BALDUR'S GATE
CITY ENCOUNTERS



Survive the City of Blood in this supplement for your *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus* campaign

BY JUSTICE ARMAN, ANTHONY JOYCE, ANNE GREGERSEN, AND GORDON MCALPIN

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Perkins, Christopher, Will Doyle, and Steven Winter. *Tomb of Annihilation*. 2017.

Kenson, Steve, and others. *Sword Coast Adventurer's Guide*. 2015.

Mearls, Mike, and others. *Volo's Guide to Monsters*. 2016.

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About the Authors

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Introduction

I used to live in Houston. I didn't like it. In addition to the heat and humidity, the city has a host of other problems stemming from the slow growth of infrastructure in comparison to its rapidly expanding population. When I occasionally ventured into the city proper, whatever issues it faced seemed chased away by sunlight, hidden from view by faceless, towering edifices and concrete overpasses.

Once, however, my wife and I attended a country music concert downtown. (Don't judge us.) We parked a couple of blocks away from the venue to save a few bucks, given the high costs of the nearby parking lots. The streets were sunny and bright when walking into the concert, but returning to our car was a different story. Streetlamps flickered. Broken bottles and trash littered the sidewalk. Strangers called out to us from the shadows, their faces lit by the glow of cigarettes.

A tall, muscular man in tattered clothes who previously was sitting against a chain-link fence stood up after we passed. His hair was disheveled, his demeanor suspicious, and he followed close behind us. We crossed the street, and so did he. I turned around to confront him just as he lurched for my wife's purse. Suddenly, a police car rounded the corner and, when it came into view, the man abruptly changed course and darted down the street.

I still think about that interaction from time to time. What would have happened if that officer hadn't driven by? In that one brief encounter, crime was suddenly personal. The city had come to life.

Anthony Joyce, Anne Gregersen, Gordon McAlpin, and I have partnered to do just that for your *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus* campaign. We hope that these short encounters will bring some color to your sessions in the City of Blood—even if that color is red.

— Justice Arman

Overview

Baldur's Gate: City Encounters provides Dungeon Masters with forty short encounters to supplement your *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus* campaign. These brief scenarios enliven the City of Blood and distinguish it from other settlements along the Sword Coast. This supplement has the following sections:

Tension Encounters. Twenty random encounters tied to five levels of tension within Baldur's Gate. As the characters make decisions, they may shift power between the city's major factions and unlock new encounters.

Neighborhood Encounters. Twenty encounters, each tied to a neighborhood within the Upper, Lower, and Outer Cities.

Appendix A: Magic Items. Details a magic item in this supplement from *Waterdeep: Dragon Heist*. This item is reprinted in this product for your convenience.

Appendix B: Creatures and NPCs. Statistics for creatures and NPCs listed in *Volo's Guide to Monsters*.

Appendix C: Tension Meter. A handout to keep track of the current level of tension within the City of Blood.

Appendix D: Map of Baldur's Gate. A map of Baldur's Gate and its neighborhoods for use with location-based encounters.

Baldur's Gate: City Encounters requires the use of the Dungeons & Dragons fifth edition core rulebooks (*Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and *Monster Manual).* When a creature's name appears in bold type, that's a reference to its stat block in the *Monster Manual, Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus,* or *Volo's Guide to Monsters*. If the creature appears in *Volo's Guide to Monsters*, its stat block is reproduced with permission in appendix B.

Tension Encounters



Opportunity lingers in Baldur's Gate. From ancient antiquities to everyday commodities, all manner of goods flow through the titan of trade along the River Chionthar. However, where there's coin, there's crime. As characters explore the city, they may encounter corrupt officials, secret cults, and strict enforcers.

The Tension Meter

Victories are far and few between in Baldur's Gate, but the characters' actions can still have an impact on city life. Most villains aren't immortal, and the characters' actions can save lives. However, there's no eliminating power in the City of Blood; it only changes hands.

Try as they might, one small group of adventurers isn't going to fix Baldur's Gate by solving squabbles on its bloodstained streets. Each time the characters eliminate a cult leader, another lurks in a claustrophobic alley, waiting to pick up the reigns. When the city incarcerates a major criminal, the criminal's followers riot in the streets or scatter to form gangs of their own. The lawful execution of a crime syndicate leader may result in a promotion for a more violent officer within the Flaming Fist.

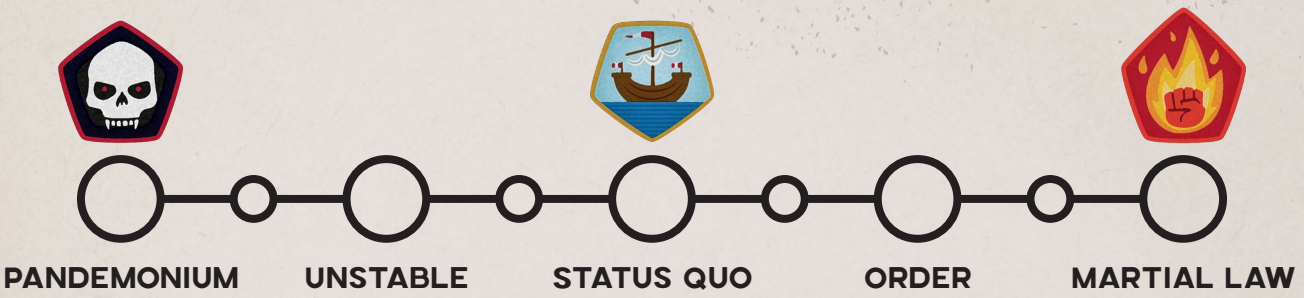
The tension meter represents the constant struggle for power in Baldur's Gate. When characters intercede in seemingly minor conflicts, they may impact the city's mood. As tides shift from one power group to another, the characters face an entirely different set of encounters within Baldur's Gate.

Five Levels of Tension

The tension meter displays the current balance of power between the city's major groups. When the characters resolve encounters in a way that favors one end of the spectrum over the other, the random encounters in the city change to match the new level of tension.

There are five levels on the tension meter: Martial Law, Order, Status Quo, Unstable, and Pandemonium.

Figure 1.1: The Tension Meter



Martial Law

When characters consistently resolve encounters in a lawful manner, they embolden the Flaming Fist to take control of Baldur's Gate. As criminals and cults slink into the shadows, the Flaming Fist subjects everyday citizens to swift and violent justice. Fists brutally enforce minor misdemeanors while corruption within the mercenary company runs rampant.

Order

If characters often side with the law, they notice conflict between the Flaming Fist and the Watch. Leaders within the Flaming Fist are determined to crack down on crime in the city, but their merciless justice is beginning to put them at odds with sincere do-gooders. Crime is present at this level, but criminals are careful to avoid attention as the mercenary company begins to take hold of the city.



Status Quo

When characters resolve encounters in such a way that neither law nor chaos prevails, Baldur's Gate remains a dangerous metropolis ripe with all manner of opportunity. Despite the presence of the Flaming Fist and the Watch, most citizens care more about coin than morality. Besides, the chances of punishment are relatively slim. Between the city's sizeable black market, rampant crime, and corruption among the patriar houses in the Upper City, there's simply too much criminal activity to punish everyone.

Unstable

The characters' actions sow discord, favoring criminals, rebels, or disgruntled, lower-class citizens. Crime is prevalent and bold, and law enforcement struggles to maintain order. Back-alley deals now take place on busy street corners, and cultists are not afraid to show their true colors to entice prospective members.

Pandemonium

Characters who consistently side with disorder witness the City of Blood earn its name. Dead Three cultists hold violent rituals in public areas. As the proletariat riots in the Upper City, the Watch barricades the cliffside villas of the wealthy elite. The Flaming Fist is stretched thin; mercenaries who refuse to sell their services to criminals are murdered in the streets.

Using the Tension Meter

To roll a random encounter, roll a d4, and consult the "Encounters by Tension Level" section that corresponds to the current level of tension on your tension meter (see appendix C for a handout of the tension meter).

By default, the first encounter in Baldur's Gate begins at the midpoint of the tension meter



at a tension level of Status Quo. However, at the DM's discretion, the characters may begin their adventure in Baldur's Gate at different tension level.

Encounter Outcomes

Depending on how the characters resolve encounters, they may tip the tension meter towards Martial Law or Pandemonium. After each encounter, the DM determines in secret whether the characters' actions were lawful, neutral, or chaotic.

At the end of the in-game day, the DM decides what impact, if any, the encounters in aggregate had on the level of tension in Baldur's Gate. They then update the tension meter if necessary as follows:

- If the characters acted lawfully, move the current level of tension one step towards Martial Law. If the current level of tension is already Martial Law, there is no change.
- If the characters acted neutrally, there is no change to the level of tension.
- If the characters acted chaotically, move the current level of tension one step towards Pandemonium. If the current level of tension is already Pandemonium, there is no change.

Example: Using the Tension Meter

The characters exit the Elfsong Tavern on their way to meet with an important NPC in the Upper City. Because the characters are covering significant ground in Baldur's Gate, the DM decides it's a great time for a random encounter.

The DM looks at the tension meter. Because the players resolved previous encounters lawfully, the current level of tension is Status Quo. Still, it's just one step from Order. The DM rolls a d4 and consults the Status Quo section of "Encounters by Tension Level."

Yet again, the characters side with the law. At the end of the in-game day, the DM progresses the tension meter towards Martial Law by one step, pushing the current level of tension from Status Quo to Order. The next time the DM decides to roll a tension encounter, they'll consult the Order section of "Encounters by Tension Level."

Tipping the Balance

As characters escalate the level of tension through their actions, new encounters are introduced to match rising threats within Baldur's Gate. In addition to the tension encounters, you can convey the dynamic nature of the city with quick descriptions or comments from NPCs. For example, in Martial Law, the Flaming Fist may hang banners bearing their insignia in front of High Hall. In Pandemonium, Reya Mantlemorn may mention to the characters that the city has finally imploded due to its own corruption.

Variant: Campaign-Based Tension

There are several instances in *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus* where it would be appropriate to record the result on the tension meter. If you'd like the events of the campaign to influence the tension within the city, follow these guidelines:

Dungeon of the Dead Three. If the characters eliminate the cultists in the Dungeon of the Dead Three, they deal a significant blow to the Cult of the Dead Three. Move the current level of tension one step towards Martial Law.

Vanthampur Villa. Attacking the Vanthampur estate creates instability in Baldur's Gate. Move the current level of tension one step towards Pandemonium.

Under the Villa. If Duke Vanthampur escapes, she orders the Flaming Fist to crack down and squash any rumors of her association with the Cult of the Dead Three, and the tension level moves one step towards Martial Law.

If Duke Vanthampur is killed or captured, no group gains power. The legitimacy of Flaming Fist is threatened, but the Cult of the Dead Three also loses a prominent member. The tension level moves one step towards Status Quo. If the current tension level is already at the midpoint of Status Quo, there is no impact on the tension meter.

Encounters By Location

For location-specific encounters within Baldur's Gate, see "Neighborhood Encounters."

Encounters by Tension Level

The following random encounters are organized by tension level. The DM may elect to trigger an encounter at any time, but a rule of thumb is when the characters move between districts or neighborhoods.

Martial Law

The following random encounters may take place when the tension level is Martial Law.

1. Disturbing the Peace

A beggar (**commoner**) hangs their head in the shadow of a grimy stoop. Wrapped in a tattered banner of Elturel, the homeless refugee shivers as they plead with a group of Flaming Fists for compassion. The two lower-ranking fists (**guards**) question the Elturelian refugee under the supervision of a gauntlet (**veteran**).

If the characters do nothing, the beggar is brutally flogged and arrested for disturbing the peace. Should they decide to intervene, the Flaming Fists feel threatened, draw their weapons, and order the characters to move along. If the characters persist, the Flaming Fists attempt to place them under arrest for obstruction of justice.



2. Grand Duke Liara Portyr

Liara Portyr recently arrived from Chult and is waving to the citizens of Baldur's Gate from a horse-drawn chariot. Reference chapter 1, "A Tale of Two Cities," in *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus* for Portyr's stat block and background information. Twenty Flaming Fists (**veterans**) form a protective perimeter around her as she stops the chariot to give a speech to a large crowd.

Portyr proclaims herself the new Grand Duke of Baldur's Gate and promises to usher in a new era that ends the corruption and decadence of the patriars and the Watch. She declares martial law in Baldur's Gate and offers a 250 gp bounty to whoever brings her the leader of the Watch and any remaining dukes other than her uncle, Duke Dillard Portyr. Liara declares the Watch and any remaining dukes fugitives of the law. Anyone found harboring these fugitives is arrested and jailed.

Bold action and attempting to undermine the status quo of Baldur's Gate does not happen without making enemies. Characters who succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check or characters with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 14 or higher notice a colorful parrot. It squawks in the air before landing on a rooftop next to a hooded **assassin** aiming a light crossbow at Portyr. If the characters spot the assassin, they have a few moments to act before the assassin attacks Portyr. The DM determines the assassin's employer and why they want Portyr dead.

3. License and Registration

A dwarvish sellsword (**gladiator**) is in a heated argument with a group of three Flaming Fists (**guards**) and their captain (**veteran**). The captain looks to be losing her patience with the dwarf, as his arguments grow louder and louder with every passing moment. The dwarf is looking for work in Baldur's Gate and flaunts his weapons and fighting ability for all to see, drawing the Flaming Fist's attention. Hearing of this, the Flaming Fists approached the sellsword and demanded he either hand over his weapons or be escorted from the city as his behavior promotes violence.

If the characters intervene, the Flaming Fists see them as allies of the sellsword. If the characters visibly carry weapons, the captain



instructs them to hand them over or be escorted out beyond the city walls.

If the characters ignore the argument between the dwarf and the Flaming Fists, the sellsword eventually becomes aggravated and attacks the captain using his fists. The Flaming Fists immediately move in to incapacitate the dwarf and escort him to the nearest prison for confinement.

4. Rat on the Rat

The characters spot 2d4 **wererats** in rat-humanoid hybrid form running toward them, pursued by an equal number of Flaming Fist mercenaries (**veterans**). As the wererats reach the characters, all but one polymorph into giant rats, abandoning their tattered clothes in the process. The other wererat polymorphs into a human named Suttar and hides behind the largest character.

If the characters allow Suttar to hide among them, the soldiers and other wererats continue the chase. Suttar attempts to pickpocket one of the characters before slipping away. The character notices Suttar pickpocketing them if they have a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 14 or higher.

If the characters attempt to help the other wererats, Suttar runs in the opposite direction.

If the characters turn Suttar in, the soldiers attack him immediately with lethal force, and the other wererats transform back into their hybrid forms to defend their friend. If either the Fists or the characters search Suttar's body, they retrieve a bauble, lifted from a patriar up the street, worth 25 sp. The other wererats are penniless.

Order

The following random encounters may take place when the tension level is Order.

1. Commanding Officer

A patriar house noble (**cult fanatic**) is under arrest for associating with the Cult of the Dead Three. The Flaming Fist received a tip from a suspicious neighbor and decided to bypass the Watch and raid the noble's villa. A servant's body lays crooked in the street, their blood flowing between the cobblestone into a nearby sewer drain.

A captain in the Baldur's Gate Watch (**knight**) argues with a Flaming Fist manip (**veteran**) over jurisdiction. Since the noble resides in the Upper City, the captain claims they must be tried before the Parliament of Peers in High Hall and therefore fall under the Watch's responsibility. The manip argues that the Parliament of Peers answers to the Council of Four, who have ordered the Flaming Fist to crack down on such corruption. Four **guards**, one from the Watch and three fists, nervously watch as their superiors abandon civil discourse.

A character can make a DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) check to discern that the Watch captain feels threatened, while a successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that the manip is slowly reaching for his weapon. If the characters don't do something to diffuse the situation, a blood bath is imminent.

2. Nine-Fingers Keene's Final Offer

The Guild fears the growing power of the Flaming Fist. Eager to maintain its system of illicit activities, the Guild is stepping up operations to sway the local population against the brutal tactics of the Flaming Fist.

Nine-Fingers Keene (see "Baldur's City Gazetteer" in *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus* for stat block), leader of the Guild, delivers a coded letter to the characters via a small child courier. The child tells the characters the message is coded to avoid unwanted readers from discovering the true message of the letter. The child holds out their hand and asks for a tip before giving the characters the secret code needed to read the message. If the characters refuse to tip the child, the child runs away without giving the secret code. Without the secret code, characters who succeed on a DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check are able to decrypt the message and read the letter normally. The letter invites the characters to meet Nine-Fingers Keene at a location of the DMs choosing to discuss a "valuable" opportunity.

If the characters meet with Keene, she offers them 200 gp each to plant false evidence in the home of a Flaming Fist officer that ties them to the Cult of the Dead Three. After the characters plant this evidence, they must file a false report with the Watch regarding the occult activity of the officer. Keene hopes the Watch arrests the Flaming Fist officer, pitting these two groups against each other. The DM determines the officer and the location of their home.

Characters that refuse to meet with Keene or reject her offer have little children approach them in the streets. These children throw dead rats at the characters and scream, "Rats, rats, you're all gonna be dead sewer rats!" If the characters fail to reconsider Keene's offer within 48 hours, she sends an **assassin** to kill them in their sleep. She wants to send a message that even during this period of law and order, the Guild is still in charge.

3. Impersonating an Officer

Three Flaming Fists (**thugs** with AC 16) rush down the street, walking out of formation and continuously looking over their shoulders. Succeeding on a DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) check tells a character that the Fists look nervous, that their armor doesn't fit their bodies, and that the maces they carry are far more rugged than what a Fist's usual weapons would be.

The three Fists are, in actuality, three thieves who were cornered by members of the guard for stealing. Defending themselves, they managed to knock out the attacking guards, leaving them unconscious. Panicked and sure they would get caught if seen leaving the alley bruised and battered, the thieves stripped down the guards and disguised themselves in the guards' armor.

If confronted in any way, the thieves panic and attack the characters. As they do so, they make a forced and loud statement that the characters are obstructing the hand of the law and must be punished. The thugs want to escape the area and attempt to run if the battle turns against them or any real Fists show up.

4. The Baldur's Gate Welcoming Committee

A Gateguide (**commoner**) leads three **acolytes** from Chondath into what looks like an ordinary bed and breakfast. A character with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 12 or higher notices that the guide lets the acolytes in, then glances suspiciously behind him before shutting the door.

If the characters don't notice this or intervene, they soon hear sounds of a struggle as the acolytes are robbed by the Gateguide and three **thugs** inside the building.

If the characters intervene, three Flaming Fists (**veterans**) arrive on the scene after the battle ends (sooner, if the characters are in grave danger). Roll on the Flaming Fist Reactions table to determine their reaction (see the "Baldur's Gate Gazetteer" in *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus*).



Status Quo

The following random encounters may take place when the tension level is Status Quo.

1. Assassin for Hire

A lawful evil tabaxi **assassin** named Song offers her services to the characters from the comfort of a dark alley. Song's fur is light grey with spots, like that of a snow leopard.

Work has been slow for Song lately, so the tabaxi is running a one-time-only discount. She offers to assassinate a target of the characters' choosing within Baldur's Gate. The price equals 50 gp × the CR of the target (minimum of 50 gp). If the target is a noble or government official, the price is double. Song takes half the payment upfront, half upon the job's completion.

The DM decides whether or not Song is successful. If captured, Song doesn't reveal who hired her. The assassination of a prominent NPC, such as Duke Vanthampur, could drastically alter the events of the campaign. If the characters stiff or otherwise attempt to trick the tabaxi, she secretly makes them her next targets. Song gets her name from the tune she whistles just before she strikes.

2. A Mother's Vengeance

A Flaming Fist manip (**veteran**) uses the pommel of his sword to beat Randal Evenwood, a handsome young Elturelian refugee (lawful good human **commoner**) as four fists (**guards**) arrest his two five-year-old twin daughters, Kerri and Merri Evenwood (chaotic good human **commoners**). The Evenwoods are a family of refugees from Elturel.

The fists scowl at anyone trying to interfere with "official Flaming Fist business" and draw their weapons if threatened. The Flaming Fists release the Evenwoods if a character succeeds on a DC 16 Charisma (Persuasion) check. Characters that offer the manip a bribe of 25 gp make the check with advantage.

Regardless of whether the characters confront the Flaming Fists, Shandria Evenwood (chaotic good human **archer**), a highly trained Elturgard sharpshooter with long fiery red hair, attacks the Flaming Fists with her longbow from afar. Shandria is out for blood after watching the Flaming Fist beat her husband Randal and detain her two daughters Kerri and Merri. Shandria uses her longbow to her advantage and fights from afar. If reduced to 10 hit points or fewer, Shandria retreats and swears to take vengeance on the Flaming Fist for their brutality.

3. Stampede of Cattle

The sound of hard steps hitting stone rumble down the street, catching the attention of people nearby. The origin of the sound itself is hard to place, bouncing between the buildings and occasionally fades as if it is moving further away. A character who succeeds on a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check discerns faint yelling and mooing sounds accompanying the general clamor.

After 1 minute passes, the noise grows significantly louder as a herd of seven **cows** swoops around the corner and stampedes down the street in a wild panic. The cattle were being transported to a market in the Outer City by a young human girl who lost control of the animals spooked by a pair of yelling guards. A character standing in the street must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or be pushed to the side by the advancing bovine, taking 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage as they are slammed into the wall or ground. The herd runs ahead, a young girl rushing after them and yelling words of warning to the people ahead of her.

A character can stop the cows by stepping in front of the herd and succeeding on a DC 14 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check or Charisma (Intimidation) check. On a failed check, the character gets run down by the herd and takes 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage.

4. By Invitation Only

Nysene Eomane (lawful evil human patriar **noble**) and two **guards** traveling from Cliffside Cemetery are attacked by three mercenaries (**veterans**) in the service of Straightstick, an ambitious Guild kingpin from the Outer City.

Straightstick seeks revenge after falling for Nysene's favorite trap: inviting would-be social climbers to one of her parties and keeping them there until after the city gates close. Because of her, Straightstick spent an evening in a Citadel cell and was made a laughingstock (see the "Baldur's Gate Gazetteer" in *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus* for more on Straightstick and Nysene Eomane, respectively).

If the characters protect Nysene from the mercenaries, she invites them to one of her parties as a "reward," hoping to trap them in the same scheme.

Unstable

The following random encounters may take place when the tension level is Unstable.

1. Myrkulyte's Musings

A **priest** of Myrkul holds an impromptu sermon in front of a public fountain. The Myrkulyte preaches about the inevitability of death, especially in these uncertain times. They invite others, including the characters, to rebuke their god, for death is the only certainty in life. Eight **commoners** listen to the priest, while other pedestrians pay no attention.

The sermon ends after five minutes, at which point the priest sets a smoking skull on the fountain whose water begins to run black. The priest then challenges the commoners to convert. Roll a d8 to determine the number of commoners who step into the fountain, emerging as unarmored **cultists** with an AC of 11. The priest gives each new cultist a twisted black scimitar as an initiation gift. Any remaining commoners disperse at the priest's call for conversion.

The characters can stop the sermon with a successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion or Performance) check to reason with the audience or enter a theological debate. Alternatively, they can attempt to coerce the priest to end their sermon prematurely with a DC 16 Charisma (Intimidation) check. On a failure, the priest ad-libs, attempting to embarrass the character for their rude interruption. If the characters persist, the priest calls for retaliation, turning the sermon into a riot.

2. Hearts and Minds

Cultists of the Dead Three seize on the instability in Baldur's Gate and move to grab power from the Watch and Flaming Fist.

A group of cultists (reference the "More Dead Three Encounters" sidebar in chapter 1 of *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus* and select a level-appropriate squad to represent this group) leads three Watch **guards** and two Flaming Fists (**veterans**) through the streets. The members of the Watch and Flaming Fist each have 1 hit point remaining and are restrained by hempen rope.

The cultists shout out to the citizens of Baldur's Gate that the Watch and Flaming Fist failed to keep the city safe, and the Dead Three guarantee the safety of citizens willing to pledge their lives to the cult. The cultists fight to the death if attacked; however, they flee the premises if the citizens of Baldur's Gate turn against them.

The citizens of Baldur's Gate turn against the Dead Three if a character wins a contested Charisma (Persuasion) check against the lead cultist (the leader is determined by the DM's choice of cultist squad present). If a character fails this check, the citizens swear fealty to the Dead Three and turn against the characters. Additionally, the cultists and 1d6 Baldur's Gate citizens (**commoners**) attack the characters in an attempt to capture them. If captured, the cultists take the characters to a secret hideout determined by the DM.

3. Rebels and Rocks

Three children wearing dirty clothing stand on the roof of a nearby building. Each of them has a handful of rocks, which they pelt at the people passing beneath. They exclusively target people wearing fine clothes or armor, and they hoot triumphantly if their rocks strike a target.



If a character is struck by one of the rocks, they take 1 bludgeoning damage.

If someone acknowledges the children in any way, either to ask what they are doing or to tell them to stop, the children yell back insulting remarks. They yell that the Guild rules this city now, and everyone wearing fancy gear best behave or get a proper pelting with something nastier than rocks. The children are urchins working for the Guild as pickpockets and are using the current lack of military power in the city to have some fun.

If a character attempts to get to the roof or some Flaming Fists show up in the area, the children flee across the rooftops until out of sight.

4. Hostile Takeover

Four **guards** escort Tendai and Khennen Shore (chaotic good human **commoners**) to their Distant Shores warehouse in the Steeps (see "Upper City" in the "Baldur's Gate Gazetteer" in *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus*).

Just as the characters pass the Shores, 2d4 cutthroats (**spies**) accost the Shores and their guards. Half of the cutthroats wield their crossbows from nearby alleys, and the other half dash in with shortswords drawn. The cutthroats only wish to frighten the Shores by killing their guards and injuring them. All attacks against the Shores are non-lethal. Once the cutthroats achieve these two goals, they disengage and retreat in separate directions.



If captured, none of the cutthroats reveal information about their employer.

The Shores request that the characters escort them to their warehouse. Roll once on the Lower City Random Encounters table in the "Baldur's Gate Gazetteer" in *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus* to determine what they encounter en route. Safely at the warehouse, the Shores offer the characters up to 5 gp apiece in gourmet dried meats. These can be sold or consumed as ten days of rations.

Pandemonium

The following random encounters may take place when the tension level is Pandemonium.

1. Rabid Ritual

The Cult of the Dead Three has strung up a Flaming Fist manip for a sacrificial ritual. The grievously wounded manip (a **veteran** with 15 hit points remaining) dangles 10 feet above the ground over a large, bronze ritual bowl.

The rope wrapped around the manip's wrists runs through the mouth of a protruding roof gargoyle and into the hands of a muscular worshipper of Bhaal (**berserker**). Two chanting **cult fanatics** of Bane and Myrkul see to it that the ritual continues uninterrupted.

As blood trickles from the dying Flaming Fist manip into the bowl below, it begins to coagulate and take shape. At initiative count 10 each round, the manip loses 5 hit points to blood loss. If the manip dies, a **shadow demon** forms from the blood and begins to wreak havoc.

Characters can stop the ritual by defeating the cultists, saving the Flaming Fist manip, or by dumping the blood from the bowl. If the characters cut the rope, the manip takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage and falls into the bowl. The rope has 11 AC and 5 hit points. Ranged attacks against the rope are made with disadvantage. Tipping the bowl requires a successful DC 18 Strength (Athletics) check.

2. If you Can't Beat Them, Join Them

The characters spot a Cult of the Dead Three recruitment booth. Three cultists of the Dead Three operate the booth in an attempt to gain new followers. The cultists are the playful Melanie (lawful evil human **fist of Bane**), the silent Lecroix (chaotic evil human **night blade**),

and the ignoramus Ya-dez (chaotic evil human **necromite of Myrkul**). They hand out small painted symbols of Bane, Bhaal, and Myrkul to tempt citizens to the booth to discuss worship of the Dead Three.

If the characters approach, the cultists offer them a painted symbol of their choice and ask them if they would like to join the Cult of the Dead Three. If the characters say yes, the cultists sign them up into the cult, provide them with cultist's garb, and direct them to the cult headquarters (determined by the DM). If the characters decline, the cultists hiss and boo at the characters, then they ask for their painted symbols back.

DMs can use this encounter to run an evil campaign version of *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus*. Now that the Dead Three control Baldur's Gate, they do not want it to end up in Avernus.

3. Bloody Warning

Two **thugs** from the Guild are in the process of wrapping a corpse in a tattered cloak. A character easily recognizes it as a cloak of the Flaming Fists as their symbol is embroidered in the center of the fabric. As the thugs work, another approaches holding a battered guard's helmet. The helmet, the thug's hands, and the mace at her side are coated in dried blood. She places the helmet on the corpse's head before propping it up so the dead man sits mostly upright against the wall. A wooden board with the words "The Guild knows best" written on it is placed in the corpse's lap.

The corpse is an unfortunate beggar who caught the ire of the thugs, and they killed him for it. The cloak and helmet come from a recent conflict the Guild had with the Fists a few streets over.

If the characters remain in the area, the Guild members notice and tell them to leave. If they choose to stay or provoke the thugs by asking questions, the thugs advance on the characters with the intent to scare them off, eventually attacking if the characters refuse to leave.

4. Stuck in the Middle with You

The characters stumble into all-out, three-way battle between three Flaming Fists (**veterans**), 1d6 neighborhood crew members (**bandits**), and 1d6 Guild operatives (**thugs**). The characters can try to save 2d4 civilians (**commoners**) or pick a side in the battle.

The fight started between the Guild and the crew, with the Fist arriving shortly thereafter to break it up. Crew members do not attack civilians or the characters unless they join the battle on an opposing side, but the Guild and Fist are less discriminating in their targets. When all of the combatants from one of the three groups are defeated, the other two groups call off the fight.





Neighborhood Encounters

The encounters that follow develop story hooks found within the "Baldur's Gate Gazetteer" of *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus*. Use these encounters when your group visits one of the neighborhoods numbered on the *Baldur's Gate: City Encounters* map (see appendix D) or while travelling through the corresponding neighborhood.

Upper City

The Upper City is home to the politically powerful patriar families and guarded by the Watch. The wealthy patriars of Baldur's Gate do all they can to keep out those they deem less desirable.

1. Citadel Streets

High Constable and Master of Walls Osmurl Havanack (lawful neutral shield dwarf **veteran**) stands behind a long table outside a stone edifice. The purse master (lawful neutral halfling **commoner**) oversees the disbursement of wages to a line of ten **guards** in the Watch. The purse master checks each guard's papers, then pays them 50 gp.

A character can attempt to disguise themself as a member of the watch to collect wages, though they must succeed on a DC 18 Charisma (Deception) check to fool the purse master and High Constable Havanack.

A pair of guards in line begin to ridicule one of their comrades, Zethra Brayton, for suggesting that one of the patriars may be up to something nefarious. The hecklers blame Zethra's suspicions on the fact that she lives in the Lower City, unlike most of the Watch.

Characters can intercede in the conflict by taking a side or attempting to deescalate the situation. If nothing is done, Zethra turns in her badge and quits when she reaches the table, at which point High Constable Havanack offers one of the characters her wages in exchange for filling her former position.

2. Manorborn—Bormal House

Four **guards** in the Watch patrolling the Manorborn neighborhood laugh about recent murders in Shantytown, a neighborhood in the

Outer City. On a successful DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check, the guards share news of the recent murders with the characters. The guards claim that a murderer is killing commoners in the Outer City.

Recently, a few commoners banded together to stop this murderer by setting up an ambush in the Outer City. Witnesses claim a heavy fog billowed around the commoners as they waited to catch the killer. When the fog cleared, there was nothing left except the decapitated bodies of the commoners. A cloaked pale figure fled the scene towards the Upper City. The Watch guards believe this is all a ruse by local gangs or cultists to scare commoners, nothing more.

The killer is Gormund Bormul (chaotic evil **wraith**), brought back from the dead by a cursed relic left in the Bormul House by a distant uncle. Sixty-five years ago, thieves stabbed Gormund in an alleyway as he left the Oasis Theater in Little Calimshan. As Gormund lay dying, commoners laughed at him as he bled to death. Gormund swore vengeance on the residents of the Outer City with his dying breath, and now he is back to make good on this promise!

Each night, Gormund leaves the crypt beneath the Bormul House wearing a tattered Bormul patriar's cloak to murder commoners in the Outer City. He returns to the crypt once he finishes killing his victims.

3. Temples—High Hall

The High Hall houses a majority of the city's governmental bureaucracy, including its notoriously corrupt court system. In the streets outside of the High Hall, characters notice Brendal Faulks (neutral good human **priest**), a devout follower of Gond, tripping over a rock. When Brendal trips, characters with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 12 or higher notice he drops a drawing of a phoenix, a torch, and a set of keys. The keys unlock a small cellar underneath a courtroom in the High Hall. Brendal picks up the items before he continues to the High Hall.

Brendal is tired of corruption in the Baldur's Gate court system that allows patriars to bribe judges and escape justice while the commoners suffer incarceration at an alarming rate. His righteous outrage led him to steal four kegs of *smokepowder* (see appendix A) from Felogyr's Fireworks in the Lower City. He secretly placed the *smokepowder* kegs in the small cellar beneath the High Hall courtroom and plans to ignite them while the court is in session (determined by the DM). Brendal believes this act will spark revolution against the corrupt government of Baldur's Gate.

If the characters confront Brendal, he is in a hurry. A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals Brendal's unusual and nervous behavior. If he believes the characters are sympathetic to his cause, he cautions them to stay away from the High Hall. If the characters discover his plot and try to stop him, Brendal flees to ignite the *smokepowder* kegs in the cellar beneath the High Hall courtroom, even at his own peril.

4. The Wide

Jedren Hiller, the Bailiff of the Wide (lawful evil human **bandit captain**), is waving a club at Sebra Mildred (neutral human **commoner**), an elderly tarot card reader. Sebra has not had any customers recently and is unable to pay Jedren 50 gp for her normal stall.



If the characters approach, Sebra begs them for assistance. Jedren tells the characters Sebra is nothing but an old hag who sells silly tricks to naive customers.

Jedren leaves Sebra alone if the characters succeed on a DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion) check and promise to pay him 50 gp within three days. On a failure, he laughs at them and asks them to leave before he calls the guards on them. If the characters try to intimidate Jedren and succeed on a DC 16 Charisma (Intimidation) check, he flees the scene and returns with 2d4 **guards** from the Watch in 2d4 minutes. On a failure, he spits at them for their insolence.

Sebra offers the characters a fortune-telling session if they pay her debt of 50 gp. She reads her tarot cards as if she had cast the *divination* spell. Acting as the servant for some otherworldly power, she answers a single question concerning a specific goal, event, or activity that occurs within the next 7 days. When she speaks her truthful omen, her eyes turn white and her voice becomes disembodied. After she does this once, she cannot do so again for 1d12 days.

Lower City

Trade, crime, and opportunity define the Lower City. Everyone is looking to get ahead in the City of Blood.

5. Bloomridge

A wooden delivery wagon rolls through the slanted streets of Bloomridge, carrying with it the scent of blood from fresh-chopped meat. A sign on the side of the wagon reads "Hamhock's Slaughterhouse" above a caricature of a sad pig. A human **cultist**, disguised in a bloodstained Hamhock's delivery uniform, drives the wagon. With a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check, a character notices the delivery man nervously checking over his shoulder when walking away from the wagon, as if he's hiding something.

If the characters decide to follow the wagon, they witness the driver make routine stops, delivering meat to businesses throughout the neighborhood. However, as it rounds the street just north of the Smiling Boar, the cultist throws a hidden switch underneath the driver's seat, dumping a body from a hidden chamber beneath the deep red wood of the wagon's undercarriage. The body rolls down the sloped street and into an alleyway behind the Smiling Boar. The corpse of the victim has curved slices along the wrists and a heart-piercing wound—the "Sickle Man's" calling card.

The chamber or its hidden switch can be discovered with a successful DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check to search the wagon. If confronted, the cultist feigns innocence and attempts to flee via his wagon. If captured, the cultist reveals he's not the only Sickle Man, mentioning, "Bhaal always collects what is owed to him." Characters can follow the lead to the Hamhock's Slaughterhouse in the Outer City, though the Flaming Fist is uninterested in pursuing any criminals outside the city walls.

6. Brampton

To those living in Brampton, meat isn't always an option when looking for food. If you do find meat, you're better off not knowing where it came from. And in no place is this more evident than Madame Masel's Bakery.

Though the tagline under her shop reads "Fresh Meat Pies!" the true descriptor of her bakery is "The Worst Pies in Baldur's Gate," as stated by anyone who has had the displeasure of visiting the establishment. In Brampton, a young human boy (**commoner**) hands out crudely made flyers for Madame Masel's



Bakery. The flyer offers a meat pie for a single copper piece.

If a character goes to Madame Masel's Bakery and buys a meat pie to eat, their mouth fills with grainy, soggy dough as the undercooked pie crumbles in their mouth. It is lumpy and tasteless, but it doesn't hold a candle to the meat inside. It is lean and stringy, with black and grayish clumps in places. When chewed, it crunches as pieces of small bones grind against the character's teeth. Madame Masel (neutral halfling **commoner**) is exceedingly polite, but utterly unaware of the abhorrent quality of her pies.

Any character who eats one of Madame Masel's pies must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, after one hour passes the character feels queasy before violently retching.

7. Eastway

A small safehouse serves as a place of rest for the city's urchins. Though clean, it is weathered and broken in many places. This safehouse offers a place of rest to impoverished orphans, and is owned and managed by Rannoi (neutral good half-elf **acolyte**), known as Lucky Rannoi by the youngsters who stay in the safehouse because of her previous position as an acolyte of Tymora. Rannoi offers a place to sleep, warm food, and even healing should it be needed.

From the street, one could mistake the safehouse for an inn or tavern with children playing outside its entrance. Should a character approach the house to investigate it further, a young child looks up at them and advises them against going inside. According to stories shared among the children, the safehouse is only safe for kids. For adults, it is the One-Way Inn, because if they go inside, they don't come back out. At least that's what the children say.

The safehouse is built on top of the Baldur's Gate sewer system, making it an ideal gateway for those with less than noble intent when they wish to traverse the city. To finance the maintenance and expenses of the safehouse, Rannoi is working with the Guild to allow them access to the underground sewer systems, either as a means of traversing the city or disposing of problematic blabbermouths.

A character inquiring with Rannoi about the One-Way Inn's nickname can attempt a DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion) check. On a success, she divulges the details of her arrangement with the Guild. For 1 gp, the characters can access the sewer system under the safehouse to travel to another district in Baldur's Gate without encountering resistance along the way. Every time they use the sewer system, there is a cumulative 25 percent chance the Guild hears of their movements in the sewers and confronts them; they don't want strangers using their hidden pathways beneath the city.

8. Heapside

Ettvard Needle (chaotic good human **commoner**), runs the *Baldur's Mouth,* the city's primary source for local news and gossip. From his small converted warehouse in Heapside, he and his team of freelance journalists report on news from across the city.

When the characters visit Heapside, they run into a flustered Needle, hurriedly walking toward Little Calimshan to meet with Rilsa Rael, its Guild kingpin. A rival kingpin operating in the neighborhood, Ileanna Kiirnodel (neutral evil moon elf **spy**), has taken offense to a recent story implicating her in the disappearance of Paellas Liadon (**commoner**), an up-and-coming actor from the Oasis Theater company. She ran the original reporter out of town and set her gang on Needle's distributors



across the city—strangely, not killing them, but stealing or destroying hundreds of copies of the paper for the last several editions. This is beginning to take a toll on Needle's bottom line.

Needle recognizes the characters to be adventurers and offers to hire them to perform two tasks: first, protect his distributors from ongoing attacks from Kiirnodel's henchmen and, second, if they are able, investigate Liadon's disappearance.

Attacks on Needle's distributors may replace any random encounter rolls in any neighborhoods outside of the Upper City with the following encounter: 1d4 **bandits** and one **thug** attack one distributor (**commoner**). Kiirnodel's gang does not kill the distributors but fights with lethal force against the characters if they intervene.

Investigating Liadon's disappearance reveals that Liadon is not dead, as the *Mouth* had insinuated, but living with Kiirnodel, happy and isolated from the outside world because he had been the target of attacks by Kiirnodel's rivals. If the characters can prove this to Needle, he begrudgingly issues a retraction in his next edition, satisfying Kiirnodel for the time being.

Once the characters earn Needle's trust, he can point the characters toward any other adventure hook the DM wishes, including any of the other encounters in this supplement. In exchange for any interesting news, Needle can provide the characters with modest compensation for information about nearly any notable citizen, crew, or group in Baldur's Gate (up to 25 sp apiece).

9. Seatower

A dirty human woman wearing tattered clothing bumps into the characters near the Seatower. The woman is the current leader of the Guild, **Nine-Fingers Keene** (see the "Baldur's Gate Gazetteer" in *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus*) in disguise. Keene apologizes and continues on her way if the characters are not affiliated with the Guild, or if they have not shown criminal tendencies. Otherwise, she reveals herself to the characters and pulls them into a nearby alleyway to speak in private.

Keene has acquired several Flaming Fist uniforms and is devising a plan to infiltrate the Seatower of Balduran and conduct a heist of the Flaming Fist's treasury. A recently incarcerated Guild member overheard Jailer Albrecht Little (lawful neutral human **gladiator**) discussing the Fist's treasury beneath the Officers' Tower with Jailer Cogrus Stonehammer (lawful neutral shield dwarf **knight**). Jailer Little claimed the treasury is overflowing after a shipment from Chult filled the Fist's coffers.

The Guild starts a riot in the streets to draw out the Flaming Fist garrison, allowing Keene and the characters to sneak in with their Flaming Fist uniforms. Once inside, Keene will accompany the characters on one of the most daring heists in Baldur's Gate history!

10. The Steeps

A human lantern bearer shouts headlines from the most recent *Baldur's Mouth* broadsheet in the eerie green fog. A character can purchase a broadsheet for 1 sp. Here are a few juicy headlines the lantern bearer may be advertising:



- "Elturel has fallen! Three eye-witness accounts that will leave you in tears."
- "Manorborn patriar walks free! Who does the Watch truly serve?"
- "Sickle Man strikes again! Thirteen bodies and zero arrests."
- "Five facts about Grand Duke Ulder Ravengard you didn't know. Number four will shock you!"
- "Occult activity rampant in Brampton. Flaming Fist ignores Lower City's cries for help."

A character who buys and reads a *Baldur's Mouth* broadsheet has advantage on Intelligence (History) checks to recall knowledge about recent events in Baldur's Gate over the next ten days.

If the characters act rude towards, steal from, or otherwise mistreat the lantern bearer, Ettvard Needle sends a reporter to dig up dirt on the characters. If the characters have participated in any unsavory events or are united by a dark secret, it is published in a future broadsheet (dark secrets are found in the "Baldur's Gate: Gazetter" in *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus*).

Headlines by Tension Level

If you're using the tension meter rules included in this supplement, consider making up your own headlines to match the current level of tension within Baldur's Gate.

Outer City

Left to its fate, the Outer City struggles to survive among competing kingpins, the Elturelian refugee crisis, and unchecked occult activity carried out by the Cult of the Dead Three.

11. Blackgate

Blackgate's Guild and its fiercely independent shield dwarf community are often at odds with each other. The characters witness Helja Fireforge (neutral good dwarf **veteran**) forcibly ejecting three **thugs** from her smithy into the crowded, muddy street.

The characters can attempt to defuse the situation with a successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation) check or choose a side in the fight. A fight attracts the attention of nearby members of the Metalworkers' Guild (1d4 **commoners** and one **veteran**).

Siding with Fireforge and the Metalworkers' Guild members earns the characters a 10 percent discount on weapons at Fireforge's shop (see chapter 5, "Equipment," in the *Player's Handbook* for a list of weapons). Guild eyes and ears are everywhere in the Outer City. Helping Fireforge sets the characters against the local Guild Kingpin, Jossel Brode (neutral evil human **bandit captain**), whether or not any of the thugs survive.

Siding with the Guild ingratiates the characters to Brode but earns the ire of the shield dwarf community in Blackgate, which blacklists them from all of its shops.

12. Little Calimshan

A ten-year-old Calishite child (**commoner**) approaches the characters and offers them a white flower. If the characters take the flower, the child informs them that the kingpin of Little Calimshan requests an audience with them in the Garden of Whispers.





Rilsa Rael (see the "Baldur's Gate Gazetteer" in *Baldur's Gate: Descent into Avernus*), waits for the characters in the Garden of Whispers. If the characters do not go to the Garden of Whispers to meet with Rael, she sends another child with a white flower every 8 hours for 48 hours. If the characters still do not come, she sends a child to the characters bearing a black flower. Once the characters receive a black flower, Rael bans them from entering Little Calimshan.

Upon meeting with the characters, Rael requests their assistance with securing herself as the true leader of Little Calimshan. She explains that Little Calimshan and the Outer City need protection since Baldur's Gate fails to care for the residents of the Outer City. She hopes that the Guild can provide basic protection for the vulnerable Outer City residents, but to do so she must defeat the Calishite gang called the Right Pashas. The Right Pashas hate outsiders and see Rael as an outsider since she is only half-Calishite. If the characters join Rael and her cause, she leads them at night to confront the Right Pashas. Aseir Basha (neutral human **bandit captain**) leads the Right Pashas. Basha and 1d8 + 2 **bandits** operate out of the Lamp of Learning in Little Calimshan. If the Right Pashas are defeated, Rael takes over Little Calimshan.

13. Norchapel

A savory aroma emanates from the stout stall of a blue-skinned tiefling street vendor (**commoner**) named Kilil. While foraging for aromatic garnishes on Duskhawk Hill, Kilil discovered cache of large eggs inside a short, rocky tunnel. While supplies last, the tiefling vendor is selling "Duskhawk Delight" for 5 sp.

The scent of the eggs isn't just attracting hungry customers. As Kilil advertises his new dish to the characters, a furious female **ankheg** bursts from the ground in search of her eggs. While hiding in his stall, the frightened vendor reveals where he obtained his secret ingredient.

Characters can attempt to calm the monstrosity or draw it away from Norchapel by using the remaining eggs as leverage. Calming the irate ankheg requires a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check. A character in possession of one of the eggs has advantage on this check.

If the characters kill the ankheg, Kilil offers them a free meal. Kilil also offers to connect them with an exotic leatherworker in Little Calimshan who can fashion a suit of plate mail or a shield from the dead ankheg.

14. Rivington

If the characters have not yet run the "Stonyeyes" encounter, they witness three Rivington Rats (**bandits**) wheeling two dead horses on a cart into a warehouse. A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals the

horses succumbed to sewer plague. Two other Rats (**bandits**) are carting off a wheelbarrow of butchered meat for sale.

If the characters have run the "Stonyeyes" encounter, they recognize two of the Rats from outside Oomas Stables carting off butchered meat.

In either case, the characters can discern that this meat is unfit for consumption by anyone or any animal with either a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) or a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check.

Although most notorious for their smuggling activities, the Rivington Rats have recently taken to selling what they call "Baldur's Gate beef," a meat that, in addition to actual, stolen beef from area ranchers, also includes diseased horse meat, rat or giant rat meat, and even humanoid flesh—"retired" Rivington Rats and others who discovered this scheme or their other criminal activities.

The characters can put an end to this disgusting operation by dispatching 2d4 **bandits**, two **thugs**, and one **bandit captain** in the warehouse. A local crew may be enlisted to help—for a fee. If the characters search the building, they find a modest amount of treasure (70 gp plus seven 50 gp gems) and a list of the Rats' customers—restaurants, inns, and other shops across the Outer City, plus a handful of businesses in the Lower and Upper Cities.

If confronted, some of these business owners are unaware of the truth, while others are intentionally cutting costs without concern for their customers' safety.

15. Sow's Foot

In Sow's Foot, one can find all manner of exotic people and pastimes. This includes travelers from Chult, bringing with them a game largely unknown on the Sword Coast called Compy Racing. It uses small reptilian creatures called compsognathuses (use the **lizard** stat block but with a 40-foot movement speed), or compys for short. The owner of the compys is a Chultan named Basternius (chaotic good human male **commoner**) who cares deeply for his compys. He has ten in total and never lets more than five race at once.

The racing track is made up of crates and barrels set up to form a round, 50-foot track which the compys must run four times. A character may participate by placing a bet on one of the racing compys by paying the buy-in. The minimum buy-in is 5 sp, but a character can bet up to 5 gp. If the compy the character bet on comes in first place, the character wins twice the amount of money they put down for the buy-in. If the compy comes in second, they win back their buy-in. If it comes in third, they win back half their buy-in.

The winner is determined by rolling 4d10 for each of the running compys. Whichever rolls the highest comes in first place. If some of the compys roll the same number, they are neck and neck for the finish line. Roll an additional d10 as a tie-breaker.

16. Stonyeyes

The ban on horses and other animals within city limits supports hundreds of businesses, big and small, that stable and care for the animals while their owners are in town. Competition is fierce, and some struggling businesses cut corners or resort to "alternative" income streams to make a profit. The owner of Oomas Stables, Alathair Oomas (neutral male human **commoner**), has hit hard times recently due to an outbreak of disease. To offset his losses from compensating dead animals' owners and damage to his reputation, he sells the diseased meat to the Rivington Rats (see the "Rivington" encounter).

If the characters have not yet run the Rivington encounter, they witness three Rivington Rats (**bandits**) arguing with Alathair over payment for two dead horses, already loaded onto their cart. A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Medicine) check reveals the horses succumbed to sewer plague and are unfit for consumption by any creature. The Rats stop arguing with Alathair if the characters confront them; carting off the horses is the Rats' priority.

The characters can persuade Oomas to stop selling to the Rats with a successful DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation) check. Oomas blames the outbreak of disease on run-off from the neighboring (and far more successful) Garynmor Stables' menagerie of exotic creatures. The creatures' waste is tainting the groundwater, and its owner, Ubis Garynmor (chaotic good male human **commoner**), refuses to accept responsibility, instead blaming Oomas's stable conditions.



The characters can meet with Garynmor at his stables and change his mind with a successful DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion) check, but any attempts to intimidate him are met with indignation; four **guards** appear to escort the characters off the property. If convinced, Garymor promises to dispose of the beasts' waste properly in the future and fairly compensate Oomas for the damages.

17. Tumbledown

The area around Cliffside Cemetery is under regular threat from the undead, and the crew known as the Gravemakers keeps its citizens safe. Even new recruits are treated like heroes by all of Tumbledown's residents.

As the characters walk its foggy streets, a group of undead emerges and attacks them and any **commoners** in the immediate area. The undead consists of two **wights** if encountered at night or 2d6 **zombies** if encountered during the day.

If the characters are in serious danger, members of the Gravemakers crew (two **knights** and one **priest**) led by Leone Wen (lawful good female human **knight**) dash in to join the fray and attract the brunt of the attacks from the undead. Otherwise, the Gravemakers show up once the battle is over and are impressed by the characters' skill.

If the characters search the bodies, they find a tarnished silver bracelet worth 5 gp and an elaborate bone key on one of the undead. Otherwise, one of the Gravemakers discovers the key. Wen immediately recognizes the key and makes no effort to hide her interest. She invites the characters to join them at their headquarters in Szarr Mansion for ale, healing (if necessary), and a brief recruitment pitch.

At the mansion, they discover several **ghosts** of the Szarr family co-existing among the Gravemakers crew. Most are harmless and even friendly toward the Gravemakers and their allies and provide information about the residents or contents of the Cemetery and Szarr Mansion in exchange for favors. Some of the spirits are hostile, scowling at the interlopers to their family home and occasionally knocking over furniture, but they only attack in self-defense.

If the players found the key, Wen will try to barter for it, offering up to 10 gp in trade. If pressed, she reveals that the key opens a crypt in the depths of Cliffside Cemetery and offers to split the contents. The crypt contains 2d6 gems each worth 10 gp. Wen is disappointed that a magic item rumored to have been in the crypt is not inside.

The characters are unable to find the crypt without the help of the Gravemakers or one of the Szarrs. Still, if the DM allows them to locate it, and the characters keep its contents for themselves, they are declared persona non grata throughout the neighborhood.

18. Twin Songs

A group of blue-robed **commoners** stand outside the gate of the Church of Last Hope, where Alanis Adcyne (neutral good elf **priest** of Chauntea) testifies to the spiritual connection all living beings have with nature. Behind Alanis are several rows of loosely-potted plants and flowers. Today, visitors to the Church of Last Hope are gardening.

Alanis studies the characters for a moment, smiles, and invites them to grab the plant with which they most identify. DMs are encouraged to ask the players what type of plant their

character would look for—a sunflower, cactus, or perhaps a young rose bush. Once they have selected their plant, Alanis leads the characters to a small garden within the walls of the Church of Last Hope, where Mother Aramina (lawful good female human **priest**) administers spades to her visitors.

If a character decides to plant their selection in the Church of Last Hope's garden, they are overcome with warmth. A character can reject these feelings if they so choose, but those who accept gain the benefits of the *sanctuary* spell until the start of their next long rest (the spell can still end as normal).

19. Whitkeep

Sitting on a stoop outside of a two-story building is Vinkel Shortstring (chaotic good halfling **bard**), with a dour expression on his face and a viol laying at his feet. If approached, or if a character gets too close, he breaks down into tears. He cries that his muse has abandoned him and that his creativity has died with her departure. He cannot sing, play, or recite his poetry without thinking of her and her extraordinary beauty.

If the characters ask him about what happened to his muse, Vinkel starts a dramatic monologue describing his longing for Evatina, who recently rejected his advances. As a result, Vinkel is much too distraught to perform his beautiful songs and poems.

As Vinkel continues on and on with this recount of his lost love, the window shudders from the second story of the house opens up, revealing an angry-looking female halfling holding a bucket. She yells down, "Vinkel, you stubborn, rat-faced creep. I told you to leave me alone!" before dumping the water in the bucket down to splash over Vinkel's head.

The female halfling is Evatina (chaotic good **bard**), and she is a singer. She and Vinkel performed a duet together, after which Vinkel became infatuated with her. Mistaking her disinterest as playing coy, Vinkel has been pursuing her romantically for days, attempting to serenade her every evening with his music, and Evatina has had enough of it.



20. Wyrm's Crossing

When walking across Wyrm's Crossing, a character with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 13 or higher hears the sound of chopping from beneath the bridge. Investigating the noise reveals a brutish-looking human male taking a blunt ax to a support beam of one of the houses built on the side of the bank.

The man's name is Avil Sarn (neutral evil human **thug**), and he was once a tavernkeeper in Wyrm's Crossing. Avil has a gambling problem and decided to bet the ownership of his tavern, The Gilded Herring, in a game of cards. He lost and transferred ownership of his tavern to a female halfling named Neera Fendrea.

Neera (lawful neutral halfling **commoner**) lives in the house Avil is currently vandalizing, though she isn't home at the moment. Avil plans to whittle down the support beams enough that the house remains standing but grows weak at the foundation. If all goes according to plan, when Neera comes home, the house collapses as she moves about her home.

Appendix A: Magic Items

Smokepowder

Wondrous item, uncommon

Smokepowder is a magical explosive chiefly used to propel a bullet out of the barrel of a firearm. It is stored in airtight wooden kegs or tiny, waterproof leather packets. A packet contains enough *smokepowder* for five shots, and a keg holds enough *smokepowder* for five hundred shots.

If *smokepowder* is set on fire, dropped, or otherwise handled roughly, it explodes and deals fire damage to each creature or object within 20 feet of it: 1d6 for a packet, 9d6 for a keg. A successful DC 12 Dexterity saving throw halves the damage.

Casting *dispel magic* on smokepowder renders it permanently inert.

Appendix B: Creatures and NPCs

Archer

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 16 (studded leather)
Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills Acrobatics +6, Perception +5
Senses passive Perception 15
Languages any one language (usually Common)
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Archer's Eye (3/Day). As a bonus action, the archer can add 1d10 to its next attack or damage roll with a longbow or shortbow.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The archer makes two attacks with its longbow.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

Cow

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 10
Hit Points 15 (2d10 + 4)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	2 (–4)	10 (+0)	4 (–3)

Senses passive Perception 10
Languages —
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

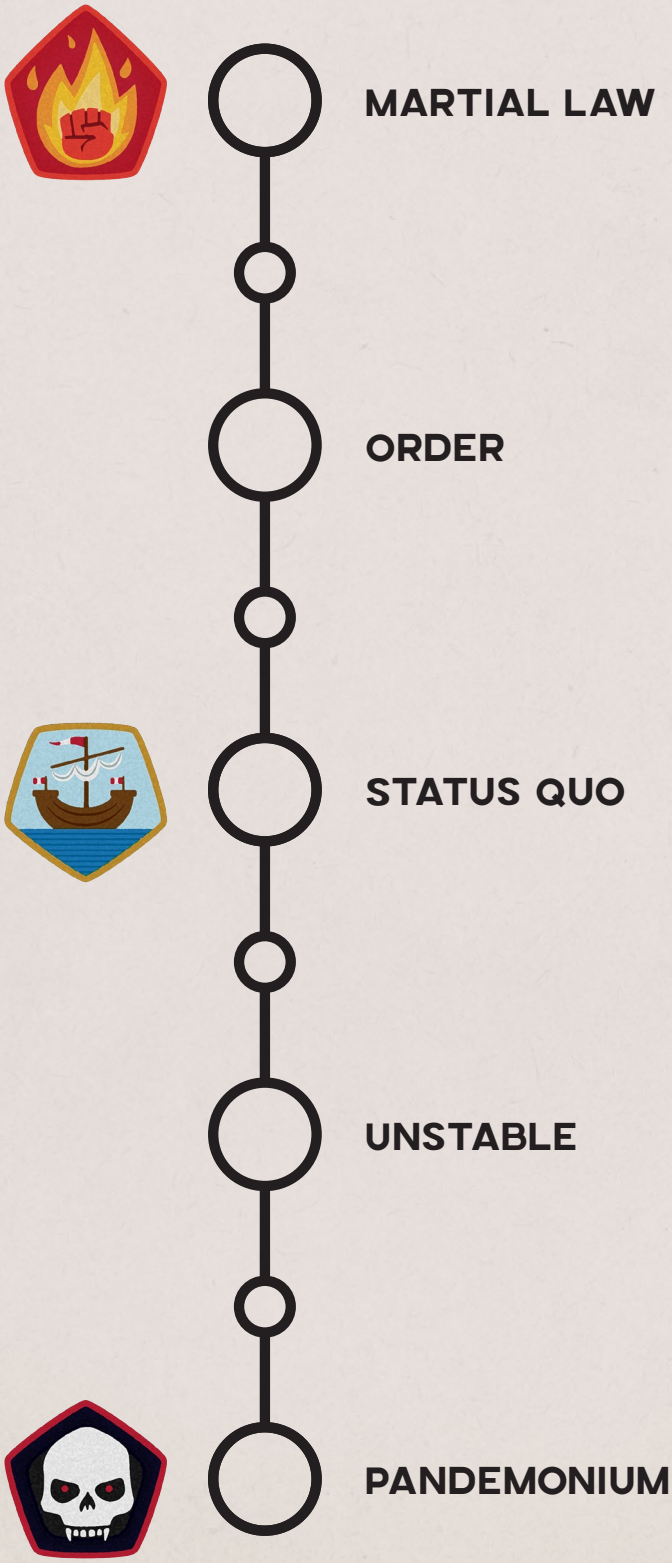
Charge. If the cow moves at least 20 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a gore attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) piercing damage.

ACTIONS

Gore. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Appendix C: Tension Meter

You can use this meter to track the current level of tension in Baldur's Gate at your table.



Appendix D: Map of Baldur's Gate



Key to Baldur's Gate Neighborhoods

The Upper City

1. Citadel Streets
2. Manorborn
3. Temples
4. The Wide

The Lower City

5. Bloomridge
6. Brampton
7. Eastway
8. Heapside
9. Seatower
10. The Steeps

The Outer City

11. Blackgate
12. Little Calimshan
13. Norchapel
14. Rivington
15. Sow's Foot
16. Stonyeyes
17. Tumbledown
18. Twin Songs
19. Whitkeep
20. Wyrm's Crossing