactly 13 years - if the players don't screw things up themselves.
- Disabling the Roman boundary stone (which has an image of Terminus) or carrying it with them will allow the troupe to approach the ruins.
- *Vim* spells could also help them.

Scene 6: The Lady Liege

Lady de Clare is the Norman lord of Caerleon. Heir to great territories in England, Ireland, and Wales, she is one of the most powerful people in Britain. Lady de Clare is widely admired for her education and political influence - she is even a close friend to King Henry! Her husband, William Marshal, is a knight errant and famous tournament winner.

Lady de Clare now holds court in the ruins of Howl Castle. This fortress was recently captured from the elf-lord Morgan Howl who ruled Caerleon for nearly a thousand years. It still shows damage from the siege.

Lady de Clare attacked Howl out of sympathy for the people of Caerleon who suffered under Howl's absurd laws. Her goals are to establish a sensible (Norman) administration and finally capture the elusive elf.

Howl's Absurd Laws

1. No sneezing on Tuesday
2. All fallen stars in Caerleon belong to Howl.

3. Thursdays are forbidden.
4. Alcohol may only be consumed between 6:00 and 6:13 PM.
5. The color blue is forbidden.
6. No eating vegetables on prime-numbered days.

If the players request her help, then Lady de Clare can offer:

- The three knights, Gwen, Eric, and Enide, as an armed escort into the ruins.
- A treasure stolen from the elf-lord Morgan Howl. The *Memento Mori* is an enchanted skull that allows one to terrify the ghosts of the dead.

In exchange, the Lady demands that the characters swear to never aid her enemy, the elf Morgan Howl, and fealty to her as liege-lord of Caerleon.

Scene 7: Exploring the Ruins

The Boundary

At the top of Caerleon hill, gray clouds swirl over the grass. A tall stone stands before you, carved with Latin text. In the distance, broken walls loom through the mist.

An enchantment has been placed on these decaying walls by a 4th century Roman magi. The god Terminus has been recruited to prevent intruders from disturbing the ghosts or monsters inside.

- Any magi can sense that there is a spell attached to crumbling walls of the fortress.
- Starting from the boundary stone inscribed with dedications to the Roman god Terminus, walking towards the walls never seems to bring characters any closer. This major spell is a combination of illusion and control, *Regio Corpus Muto Imaginem*.
- Marcus has left another sophisticated enchantment, *Intelligo Vim Regio Imaginem* which delivers an illusory message when any other spell is cast nearby. A spectral image of curly-haired man in a Roman toga appears:
 - *"I am Marcus, a scholar of Mercury and a sage magus."*
 - *"My comrade magicians, I beg you not to disturb this place. It is a place of doom. With the august legions of Rome, I have long guarded against the destruction sleeping here."*
 - *"But my watch must end. Rome's empire is in anarchy and the legions have abandoned Britannia. I cast my final spell to protect the fortress."*
 - *"Please do not wake the fiery terror in this place."*

Passing the walls leads to an open plaza. Among other ruins there is an aqueduct fountain, an imposing temple, and one steaming building.

Aqueduct

A still-functioning aqueduct carries water to a fountain at the center of the ruins. The fountain, latrines, and other facilities drain into a dismal sewer.

Sewer

This stone trench is dark and pungent. Half-flooded, it winds deeper and deeper into the hill.

While wandering through this sewer, a giant crocodile attempts to ambush the troupe.

- Have everyone roll *Finesse* - failing characters are surprised.
- The crocodile attempts to swallow characters on its second attack.

A crevice in the sewer leads into the Caves of the Britons.

Haunted Thermae

The baths fill with hot steam as the characters enter. Semi-naked male and female Roman *thermae ghosts* confront the party.

- *Who dares enter our bath!*

They are afraid of *the Italian Necromancer* (Lazzarelli) but generally eager to defend the bath house. They can summon scalding steam and are not afraid to wrestle. The ghosts are not harmed by physical attacks but could be beaten in a bout of wrestling.

- The ghosts remember that Lazerrelli, *an Italian Necromancer dressed in black silk*, entered the bath looking for a way into the caves beneath the ruins.
- Lazerrelli stole several of the ghosts from the bath and trapped them in Crematory (*ash wraiths*) The ghosts would be grateful if the characters freed their brethren.
- The ghosts are also terrified by the *Memento Mori* if the players show it.

Natural steam rises from a deep well in the center of the Thermae. This leads into the Caves of the Britons.

Temple of Jupiter

A cavernous enclosed chamber. A twenty-foot tall statue of Jupiter glares down at the room. The electric smell of ozone suffuses the room.

A pious priest of Jupiter left a spell on the statue. Any one who passes before it without praising the sky-god is smote by lightning. Characters can roll *Finesse* to dodge the strike.

Behind the statue, a staircase descends into the Crematory.

Crematory

The stair leads down into a crematory, a place for burning dead bodies. Enclosed by stone walls, large urns contain the ash remains of the dead.

Unlike other locations in this ancient ruin, it appears to have been occupied recently. Boot-prints have disturbed the dust. One of the urns has been smashed and ash used to draw arcane glyphs on the floor.

Roll to learn that the necromancer Lazzarelli left the remains of his camp inside this claustrophobic crematory. Lazzarelli cast a spell as trap for anyone following him - the funeral urns break and *ash wraiths* attack the players when they try to leave the crematory.

A heavy stone slab covers a long chimney descending into the Caves of the Britons. Steam billows out if the slab is removed.

Caves of the Britons

These natural caverns echo with dripping water and swirling steam. They can be entered from:

1. A crevice in the sewers.
2. A well of rising steam in Thermae
3. A sealed stone chimney in the Crematory.

The caverns are unlit and maze-like. Broken iron-age swords, bones, and minor treasures are scattered throughout them. Consider a *Wit* roll to avoid the troupe becoming lost.

- Lost characters must roll *Brawn* or be wounded by the suffocating steam and heat of the caves.

Painted Cave

The troupe discovers a brightly painted room. It is illuminated by a seam of supernaturally glowing quartz.

The paintings show:

- Human Britons founding Caerleon. The growing cultivation and prosperity of the land under wild Briton warriors.
- A panel of red flames engulfing the land. The towns and hill-forts are shattered and burned.
- A pointy-eared elf riding out of the River Wye. With a shining spear, he charges with the Briton warriors to battle against a monster made of fire.

- An *Esoterics* roll could identify the elf as Morgan Howl, the former ruler of Caerleon.

Chamber of the Sleepers

On low slabs lie a dozen bodies. Male and female, painted warriors sleep with spears, shields, and golden torcs.

One of these sleepers is a petty queen, Aine. She and her warriors entered an ageless slumber by drinking the same mead as Cadwalader. They swore to continue their fight with the dragon on his waking a thousand years in the future.

Cadwalader's Lair

At the bottom of the caves, the hugely corpulent dragon sleeps. Cadwalader is scarlet red and enormous. A respectable serpent, he sleeps on a glittering bed of loose treasure.

The room billows with steam and is hot as an oven. Even asleep, Cadwalader's body is scaldingly warm and causes water pooling in the chamber to boil.

Impress on players that Cadwalader is asleep and won't wake for 13 years. It might be better to prepare before attacking him.

The players can roll *Finesse* to steal some treasure. Failing disturbs Cadwalader's sleep. The dragon shifts in his sleep - causing an earthquake and advancing his awakening by one year.

Treasure Table

1. Handful of golden aurei coins, twenty in total
2. A silver mask, ornamented with topazes
3. A bronze sword. Made by dwarves, it cannot be warmed above body temperature
4. A golden torc which transforms its wearer into a lion
5. A brilliant, clear diamond