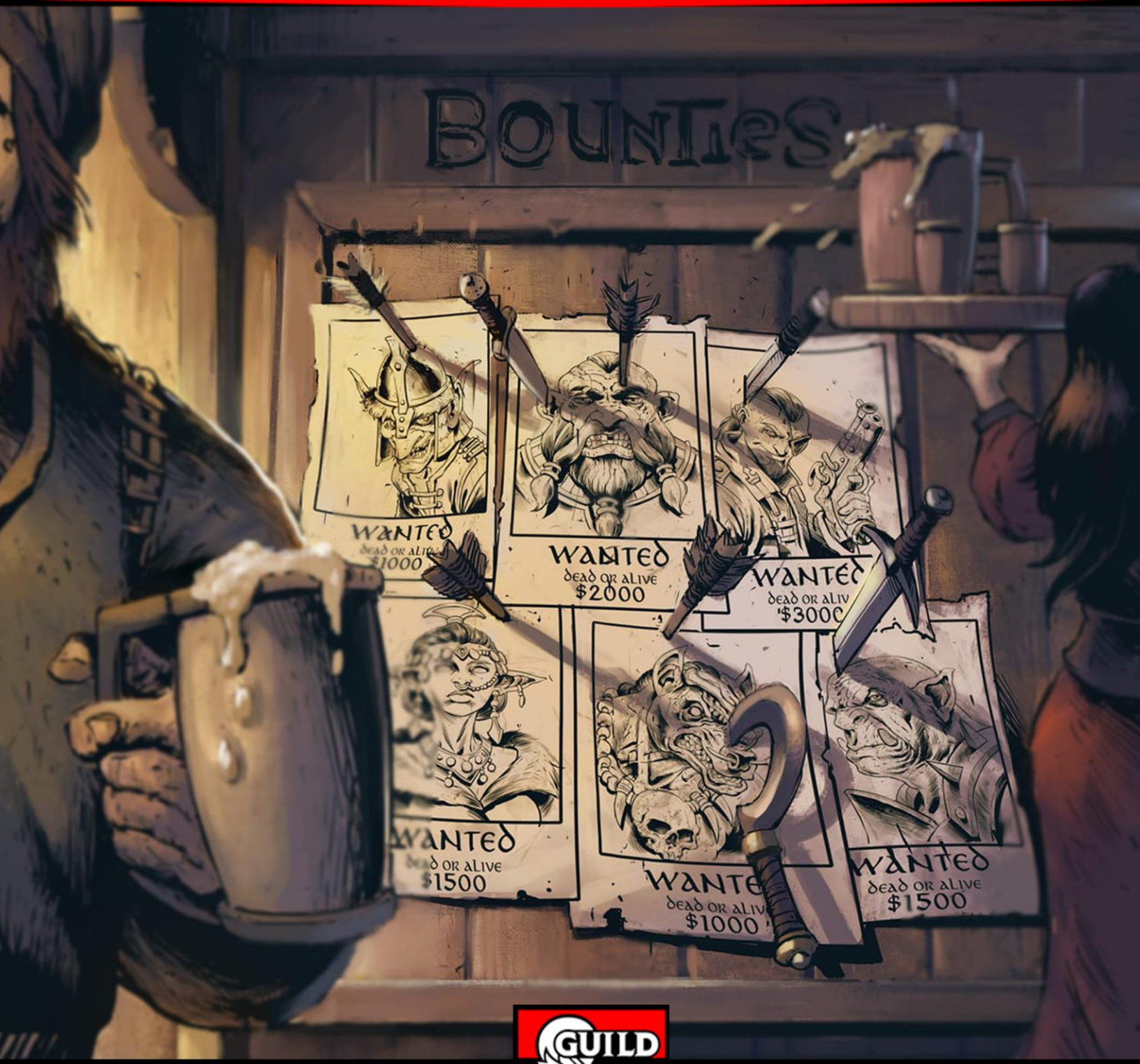
Savage Encounters

Villains & Lairs



GUILD

Expand your game with this collection of villainous NPCs, lairs, and magic items for the world's greatest roleplaying game

Villains & Lairs

a Savage Encounters supplement

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Expanded Edition

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+ = new NPC from the expansion

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About this Supplement

While working on the other Savage Encounters supplements, I saw several inspiring stock art images, but nothing that would fit the context of those books. So, I commissioned art for those supplements. For this project, I scoured the Dungeon Masters Guild and DriveThruRPG for some of the most inspiring images (inspiring to me). I then sent requests to writers to create a backstory, motives, flaws, and how the NPC could be used by a Dungeon Master.

This supplement includes 46 NPCs of various Challenge Ratings. Eleven of these NPCs include lairs, some described more than others, but each with a map and information about the lair. These could easily be used as a one-shot adventure or a quick side-quest. These villains could also be used as inspiration for a bigger piece of your ongoing campaign.

I asked Luiz Prado to create the cover. Luiz has created some fantastic art for me in the past and I wanted to give him a bigger project this time. The *Wanted Posters* on the cover are described in the Bounties section of this supplement. Six quick and easy villains that you can introduce as side-quests with the opportunity for reward.

Jean Headley, Brent Sweany, and Alex Clippinger helped me edit this project. We didn't change a lot of the text. We wanted you to get a taste of the writer's style. Hopefully, you'll find a few writers you like and pick up some of their individual content.

We hope that you enjoy this product. It has been fun being the coordinator and working with these fellow writers. They've come up with some great villainous NPCs!

Now – go play D&D!

\- *Jeff C. Stevens*

The Art

With the exception of Fur'gudlu, Sybil, and Zekkaris, all of the images in this supplement come from stock art purchased from the DMs Guild or from DriveThrueRPG. Each artist is credited in each of the villains in which their work appears.

- Fur'gudlu is a commissioned piece by ***Grace Rathbun - All rights reserved.***
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The Maps

With the exception of the maps by Dyson Logos, who has a map pack that includes over 100 maps available on DriveThruRPG which are available for use in your commercial products, many of the maps come from cartographers who I follow on Twitter. Please give them a follow!

Dyson Logos - @DysonLogos
Elven Tower - @ElvenTower
Empire Role Playing - @EmpireRPG
Remley Farr - @RemleyFarr
Jeff C. Stevens - @jcorvinstevens
Rich Robinson - @RichRollsDice
Mobral Rox - @mobralrox

Editing & Layout

As much as my team and I would like to think we have found all the typos, misprints, and layout issues, we know we haven't. This is a large supplement and there are bound to be issues – it just happens. I apologize in advance.

If you happen to notice any outrageous issues, feel free to email me at jcorvinstevens@gmail.com with your suggestions and comments. You can even message me on Twitter (@jcorvinstevens).

Using this Supplement

Text in text boxes denotes a new item or magic item that you may wish to add to your game.

Stat blocks for some of the creatures in this supplement can be found in the ***5th Edition Monster Manual, Volo's Guide to Monsters, or Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes***

Official Wizards of the Coast books referenced:

MM = *5th edition Monster Manual*
PHB = *5th edition Player's Handbook*
DMG = *5th edition Dungeon Master's Guide*
VGtM = *Volo's Guide to Monsters*
MToF = *Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes*

Unless otherwise noted, assume all NPCs have the stats of a **commoner (MM, p 345)**.

Adjusting the Villains

Although a stat block for most of the villains is included, you may wish to adjust them to make them fit in your own campaign. You could accomplish this by increasing the Hit Points of the villain, giving it extra armor or magical armor, or by adding feats or special traits. The later can be found in Chapter 9: Dungeon Master's Workshop of the *Dungeons Master's Guide* (page 280).

Adjusting the Lairs

Feel free to add to the lairs, too. You can make them more difficult by increasing the DC of traps and checks, adding more creatures, or by changing the listed creatures to a different threat altogether.

Bounties

This section provides you with a list of known villains with bounties on their heads. Players may learn of the bounty while in a tavern, while incarcerated, or however you'd like. I like the idea of them meeting one of these 'wanted' individuals first; perhaps in a tavern brawl, along the street, glimpsing them from afar, or even hiring one as a sellsword for an upcoming encounter. Later they learn there is a reward.

I've written a little backstory for each of the 'wanted' individuals. Feel free to use that story, adding on as you wish, or starting over completely.



Grug'not Gibbernose

Goblin – wanted for mistreating Farmer Nekzal's dairy cattle. He's been seen stealing milk and has run off with two calves.

Grug'not plagues the area by sneaking onto farmland, milking or stealing cows, chickens and their eggs, running off with sheep or goats, and even infiltrating a farmhouse or two. The latter he seems to do only during the coldest months; it appears he'd rather not milk a cow in the cold! His antics, although not vicious, nevertheless cause economic grief to many local farming families. For this reason, many of the families collected funds to put towards Grug'not's bounty.

Many believe Grug'not has a hideout built in a swamp, while others think he's created a small lair in the foothills, perhaps in a cave.



Grug'not Gibbernose

Small humanoid (goblin), neutral evil

Armor Class 16 (leather armor, shield)
Hit Points 16 (3d8 + 3)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	7 (-1)	8 (-1)

Skills Animal Handing +4, Perception **+4,** Stealth +6, Survival +4
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9
Languages Common, Goblin
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Keen Hearing and Sight. Grug'not has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or sight.

Nimble Escape. Grug'not can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of his turns.

Actions

Multiattack. Grug'not makes two melee attacks.

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Hand Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Bild 'Bone Fist' Windergard

Dwarf – wanted for killing two innocent bystanders while in the midst of a tavern brawl.

Bild loves mead nearly as much as he loves fighting. Bild's typical weapons are his hands and head; he's a highly-skilled pugilist who often leaves his opponents either seriously injured or dead. Many have found the drunken dwarf to be a nuisance during their time in a tavern; asking Bild to mind his manners often leads to a bout of fisticuffs. Stories tell of Bild taking on five men at once and leaving the brawl with only his beard mussed.

If encountered in a tavern Bild is often inebriated, which means he is very vocal, firing off insults and trying to drum up a fight. Bild continues his mockery as he fights.



Bild 'Bone Fist' Windergard

Dwarf, chaotic neutral
Armor Class 14
Hit Points 68 (11d8 + 11)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+5)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	9 (-1)	14 (+2)	9 (-1)

Skills Acrobatics +3, Athletics +6
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Common, Dwarf
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Unarmored Defense

Fast Fists. (twice/short rest). Immediately after Bild takes the Attack action on his turn, he can make two unarmed strikes as a bonus action.

Second Wind. (once/short rest). On Bild's turn, he may use a bonus action to regain 1d10 + 11 hit points.

Actions

Multiattack. Bild makes three unarmed strike attacks.

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, Bild 'Bone Fist' can choose one of the following additional effects:

- The target must succeed on a **DC 12 Constitution** saving throw or be knocked prone.
- The target must succeed on a **DC 12 Constitution** saving throw or be stunned until the end of Bild's next turn.
- The target must succeed on a **DC 12 Wisdom** saving throw or be frightened of Bild until the end of Bild's next turn.

Jarvis Sa'ville

Human – wanted for robbing taverns and stealing alchemical reagents.

Jarvis is a charismatic swashbuckler who travels from port to port, earning money as security on merchant ships. He may have a bad reputation in the city, but ship captains and their crew regard Jarvis as an excellent resource. He's quite handy with his black powder pistol, which he 'acquired' from a gnome tinker. No one knows what happened to the gnome, or where Jarvis gets his seemingly endless supply of ammunition.



Jarvis Sa'Ville

Human, chaotic good

Armor Class 17 (leather armor)
Hit Points 75 (12d8 + 12)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	17 (+3)

Skills Acrobatics +8, Athletics +5, Persuasion +7
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages Common
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Lightfooted. Jarvis can take the Dash or Disengage action as a bonus action on each of his turns.

Marksman. Attacking from long range doesn't impose disadvantage on Jarvis's pistol attack, and his pistol attack ignores half cover and three-quarters cover.

Suave Defense. Jarvis's AC includes his Charisma modifier.

Actions

Multiattack. Jarvis makes three attacks: one with his pistol and two with his rapier.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4+4) piercing damage.

Pistol (Loading). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 30/90 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10+4) piercing damage, *Ammunition*: 20 bullets. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be knocked prone.

Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8+4) piercing damage.

Reactions

Parry. Jarvis adds 2 to his AC against one melee attack that would hit him. To do so, Jarvis must see the attacker and be wielding a weapon.

Tanna Eyre

Elf – wanted for providing dark magic services to criminal groups.

Tanna, outcast by society at a very young age, took to the swamp. Tanna is often hired by low-level bands of thieves or bandits, selling her services based on the level of spellcasting she is expected to perform. An amount of 200gp, paid in advance, is enough to secure Tanna for 24 hours of cantrip and 1st-level spellcasting. A sum of 600gp, also paid in advance, secures Tanna for 24 hours of cantrip through 3rd-level spellcasting. Each spell she casts above the agreed-upon level costs additional gold equal to 100 X the spell's level. This amount may be paid in advance, but there have been many occasions when a group of bandits who contracted Tanna to work for them pleaded with the wizard to cast higher-level spells when things have gone bad.

In this case, she does as she wishes. If she sees her actions might make a difference, she casts the spell, and collects that payment immediately after the battle. If she believes her actions won't make a difference, she simply casts *dimension door*, leaving the group to fail on their own.



Tanna Eyre

Medium humanoid (elf), neutral evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 40 (9d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Savings Throws Int +6, Wis +4
Skills Arcana +6, History +6, Survival +4
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages Common, Infernal, Goblin, Abyssal
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Spellcasting. Tanna is a 9th-level spell caster. Her spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). Tanna has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *acid splash, mage hand, poison spray, prestidigitation*
1st level (4 slots): *mage armor, magic missile, thunderwave*
2nd level (3 slots): *cloud of daggers, Melf's acid arrow, web*
3rd level (3 slots): *fireball, counterspell*
4th level (3 slots): *dimension door, fire shield*
5th level (2 slots): *cloudkill, conjure elemental*

Actions

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Jekam

Gnoll mercenary – wanted for killing at least three innocents while he raided caravans along the road.

Jekam is a gnoll who sells his sword for any cause. His greed for gold only nearly rivals his love of mead. It's rumored that Jekam spends time at a ramshackle tavern located outside city limits.

Jekam spends much of his gold paying for his own protection. He has many eyes and ears in the city and along the roadways; anyone looking for Jekam had better be careful. Mentioning his name to the wrong person could make him go into hiding, or it could put a target on someone's back.



Jekam

Medium humanoid, chaotic evil
Armor Class 15 (chain shirt)
Hit Points 49 (9d8 + 9)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)

Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Common. Gnoll
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Rampage. When Jekam reduces a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on his turn, he can take a bonus action to move up to half his speed to make a bite attack.

Savage Swings. Once per turn, Jekam deals an extra die of damage when he hits with a greatsword attack.

Actions

Multiattack. Jekam makes two attacks with his two-handed sword

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage,

Reactions

Parry. Jekam adds 2 to his AC against one melee attack that would hit him. To do so, Jekam must see the attacker and be wielding a weapon.

Grutt Hangtooth

Orc mercenary – the last member and leader of the 'Hangtooth' gang. Grutt is the son of Grag Hangtooth, who is already in custody. The fear is that Grutt will soon start a new gang and attempt to free his father and other gang members, who are currently in custody.



Grutt Hangtooth

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (chain mail, shield)
Hit Points 60 (8d8 + 24)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Wis +3
Skills Insight +3, Intimidation +4, Perception +3
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Common, Orc
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Always Ready. Grutt has a +5 bonus to initiative rolls.

Brute. A melee weapon deals one extra die of its damage when Grutt hits with it (included in the attack).

Actions

Multiattack. Grutt makes two attacks with his longsword.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) slashing damage, or 13 (2d10 + 3) slashing when used with two hands.

Shield Bash. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it must succeed on a **DC14 Strength** saving throw or be knocked prone.

Agrod the Mountain Slayer

By Tony Petrecca
Artist: Claudio Casini

Agrod is a powerful orc warlord, active explorer, and a proud father. He can be found throughout the Realms leading an orc warband or hunting with his sons.

Background

Born into the Thousand Fists tribe of the Nether Mountains, Agrod was a curious explorer by nature, and it was a nature that would serve him well. His wanderings led him to discover the cavern tomb of a long-lost orc warlord. Defeating the carrion crawlers who'd taken up residence within, he emerged with a mighty, ancient greataxe, and his rise to prominence began.

Soon thereafter, a warband of orcs from the Ripped Gut tribe assaulted the Thousand Fists. Demonstrating immense ferocity, Agrod charged the hoard, and to the amazement of his tribesmen, he felled thirty invaders in what seemed a single blow. Agrod's legend amongst his tribe exploded, and he was dubbed The Mountain Slayer.

For a time Agrod settled in to a role as a chieftan of the Fists while siring three sons, but his wanderlust was too great to sit still. He gathered his three sons and a score of powerful and loyal warriors and set out, determined to explore the world and its fortunes. Dubbing themselves the The Slayer's Fist, the band wanders to this day, taking their plunder where they find it.

Current Motives

Agrod roams the Realms with The Slayer's Fist, seeking glory and plunder. While not above raiding small settlements, they are not a large warband and are well aware of their limits. As



such, they avoid confrontations that might draw the full military might of local authorities.

Given Agrod's prior success looting a long-lost tomb, The Fist often seek out abandoned caverns, tombs, and dungeons in search of wealth and wonderous items.

Long Term Motives

Agrod's long term desires mirror his current motives. He seeks continued glory and plunder for his sons and The Fists. The thought of some comfortable retirement is antithetical to his being, thus Agrod will prowl the land for as long as Gruumsh wills it.

Flaws

Agrod enjoys hunting, plundering, and tomb raiding with his sons. They often wander away from The Slayer's Fist to hunt or explore on their own. When they are separated from the warband

the four are far more vulnerable.

The Slayer's Fist

Agrod's warband consists of 20 cunning and powerful **Orc Slayers** (See below), an **Eye of Gruumsh** (MM, p 247) and Agrod's three **Orog** sons, Darmog, Krellor and Gorsht.

The Fists travel light, keeping with them only what they can carry in their own packs. Preferring to travel at night, they shelter where they can during the day – abandoned caves, ruins, farmsteads they've plundered – whatever might be available. When a comfortable location has been found they might linger for a few weeks, but eventually their mutual wanderlust motivates further exploration.

Hordebreaker

Weapon (greataxe), legendary (requires attunement by a half-orc or orc)

Discovered in a long-lost orc warlord's tomb beneath the Nether Mountains, this mighty, grizzled greataxe bears an ancient orcish sigil declaring it Hordebreaker.

While attuned to Hordebreaker you cannot be frightened.

You gain a +3 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. It has the thrown property with a normal range of 20 feet and a long range of 60 feet. When you hit with a ranged attack using this weapon, it deals an extra 1d12 damage. Immediately after the attack, the weapon flies back to your hand.

Once per day, while wielding Hordebreaker, you can use an action to make a ranged attack, targeting every creature of your choosing within 60 feet of you. When using this feature the weapon's normal range extends to 60 feet, and you do not have disadvantage on the attacks if an enemy is within 5 feet. Immediately after the attack, the weapon flies back to your hand.

Agrod the Mountain Slayer

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor Class 18 (*Natural Armor and Bracers of Defense*)
Hit Points 119 (14d8 + 56)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Str +8, Con +7, Dex +5
Skills Intimidation +5, Perception +4, Survival +4
Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing and slashing damage.
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Common, Draconic, Giant, Undercommon
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, Agrod can move up to his speed toward a hostile creature that he can see.

Gruumsh's Fury. Agrod deals an extra 4 (1d8) damage when he hits with a weapon attack (included in the attacks.)

Primal Might. Agrod has resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage.

Reckless. At the start of his turn, Agrod can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls during that turn, but attack rolls against him have advantage until the start of his next turn.

Actions

Multiattack. Agrod makes two attacks with his great axe.

Greataxe (Hordebreaker). *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (1d12+8 plus 1d8) slashing damage or 25 (2d12+8 plus 1d8) when thrown.

Battle Cry (1/day). Each creature of Agrod's choice that is within 30 feet of him, can hear him, and not already affected by Battle Cry gain advantage on attack rolls until the start of Agrod's next turn. Agrod can then make one attack as a bonus action.

Possessions and Magic Items: Agrod wears a *belt of hill giant strength* adorned with the skulls of several of his victims*, bracers of defense,* and carries his greateaxe.

Orc Slayer

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (chain mail armor)
Hit Points 30 (4d8 + 12)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Intimidation +2
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Common, Orc
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Aggressive. As a bonus action, the orc can move up to its speed toward a hostile creature that it can see.

Reckless. At the start of its turn, the orc can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

Actions

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12+3) slashing damage.

Javelin. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

Alyndra Valcyne of the Innocent Smile

By Drew Derby
Art: Eric Lofgren

An energetic and bright-eyed young elven woman who is seldom seen twice in one place. Alyndra has been spotted engaging in merriment in local taverns and as a smiling companion accompanying many groups of adventurers. With encouraging words and saccharine smiles, she promises her would-be companions grand adventures that lead to vast riches and unlimited power.

After days and sometimes months of travel, she becomes the heart of every party she is a part of. Finally, she leads her companions on their final adventure: into a dark cavern where slavers wait to overpower them. These broken souls are then shipped across the great waters to other lands and sold. Alyndra is given her cut before returning to the vast kingdom with a smile on her lips and a spring in her step, seeking again to deceive another group of hopeful adventurers with a lust for riches and power.



Background

Alyndra Valcyne started life as a commoner born in a small village. Her father and mother were simple folk, wood elves that had settled into a quiet life amongst humans. They were common merchants of modest means, content in only transporting goods from the farm to market and back again. In her youth, her parents unexpectedly fell ill to a disease that took them after a week of suffering. Fearing a plague in his province, the local lord ordered the remaining Valcyne family put to the sword and Alyndra's home burned to eliminate any traces of the disease. Taking pity on the girl, the local tavernkeep hid her from the Lord's men and claimed her as his own blood. And so Alyndra spent her youth as a barmaid, keeping her elven ears hidden from sight.

One morning, a small group of handsome young men came into the tavern. The men wore the finest leathers and silks. They spun lofty tales of their travels that captivated Alyndra's heart. This was her chance to leave the simple life behind. Intrigued by her innocent wonder and youthful beauty, the men quickly accepted her pleas to join them. The next day, she was on the trail with them, riding the only thing she had left, the spry young horse her parents had left her.

Before long, she began to miss the little town she had left behind. At night, her thoughts were on the kind old tavernkeep that had saved her life. By day, she forgets the kindly innkeeper, and revels only in the absolute adoration of the adventuring men. As time went on, she could feel

their care grow. They hunted for her each day and brought her wild flowers to put in her hair. She felt like she was a princess, and these dashing young men were her shining knights.

After three weeks of travel, the group stopped at a dark cavern. They told her to stay outside, but it was dark, and she was afraid to be alone at night in a strange land. After much debate, they let her come into the cave. That was where the slavers descended upon her.

Alyndra was sent to sea immediately. The slaver's ship was captained by Nolan Clarke. He was a handsome man and a devious man.any years of success in his business had given him a love for the finer things life had to offer. Her elven features and fierce defiance against her captors intrigued him and before long she found herself free of chains and comfortable in the captain's cabin. She was given luxury the likes of which she'd never dreamed. They dined on artisanal breads, cheeses, and exotic meats, and drank sweet foreign wines. Deep into the night, he would play her songs on his sand lute, a beautiful instrument that played melodies completely foreign to her ear. They played strange games of chance together, and sometimes, he would even let her win. The first time she beat him he gave her a peculiar item that she keeps nearby at all times to remind her of him, an **Ever-Spinning Coin.**

Perhaps out of love for her, or perhaps because he saw potential profit, Captain Clarke decided to free Alyndra, but only on the condition that she join his operation. He felt that if she could win his heart, then she could surely win over the hearts and minds of naive adventurers.

Over the course of their voyage east, Nolan and his crew taught her their ways. She learned to fight, she learned to lie, and most of all, she learned a love of coin. When they divided the riches from the sale of their first batch of slaves, she held the platinum tightly in her hand for a week. She no longer thought of her home at night. At next landfall, she went ashore under Nolan's watchful eye, and sought their next mark.

Current Motives

Alyndra Valcyne can be encountered almost anywhere there's adventure nearby. She travels the hills and countryside alone in hopes of encountering adventurers. She yearns for the riches that follow a good capture. When she meets new friends and traveling companions, it has been said that her constant smile can warm any heart--though she alone knows the real source of her joy.

If the party comes across Alyndra while she is already traveling with a group, she will go out of her way to seem warm hearted and kind. This is just another way she gains the trust of her perspective captives.

Alyndra can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **Shortcuts -** As someone with the burden of endless travels, Alyndra knows many side roads and shortcuts. She will offer information that will halve your parties travel time for the next week.

- **Bartering -** Alyndra has an abundance of basic adventuring gear and will offer it to travelers at 50% its value. She will also buy magic items at their base value.

- **As a Villain -** If your party finds Alyndra Valcyne on the road or in a tavern without a party she will always engage in conversation. Promising the party riches beyond their wildest dreams.

- If the group decides to join her, the party will travel for 1d8 days. At the beginning of each day she will make a Deception check to maintain her lie.

- At the end of the journey, the party is lead into a cave where they are ambushed by slave traders.

LONG TERM GOALS

Alyndra Valcyne wants to be reunited with Captain Nolan Clarke. Her infatuation with him borders on an unhealthy obsession. This is her burden. She works to please him day after day and night after night. She was caught in a never-ending loop of desperate conversations with strangers. Many nights were spent traveling with peculiar people as she corralled them back to the dark cave to be sold as slaves and line the pockets of Captain Nolan Clarke with coin.

Ever-Spinning Coin

Wonderous Item, rare

A golden coin of unknown origin. One side has a spiraling serpent and the other has an intricate etching of a man with three eyes. If spun on a semi-flat surface (ex. table, rock, palm of hand), the coin continues to spin until picked up.

A creature in possession of this coin while it spins has advantage on deception checks.

Alyndra Valcyne

Medium humanoid (elf), Chaotic neutral

Armor Class 18 (leather armor & shield)
Hit Points 66 (12d8 + 12)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	20 (+5)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)

Skills Acrobatics +9, Athletics +5, Deception +6, Persuasion +6
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Common, Elvish
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Lightfooted. Alyndra can take the Dash or Disengage action as a bonus action on each of her turns.

Actions

Multiattack. Alymdra makes three attacks: one with her dagger and two with her rapier.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack*: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d4 + 5) piercing damage.

Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack*: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit: 9* (1d8 + 5) piercing damage.

Amelia Anuran

By: Justin Handlin
Artist: Dean Spencer

Amelia is often perceived as a monster among those who stumble across her forest hovel. Her flailing tendrils frighten even the most courageous of heroes. Her vile appearance, combined with her slurred speech and unsteady hands, makes anyone wary of her. Her study of the arcane arts and her grotesque experiments have caused locals to name her the "Tendril Witch." Since she began living in the forest, bizarre creatures began showing up: deer with fangs, cats with wings, and much worse.

While most don't understand her and do their best to avoid her, often circumstances force them to visit Amelia's hovel. While they fear the Tendril Witch, she is the only source of medicine and healing treatment in the area. In exchange for her services, the locals allow her to trade with them for food and basic goods, but do not allow her into the village for fear of scaring off the few visitors and merchants who do visit.



Background

Amelia grew up studying medicine and herbalism. She wanted to help those who could not help themselves. However, a sort of irony struck. She developed and suffers from a yet unidentified disease. Over the years, a slowly growing fungus has gradually taken over the muscles in her body, leaving them nearly useless. She has spent most of her life studying the arcane arts and herbalism in the hopes that she will one day find a cure. The longer her search has dragged on, the more the disease has crippled her.

She took her studies to the privacy of a forest with a wide range of creatures and plants to use in her experiments. After learning the *find familiar spell,* she quelled some of her loneliness by befriending her familiar, a rascally weasel named Snitch. With her new ally, she continued her search. Sadly, her time was running out, so she began to focus less work on her cure, and more on a form of support. Something to cover her weakness so she could continue to search for a cure even after her illness took her arms and eventually her legs. At first her focus led her to trying to reinforce the ever-weakening extremities, but after years of trying she decided 'why reinforce the weak? Why not create new extremities? Why limit herself to only making herself as she is now, why not…stronger, faster, more versatile?' As the ideas flowed, she decided that she could be better!

Her research began to focus on the creatures of the land and their strengths. Much like the Chimera, she developed a way to integrate her body with some of the strongest creatures that exist. She mixed and matched specimens until she finally mastered the rituals needed to meld herself with the best specimen that can be used

to fulfill her desires. A remarkable creature with such unique features that not only allows her to continue her work but also allows her to protect herself from harm while she seeks out the cure for her illness. The creature she decided on sharing her body with was the Displacer Beast.

Although her age made it a risk, through a complex ritual she magically fused the best parts of the displacer beast with her own body. The most notable change was the lashing tendrils that now extend from her back. After her astounding success, she began to master the tendrils. She was disappointed the more she worked, while she was able to bond the tendrils, she was unable to fully capture that which made the beast a magnificent specimen for her procedure - its displacement. She set out to find another specimen. After a long search, she settled onto a young, not quite fully developed Displacer Beast and added its smaller tendrils to her body.

Current Motives

While Amelia is aware of how most locals feel about her, she understands their fear, and does not resent them for it. She understands that if she was in their shoes, she may feel exactly as they do. As such, she keeps to herself most of the time, only interacting with them when someone is ill and needs treatment, or when she needs food and trade goods. While she doesn't live in the village, she does care about it and she understands its importance to her survival.

Amelia can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **An information giver.** She is constantly searching the forest for new herbs for her cure, and as such is well informed of any disturbances.

- **A quest giver.** Most of her focus is on finding a cure, and as such, she can often use help gathering medicinal herbs for her experiments and for when the locals are ill.

- **A merchant.** She carries a variety of concoctions from her experiments, as well as medicinal potions.

- **A villain.** If she ventures too far from her forest, she may be treated as a monster. Her experiments would suggest a darker side and could easily be misunderstood by many.

Long Term Motives

Amelia cares for nothing more than to restore her body to the way it was before the disease. Although she has grown old and most would have given up, she continues to seek out a cure as her arms are nearly useless.

Flaws

Amelia's dark nature of her suffering, the way others treat her due to her experimentation with living creatures, and the continuous focus she has for repairing her body has left her bitter to those around her, making her a challenge to work with. She often is so engaged in her work it could be an hour before she even realizes she has been approached. The constant flow of thoughts, ideas, and potential solutions to her experiments to repair herself is an ongoing source of distraction, often leaving her muttering to herself even during a conversation with others.

Amelia Anuran

Medium humanoid (human), Chaotic neutral

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)
Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

Skills Deception +3, Persuasion +2, Arcana +4
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages Common, Elvish
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Displacement. The magical fusion of the beast to Amelia allows her to project an illusion that makes her appear to be standing near her actual location, causing attack rolls against her to have disadvantage. If she is hit by an attack, this trait is disrupted until the end of her next turn. This trait is also disrupted while she is incapacitated or has a speed of 0.

Spellcasting. Amelia is a 4th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). Amelia has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *control water, prestidigitation, shocking grasp,*

1st level (4 slots): *absorb elements, find familiar, shield,*
2nd level (3 slots): *misty step, phantasmal force*

Actions

Multiattack. Amelia makes two tentacle attacks.

Tentacle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Angel

By: Jeff C. Stevens
Artist: Dean Spencer

Angel is a skilled thief whose pet owl helps her safely infiltrate locations while it surveys the area and then stands guard as she pilfers the location.

Background

Angel, a charming-joyful-spunky-flirty half-elf, started her career as an adventurer, joining various groups who needed a skilled locksmith or pick-pocket. She grew tired of the adventuring life; drudging through swamps, exploring musty and damp ruins, and battling creatures she had no idea what they were. Instead, she turned her attention to high-class targets, those nobles and upper-class persons with so much wealth they didn't know what to do with it.

Angel also runs a small adventuring outpost on the outskirts of a city. Here, she sells some of the things she's pilfered, but keeps them stashed away until the right customer enters her business. Other items, which she keeps on display, include magical weapons and gear, potions, spell scrolls, and maps which she acquired during her short adventuring career and from legal transactions. Always interested in something new and different, Angel trades items quite often. She doesn't need gold, she acquires enough of that through her normal business.

One item Angel won't part with is her familiar glove, which is used to summon her familiar – Singe. The glove allows its wearer to cast the *find familiar* spell at-will. Singe allows her to scout areas from above, peer through windows, and provides her a sentry while she's illegally entering a dwelling or establishment.

Angel keeps her most precious items in her home, a viciously trapped house not far from her outpost. These items include incriminating documents, fantastic maps, and extraordinary items.



Current Motives

Angel has had dealings with many high-ranking public officials. She accumulates information and documents which can be used to incriminate or blackmail them.

Angel can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **An information giver** – she keeps her ears open when adventurers visit her shop, and she has a way of gleaning information from patrons.

- **A quest giver** – she's collected a few maps which may lead the adventurers to lost treasure.

- **A fence** – Angel knows ways of selling 'acquired' items, and she does so with a 20% handling fee.

- **A merchant** – Angel both buys and sells rare items. She's more than happy to purchase art and antiquities from adventurers at a rate of 60% current market value.

Long Term Motives

Though Angel enjoys her current life of collecting and pilfering, her vicious mind dreams of a much larger scheme – to thwart several nobles and high-ranking officials at the same time. Like a series of falling dominoes, she wants to see each of these corrupt individuals tumble from greatness.

Flaws

Angel is a kleptomaniac. She seldom waits more than a day before stealing again, though it Need not be a large heist. Her desire is relieved by stealing something as simple as a dagger off a noble's hip.

She's been lucky so far, going unnoticed. That luck could end soon.

Angel in Waterdeep

Angel's Adventuring Outpost is perfect for Waterdeep. Setting up shop in the Field Ward would allow her to remain outside the reach of the City Watch. Ideal locations could be found along The Fieldway or Gawenknife Street.

Familiar Glove

Wonderous Item, rare

Twice per day, the wearer of this glove may cast the *find familiar* spell, requiring no components. The casting time is 1 action.

The first time it is used, the familiar is randomly selected by the glove. The selected familiar is always summoned from that point on by the wearer. Though, each act as a normal familiar, each has its own personality.

Alex – a rainbow colored crab with a deep voice.
Callus – a green toad with thick, callused skin. It is unsympathetic and insensitive.
Lurch – a large, obese bat that has difficulty flying. Prefering to just hang from its summoner, it is rude and negative while carrying out its commands.
Singe – a beautiful, highly-intelligent owl that believes it is better than its summoner.
Whisper – an insecure, timid octcopus. It clings to its summoner, hiding when it can, and hardly speaks above a whisper.
Xylo – a red raven that enjoys singing. It has a hard time understanding commands that are not sung, and it prefers to speak in song.

The familiar is randomly selected again when the glove is donned and used by another creature.

Angel

Medium humanoid (half-elf), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 17 *(studded leather armor +1)*
Hit Points 84 (13d8 + 26)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Int +3
Skills Acrobatics +7, Athletics +3, Deception +6, Perception +5, Persuasion +6, Sleight of Hand +7, Stealth +7
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Common, Elvish, thieves' cant
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Cunning Action. On each of her turns, Angel can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Mobile. Angel's speed is increased by 10 feet (already included in Stat Block). In addition, when she uses the Dash action, difficult terrain doesn't cost her extra movement on that turn. When she makes a melee attack against a creature, she doesn't provoke opportunity attacks from that creature for the rest of the turn, whether she hits or not.

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). Angel deals an extra 14 (4d6) damage when she hit a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of hers that isn't incapacitated, and Angel doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Actions

Multiattack. *Angel makes three attacks with her dagger.*

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. or 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage.

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

Reactions

Uncanny Dodge. Angel halves the damage that she takes from an attack that hits her. Angel must be able to see the attacker.

Aurelia Sing

By: Jeff C. Stevens
Artist: Dean Spencer

Aurelia Sing is an accomplished alchemist, one who often experimented with potions and reagents to create new healing salves, healing elixirs, and other potions. Her journey took a turn when she began studying ancient tomes for extending one's life. The texts promised fantastic rewards. Of course, the texts were incorrect.

Background

During her studies, Aurelia learned of a lost tome that promised longevity, preserving the body's current form for hundreds of years. She hired a band of adventurers to seek out the text, giving them clues she had procured from her studies. The adventurers returned some six months later with the tome in hand. Ecstatic, Aurelia paid the party handsomely by rewarding them with a magical family heirloom. She then retreated into her laboratory.

She studied the tome for months - taking notes, making calculations, and procuring any ingredients and reagents she would need for the potion. She worked diligently, often by the flickering flame of a dwindling candle late into the early morning hours, until she felt she was ready.

She created the potion, drank it, and felt wonderful. Energy coursed through her body. The 35-year-old woman felt like she was in her 20s again. She felt alive. She felt satisfied.

That all changed after a ten-day – when the potion's true purpose took hold of the woman.

Gone is the human form of Aurelia Sing – a brilliant student of the alchemical arts. Her soft, tan skin and her lovely blonde hair are all but a fading memory for her. Though she retains her wisdom and knowledge, she's been transformed into an undulating ooze which can form multiple



appendages and control its destructive secretions. Her mind is now a chaotic mess of thoughts.

Current Motives

Aurelia spends her time reviewing the tome, trying to figure out where she went wrong. When not studying, she slinks around the city sewers, using piping and narrow tunnels to reach merchants that carry supplies for her experiments.

In an effort to find the remedy to her predicament, Aurelia experiments on stray animals, captured household pets, and the occasional vagabond or vagrant.

Aurelia can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A Menace**– Aurelia sneaks around the city at night, manipulating her ooze-like form to resemble a Medium-sized humanoid wearing dark robes and a large, floppy hat. While out, she captures stray pets, household pets, and vagrants to use in her experiments.

- **An Employer** – Though communicating with Aurelia may be difficult, she could hire the adventurers to track down the party that gave her the tome. She also wants her family heirloom returned.

- **A Merchant** – Aurelia may require something the adventurers have acquired. She may have an item or coin to offer the adventurers.

- **A Villain**– Unsatisfied with the subjects she's been experimenting on, Aurelia decides to abduct nobles and soldiers. She does so easily by sneaking into their rooms and using her ooze secretions to subdue her target.

Long Term Motives

Aurelia's main goal is to reverse the potion's effects. After that, she plans to hunt down the adventurers who found the tome. She believes they tampered with the text or tricked her in some way, and she wants her family heirloom returned.

Flaws

Aurelia is disgusted with her new appearance. She doesn't let anyone look upon her new form. She also finds it difficult to speak, her words come out garbled and raspy.

Aurelia in Waterdeep

Clearly Aurelia is right at home in the sewers of any major city, and Waterdeep is no exception. With a vast sewer network, Aurelia's lair could be beneath any of Waterdeep's wards. With her lair placed in the vicinity of Trollskull Alley she could provide an immediate threat to PCs who've taken up residence in Trollskull Manor. Furthermore, if Snuggles is operating on Saerdoun street across from the alley, Aurelia's petnapping might lead Snuggles to seek the PCs help.

Aurelia Sing

Medium ooze, neutral evil

Armor Class 11
Hit Points 60 (8d8 + 24)
Speed 25 ft., climb 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)

Skills Stealth +5
Damage Resistance acid, cold, fire
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone
Senses blindsight 60 ft. passive Perception 12
Languages Common, Elvish, Gnomish, Infernal, Celestial
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Amorphous. Aurelia can move through a space as narrow as 1-inch wide without squeezing.

Corrosive Form. A creature that touches Aurelia or hits her with a melee attack while within 5 feet of her takes 4 (1d8) acid damage. Any nonmagical weapon made of metal or wood that hits Aurelia corrodes. After dealing damage, the weapon takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to damage rolls. If its penalty drops to -5, the weapon is destroyed. Nonmagical ammunition made of metal is destroyed after dealing damage.

Aurelia has control of this effect and can turn it off and on as an action.

False Appearance. While Aurelia remains motionless, she is indistinguishable from an oily pool or wet rock.

Humanoid Appearance. Aurelia can shape her form to resemble a Medium-sized or smaller humanoid, donning a black cloak or robes and a large black hat when she does. She uses this form at night to stalk prey. While in this form, and while in the cover of darkness or shadow, she appears as a normal humanoid. A creature making an active Perception check and succeeding on a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check realizes there is something odd about the humanoid (no legs, it glides when it moves, there's no face under the cloak).

Actions

Multiattack. Aurelia makes two attacks.

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. one target. *Hit*: 4 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) acid damage, and if the target is wearing nonmagical metal armor, its armor is partly corroded and takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to the AC it offers. The armor is destroyed is the penalty reduces its AC to 10 or less.

Spewing Ooze. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 30/60 ft. one target. *Hit*: 7 (2d6) acid damage, and if the target is wearing nonmagical metal armor, its armor is partly corroded and takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to the AC it offers. The armor is destroyed is the penalty reduces its AC to 10 or less.

Sleep Mist (recharge 5-6). A white mist sprays from Aurelia's ooze in a 25-foot radius centered on Aurelia. Each creature in the radius must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or fall unconscious for 5 minutes. This effect ends for a creature if the creature takes damage or someone uses an action to wake it up.

Reactions

Hardened Ooze (twice per day). When hit with an attack, Aurelia can harden her form. Until the start of her next turn, she has a +5 bonus to AC, including against the triggering attack, and she takes no damage from *magic missile*.

Aurelia's Sewer Lair

By: Alex Clippinger
Cartography: Empire Role Playing

Lair Features

There are common features throughout Aurelia's lair:

Floors. Areas 4 through 9 have stone floors, as do the hallways between them.

Waterways. The sewage tunnels are filled with approximately a foot of dirty sewer water.

Surfaces. The walls, floors, and ceilings in all of the lair's areas have a corroded and pitted look, created by the constant passage of acidic ooze creatures.

Ceilings. The sewage tunnels and corridors are eight feet high. Areas 4 through 9 have ceilings 9 feet in height.

Patrolling Oozes. Every ten minutes or so, a random ooze (see table below) appears at one of the grates (Area 1, below) and travels to another grate. An ooze that appears at grate 1A travels to 1B and vice-versa; an ooze that appears at grate 1C travels to 1D and vice-versa.

Lair Areas

1. Drainage Grates

These narrow grates lead to deeper sewage pipes too narrow for most creatures to squeeze through. A creature of size Tiny or smaller can move through the pipes normally, as can oozes. In the sewage tunnels, the water draining into the grates makes them noticeable by both sight and sound.

Grate. The metal grates over the pipes are heavy and haven't been raised in a long time. Lifting one requires a successful DC 13 Strength check.

Oozes. The patrolling oozes (see 'Lair Features,' above) and Aurelia can enter and exit these pipes without needing to move the grate. When an ooze enters the pipes at one of the grates, it can choose to appear at any one of the other grates. Because these pipes have become slime-slicked with their passage, oozes double their movement speed when travelling between grates.

2. Corroded Chamber

Some of Aurelia's ooze creatures have left the lair proper and tunneled through the wall of the sewer, their acidic touch hollowing out a kind of den.

Labradoozes. A pack of four **labradoozes** lair in this chamber. These dogs-turned-ooze-hybrids are driven by pained and confused instinct: there is a 50% chance they will emerge to attack a non-ooze creature moving through the main tunnel outside; otherwise, they huddle and whimper in their chamber and attack if they feel threatened.

Treasure. The abominations sneak out at night, scouring the city for whatever meals they can find. A few remnants from these meals can be found strewn about the chamber.

- A *ring of protection +1*
- A small, leather dog collar with a copper nameplate that reads *Betsy*.
- A silvered dagger
- A set of blue, fancy boots – clean and undamaged.
- A men's gold wedding band with the name Roger engraved on the inside of the ring.

3. Main Sewage Tunnel

This wide tunnel flows against creatures as they travel towards the stone corridor areas.

3A/3B. This small side tunnel contains a **slithering tracker** (CR 3, VGtM, p 191), which lurks beneath the water's surface. The slithering tracker is a common peasant transformed by Aurelia, driven insane and seeking revenge. It sweeps out of the

flowing water in area **3A** when it senses one or more creatures entering area **3B.**

3C. The sewage tunnel continues onward, but here a metal ladder ascends five feet to the stone corridor areas above. The ladder and walls have a pitted, acid-touched look.

4. Clean Room

The walls and floors of this room are immaculately clean.

Door. A locked wooden door leads to **Area 5.** Picking the lock requires a DC 14 Dexterity check using thieves' tools.

5. Subject Cell

Aurelia used this room to house subjects undergoing slow transformations. It currently houses a **gelatinous cube** (CR 2, MM, p 242), which waits until someone enters the room before attempting to engulf them. The only evidence of the transparent cube's presence are the perfectly clean floors and walls.

6. Alchemical Lab

This serves as Aurelia's lab, where she performs experiments in search of a cure.

Aurelia. Aurelia Sing might be found in this room, working at the table (**6B**). If she hears sounds of combat echoing down the corridors from **Area 4 or 5**, she might use the drainage grate **1D** to move to drainage grate **1C**, choosing to await the characters in **Area 9**. If Aurelia is caught unawares or if she chooses to stand her ground in **Area 6**, she uses the containment tubes (**6A**) to her advantage.

6A. Containment tubes

There are six tall glass containment tubes arranged down the center of the room. Aurelia uses the tubes to house various experimental serums and other creations. The tubes are five feet tall and approximately eight inches in diameter, resembling big test tubes. They do not provide cover against attacks. The tubes have AC 13 and 2 hit points. If a tube is broken, it spills its contents onto the ten-foot cube immediately surrounding it. There is also a spigot on the bottom of each tube, which can be used to fill a vial or other container with the liquid; each tube whose contents can be used to fill a vial holds enough for three full doses. Aurelia is immune to a tube's contents unless she chooses not to be.

The northern row of tubes, from closest to the entrance to furthest, contain:

- A **gray ooze** (CR ½, MM, p 243), which slowly laps up against the edges of the tube towards creatures it senses in the room around itself. If a creature uses the spigot, the ooze forces itself through the opening and into a space within 5 feet of the tube.
- A rose-colored liquid that bubbles as though carbonated. Careful examination of the bubbles reveals they are tiny hearts that break in two as the bubbles ascend the tube. A creature that drinks this potion has a 50% chance to experience the effects of a *philter of love* (but only triggering when it sees an ooze-type creature); otherwise, the creature must make a **DC 14 Wisdom** saving throw or become frightened of the next creature it sees for 1 minute. A frightened creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect early on a success.
- A thick, granite-gray fog that looks like it has bits of sand and grit floating in it. A creature that drinks or that is splashed by this mixture must succeed on a **DC 13 Constitution** saving throw or suffer a random effect at the start of each of its turns for 1 minute. An affected creature rolls a d6: on a 1-3, there is no effect; on a 4-5, the creature is affected as though by a *gaseous form* spell (no concentration required) until the start of its next turn;

on a 6, the creature is petrified until the start of its next turn.

The southern row of tubes, from closest to the entrance to furthest, contain:

- A red liquid that glimmers when agitated. A creature that drinks or that is splashed by this liquid regains 3d4 + 3 hit points; there is a 25% chance for each creature that these regained hit points vanish again at the start of its next turn.
- A milk-white liquid that appears curdled and spoiled before returning to normal again. A creature that drinks or that is splashed by this liquid either ages 2d4 + 1 years (50% chance) or has its age reduced by 1d4 + 1 years, to a minimum of 13 (50% chance).
- A crystal-clear liquid that appears to vanish every so often. Drinking or being splashed by this liquid causes a creature to vanish and reappear randomly for 1 minute. At the end of an affected creature's turn, each space around it is assigned a value of 1-8; the creature rolls a d8, appearing in the space that matches the result. If the space is occupied by an object or creature, the existing creature is shunted to the nearest unoccupied space and suffers 1d6 force damage per 5 feet travelled when shunted.

6B. Workbench
Aurelia creates various oozes and mixtures here.

Treasure: Searching the workbench yields enough supplies to form two sets of alchemist's supplies, a vial of poison, and three vials of antitoxin.

7. Animal Holding Cell

The door to this room is locked and can be opened with a successful **DC 14 Dexterity** check using thieves' tools.

Makeshift enclosures, made from scrap wood, metal, and twine, hold several feral dogs and cats, as well as a few household pets.

8. Humanoid Holding Cells

As the characters approach this door, they see a **gray ooze** slipping underneath the door and hear shouts from the other side.

Door. The door is locked, requiring a successful **DC 14 Dexterity** check using thieves' tools to unlock.

Prisoners. There are three unarmed **commoners** in the cell: a human man named Otik, a female half-elf named Valia, and a halfling male named Springer. They were captured by Aurelia within the past few days and were locked in this cell as she prepares experiments to perform on them.

Gray ooze. At the start of its next turn, the gray ooze finishes entering the room and slowly moves towards the prisoners. Without intervention, the gray ooze will kill each of them in turn.

9. Aurelia's Chambers

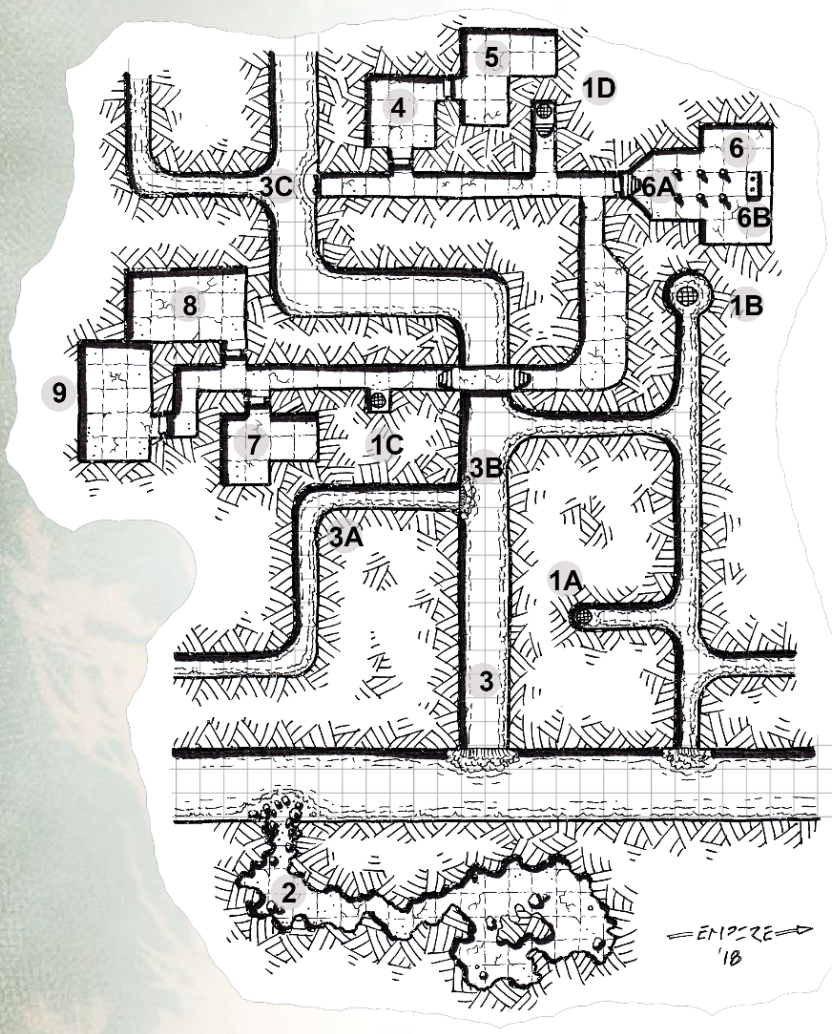
This is the closest thing to a bedroom that Aurelia has. The sparse chamber contains her personal effects. It also contains a deadly trap for anyone who might intrude on her private quarters.

Green slime. The ceiling is covered with green slime (DMG, p 105) of Aurelia's own creation, which drops onto any non-ooze creature it senses below it.

Treasure: Hidden under a pile of mildewed clothing is:

- A small leather pouch containing 2 pp, 10 gp, 8 sp, and 15 cp.
- A mechanical, gold timepiece fashioned by the famous gnome tinkerer Ferrelel valued at 150 gp. The timepiece resembles a pocket watch and keeps accurate time, requiring no winding.
- 3 gold rings worth 15 gp each.
- A set of thieves' tools.

- A professional-looking set of kitchen cutlery valued at 10 gp.
- A silver flask with the name Embeb engraved on it and valued at 20 gp.



Labradooze

Medium ooze, unaligned

Armor Class 11 (natural armor)
Hit Points 15 (3d8 + 2)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	10 (+0)	16(+1)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	6 (-2)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4
Damage Resistance acid, cold, fire
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone
Senses blindsight 60 ft. passive Perception 13
Languages -
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Amorphous. The labradooze can move through a space as narrow as 6-inches wide without squeezing.

Partial Corrosive Form. A creature that touches a labradooze or hits it with a melee attack while within 5 feet of it has a 50% chance of taking 4 (1d8) acid damage. If this acid damage is taken, any nonmagical weapon made of metal or wood that hits the labradooze corrodes. After dealing damage, the weapon takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to damage rolls. If its penalty drops to -5, the weapon is destroyed. Nonmagical ammunition made of metal is destroyed after dealing damage.

Pack Tactics. The labradooze has advantage on attack rolls against a creature if at least one of the labradooze's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. one target. *Hit*: 7 (2d4 + 2) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) acid damage.

Barabbas Abernathy

By: Chad M. Lensch
Artist: Eric Lofgren

Barabbas is a Cleric of Oghma, whose quest for knowledge of the existence of his late daughter's soul consumes him. He is well-known for his proficiency with many unusual languages and is sought out to decipher unusual tomes and symbols.



Background

Barabbas grew up in an affluent noble family. His father, a shrewd entrepreneur, impressed upon a young Barabbas that success often comes from having the right piece of information at the precise time Honorable ventures and quests, as well as the properly timed bribes and blackmails, were the effective and efficient tools of his father. Barabbas learned these practices with great aptitude.

Barabbas eventually wed an upper-class woman from a wealthy family. He did not do this for love as much as for a sound long-term economic strategy. His heart was changed when his daughter, Mara, was born. She showed him what true love was, and he began to see the world differently.

Mara became ill. Barabbas used his wealth and influence to bring the best physicians and healers to help, to no avail. He was exasperated at their lack of competence. He took matters into his own hands and searched for his daughter's cure. He learned many languages and collected and read rare and exotic books for any clue for a cure. He never found it. Mara died.

Barabbas was devastated. He brought clerics of Lathander and Ilmater to resurrect Mara, to no avail. For some unexplained reason, their spells could not get her to come back from the Astral Plane. He became disgusted with these so called "clerics of life". At his most desperate point, he bargained with Oghma; Barabbas promised to follow him, if he would be granted the knowledge to bring back his little girl. He became a cleric of Oghma, to his wife's displeasure, and she left him.

Barabbas since then has bordered on the fine edge of brilliance and insanity. He mastered many languages of powerful creatures, hoping to somehow harness their power. In a perverse way to be close to her, Barabbas secretly exhumed Mara, and keeps her remains in a secret room. Once every 10 days, as limited by the spell, he uses his spell *speak with dead* to talk with Mara.

To this day, he keeps searching, and hoping, for the discovery of the right piece of information at the precise time that will bring his Mara back.

Current Motives

Barabbas is interested in any information, especially magic items or books that deal with death or restoration magics. His talents for language, and magics of the mind, make him an invaluable associate in matters of business and politics.

Barabbas can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A translator** – He is happy to read or decipher any strange language or runes for the party. For a price or a favor, of course.
- **A healer** - He offers his healing services and spells to hold off death of the unfortunate, especially children. The wealthy are encouraged to pay, of course.
- **A quest giver** - He is well versed in magical items and rare tomes. He will hire those who can recover what he is not able. He pays well.
- **A spy/diplomat** – He offers his *read thoughts* and *suggestion* abilities to the highest bidder, for business deals, and political summits. This helps fund his research.
- **A collector** - If the party has any magical items that deal with healing or resurrection, he purchases them at 60% their normal value. Anything with *wish* associated with it, he'll pay full price (or more).
- **A villain** – If the party has an item that he wants, or interferes with his acquiring it, he becomes infuriated. He attempts to get what he wants by magical suggestion, blackmail, hiring a hit on a person, or by carefully planned physical force.

Long Term Motives

Barabbas wishes to gather enough knowledge or power to bring his daughter back from the dead. As of now, he is not powerful enough, nor has he been able to convince anyone to *wish* for Mara's return. Because Oghma has not yet given him the information Barrabas desires, he may begin to question his faith in Oghma. He may be swayed by other earthly or dark powers, or those promising power and knowledge, to achieve his ultimate goal.

Flaws

Barabbas barely contains his obsessive zeal to gather any information or items that could help him raise Mara. When he is denied what he feels could help him with his goal, he gets it-- one way or another. Also, Barabbas must be with Mara at least once per day. He is unwilling to travel or go on long quests for this reason.

Barrabas in Waterdeep

Given his background, Barabbas would likely have a residence in the North Ward, perhaps along the High Road near Traders Way. From such comfort, he might establish a store front as a small book seller, sage, or healer, providing an ideal opportunity to continue gathering information to fulfill his wishes and bring back his beloved daughter.

Items

Barabbas carries an *animated shield*, *wand of magic missiles,* a *ring of mind shielding*, and the *Flail of the Fool.*

Flail of the Fool

Weapon (flail), rare

Barabbas gains a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon.

A creature hit by this flail must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or have disadvantage on Wisdom saving throws for 1 minute.

Barabbas Abernathy

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 15 *(scale mail, Animated Shield)*
Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	9 (-1)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Wisdom +6, Charisma +6
Skills Arcana +10, History +10, Investigation +6, Medicine +6, Perception +6, Religion +6
Senses passive Perception 16
Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Dwarvish, Elvish, Gnomish, Infernal, Sylvan
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Divine Domain: Knowledge. Barabbas is a cleric of Oghma, The Lord of Knowledge.

Spellcasting. Barabbas is a 10th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 14, Spell Attack +6). Barabbas has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *guidance, light, resistance, sacred flame, spare the dying*
1st level (4 slots): *bane, command, cure wounds, guiding bolt, identify, sanctuary*
2nd level (3 slots): *augury, gentle repose, hold person, locate object, suggestion*
3rd level (3 slots): *animate dead, glyph of warding, non-detection, speak with dead*
4th level (3 slots): *arcane eye, confusion, death ward*
5th level (2 slots): *geas, legend lore, raise dead, scrying*

Potent Spellcasting. Barabbas adds +2 to the damage he deals with any cleric cantrip.

Channel Divinity. Barabbas can gain divine energy from Oghma and use it to fuel magical effects. He can use this power 2 times between rests.

Linguist. Barabbas has spent considerable time learning languages to increase his knowledge of history and magic. He can create written ciphers from items that others can't decipher.

Actions

Multiattack. Barabbas makes 2 attacks per round, or he can use his Channel Divinity ability.

Flail of the Fool. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage. Upon hit, target must make a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw, or have disadvantage on Wisdom saving throws for 1 minute. Barabbas is proficient with its use.

Channel Divinity: Knowledge of the Ages. As an action, Barabbas can use Channel Divinity to gain proficiency with any skill or tool for 10 minutes.

Channel Divinity: Read Thoughts. As an action, Barabbas can use Channel Divinity to choose one creature that he can see within 60 ft. That creature must make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw. On success, he can read their thoughts. Barrabas can't use this feature on them again until he finishes a long rest. On a failure, he can read surface thoughts while within 60 ft. for 1 minute. During that time, he can cast suggestion on the target without expending a spell slot.

Channel Divinity: Turn Undead. Each undead that Barabbas can see or that can hear him within 30 feet of him must make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw. If the creature fails its saving throw, it is turned for 1 minute or until it takes any damage. A turned creature must spend its turns trying to move as far away from him as it can, and it can't willingly move to a space within 30 feet of him. It also can't take reactions. For its action, it can use only the Dash action or try to escape from an effect that prevents it from moving. If there's nowhere to move, the creature can use the Dodge action.

Destroy Undead. When an undead fails its saving throw against his Turn Undead feature, the creature is instantly destroyed if they are a CR 1 or less.

Divine Intervention: Doubter's Request. As an action, Barabbas requests Oghma's aid and rolls percentile dice, *at disadvantage*. If the number rolled is equal to or less than Barabbas' level, Oghma intervenes. If successful, he can't use this feature again for 7 days, otherwise, he can use it again after a long rest.

Reactions

War Caster. Barabbas can use his reaction to make an opportunity attack to cast a spell that has a casting time of 1 action and targets only that creature.

Resolve for Mara (Recharges after a rest). If Barabbas is taken down to zero hit points, he can take a reaction to heal 2d8 hit points.

Bas'Rafna

By Jeff C. Stevens
Artist: Gary Dupuis / Purple Duck Games

Bas'Rafna is a broker of secrets, rare items, and spell components. He covets knowledge as much as he does treasure. He's a wanted creature, though few dare to face him, or know who or what he really is.



Background

Bas'rafna couldn't tell you where he came from; those memories are blanketed by the pain of his imprisonment – taken from his home and made to be a pet. His eager mind tortured as he was locked in a cage and put on display. At that time, he had no abilities, but as time went slowly by his body and abilities matured.

After 50 years of slow maturation, Bas'Rafna developed the ability to shapechange, mimic, and use magic. It was on the eve of his 51st birthday that he broke from his prison, crawled through his then-master's house, sliced him with his claws, and then assumed his identity.

Bas' then used the knowledge he had gleaned as a prisoner; the master's visitors often spoke about their smuggling exploits openly in the master's house. Using the previous master's fortune, Bas' hired a ship and crew, sailed away from the wretched land that had been his home for 50 years, and found a location more to his liking.

Gone were the bars of his cage, the sandalwood scented air of the master's house, and its overly warm interior. He chose a cave, as it felt more fitting and comfortable to him – the damp air, darkness, and rough floor brought back specks of early memories, of a home he had forgotten.

Bas' now leads a group of criminals – stealthy thieves, cunning spies, brutal mercenaries, and canny magicians. Aside from offering Bas' protection they gather information, perform dark duties for whoever can afford them, and steal away secrets and treasure.

Able to take on the form of any humanoid race and gender, Bas' uses his ability to glean information himself, to steer targets in the direction he wants and needs them to go, to influence others, and to mingle in society. He maintains several personalities.

Puelo – a young, charismatic merchant who deals in silks
Gorth – a thug-like, musclebound human who is often found in taverns, sipping ale as he listens to conversations
L'anna – a young, vibrant, and beautiful woman from a foreign land. Her rich, dark skin attracts all genders
Grynda – an elderly woman who is often found skinning fish for fishermen at the docks.
Todo – a teenage halfling boy who runs around with other youth in the city

Kranga – an old half-orc with a veteran appearance. Kranga is the form Bas' uses to negotiate deals, hire out his mercenaries, and pay for secrets

Current Motives

Appealing to his chaotic desires, Bas'Rafna hopes to glean incriminating information about city nobles and officials. He also wishes to be the sole source of rare spell components, using them as incentive for mercenaries and adventurers who he needs to hire.

Bas'rafna can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **An information giver** – Bas' could appear to be giving the adventurers valuable information, but he's actually using them.
- **A quest giver** – always intrigued by precious items, rare spell components, and information, Bas' could hire the PCs to do a bit of his bidding.
- **As a villain** – If his plans are slighted by the PCs, Bas' uses his many hirelings to hunt them down. He doesn't want them all killed, he wants a few returned alive so he can learn what they know.

Long Term Motives

Using information he has gathered about city officials and nobles, Bas' intends to begin whispering this information to their rivals in hopes of crumbling the city's governing force. He'll then watch the turmoil as the city falls apart from within, then move to another city and begin the process again.

Flaws

Quietly curious about his birth home, Bas'Rafna is always intrigued by rare items, weapons, and artifacts. He hopes to find some link to his past by inspecting and researching such items.

Bas'Rafna's Lair

Bas'Rafna, along with a few of his hirelings, resides in a cave not far from the city.

T – each T represents a *glyph of warding* cast on that square, which is activated if the square is stepped on. If activated, the glyph releases its stored spell (*Thuderwave*) creating a 20-foot-radius sphere centered on the glyph. Each creature in the radius must make a **DC 13 Dexterity** saving throw or take 5d8 thunder damage, or half as much damage on a successful save.

In addition, all creatures in the cave are alerted and take their 'ready' post.

The glyph is nearly invisible and requires a successful **DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation)** check to be found.

Area 1

The door to this room is unlocked. This room is used by hirelings. The room is currently empty but could have hirelings staying in it if the DM wishes. The small closet holds a bucket which is used as a privy.

Area 2

The narrow tunnel opens to a massive cavern with stalactites hanging roughly 50-feet above. The room is lit by eight torches, four along each of the walls.

Area 3

Three raised sections of ground, roughly 20-feet tall, create a raised platform for any of Bas' hirelings who wish to use them. If the party tripped one of the traps, two archers from the northern shack (Area 4) have made their way onto the top of the northernmost pillar.

Area 4

Two wooden shacks give privacy to several of the Bas's hirelings. Two **archers** (CR 3, VGtM, p 210) share the north shack, while a **mage** (CR 6; MM, p347) and **knight** (CR 3; MM, p347) share the lower shack.

If searched, the northern shack holds a leather pouch containing 113gp in various coins, a *potion of greater healing*, and *two +1 arrows*. The other shack contains a set of chain mail armor and a *potion of invisibility*.

Area 5

This closet contains two buckets which are used as privies.



Area 6

This room acts as a closet, containing all Bas'Rafna's clothing he uses while he is shapechanged. The clothing is common, and worth a total of 3gp.

Area 7

The door to this room is locked. A successful **DC 15 Dexterity** check using thieves' tools is required to unlock the door. Alternatively, two successful **DC 15 Strength (Athletics)** checks or 25 points of damage will bash open the door.

Crate one contains 10 spell component pouches, complete with all basic components.

Crate two contains various trinkets and bric-a-brac: a small jade horse, an ornately carved wooden box, a piece of glass fashioned to look like an eyeball with a blue iris, a pair of 6-inch long gold earrings, and a purple robe with large copper buttons. None of the items are magic and each has a value of 7gp.

The chest is locked. A successful **DC 15 Dexterity** check using thieves' tools is required to open the chest.

The chest contains a *longsword +1*, ten *+2 arrows* or *crossbow bolts*, and a *wand of fear*.

Area 8

A 15-foot deep pond fills this small section of the cave. A mound of round, flat, smooth jade stones acts as Bas'Rafna's bed; he finds the stones soothing, somehow reminding him of home.

Bas' also hides his most valuable and sentimental treasures in this pool, along the back section behind his bed. Hidden below the water is a 2-foot tall jade statue worth 300gp – it is a carving of a creature resembling Bas'. In addition, the pool contains:

- a leather sack of 20 finely-cut star rose quartz (1,000gp total)
- a wooden crate holding:
    - a waterproof bamboo tube containing gold dust (125gp)
    - a waterproof bamboo tube containing the powder of a crushed black pearl (500gp)
    - a gem-encrusted bowl (1,000gp)
    - a waterproof bamboo tube containing jade dust (100gp)
    - a waterproof bamboo tube containing diamond dust (500gp)
    - a miniature platinum sword with a grip and pommel of copper and zinc (250gp)
    - a leather pouch containing an agate stone (1,000gp)
    - a jade circlet (1,500gp)

Bas'Rafna

Medium dragon, Chaotic neutral

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Skills Deception +6, Insight +3
Condition Immunities charmed
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Common, Draconic
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Shapechanger. Bas'Rafna can use his action to polymorph into a Small or Medium humanoid he has seen, or back into his true form. His statistics, other than his size, are the same in each form. Any equipment he is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. He reverts to his true draconic form if he dies.

Spellcasting. Bas'Rafna is an 8th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). Bas'Rafna has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *friends, mage hand, minor illusion, vicious mockery,*
1st level (4 slots): *charm person, comprehend languages, sleep, unseen servant*
2nd level (3 slots): *calm emotions, suggestion*
3rd level (3 slots): *fear, nondetection, tongues*
4th level (2 slots): *compulsion*, *confusion,*

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (1d10) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) poison damage.

Breath Weapons (Recharge 5-6). Bas'Rafna uses one of the following breath weapons.

Acid Breath. Bas'Rafna exhales acid in a 40-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 23 (5d8) acid damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Confusion Breath. Bas'Rafna exhales confusion gas in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be confused for the next minute.
An affected target can't take reactions and must roll a d10 at the start of each of its turns to determine its behavior for that turn.

1	The creature uses all its movement to move in a random direction. To determine the direction, roll a d8 and assign a direction to each die face. The creature doesn't take an action this turn.
2-6	The creature doesn't move or take actions this turn.
7-8	The creature uses its actions to make a melee attack against a randomly determined creature within its reach. If there is no creature within its reach, the creature does nothing this turn.
9-10	The creature can act and move normally

Black Rose

By Janek Sielicki
Artist: Daniel Comerci

The villainess known as Black Rose terrorizes local towns and settlements, striking fear into the hearts of lords and nobles. But the peculiar code of honor she follows makes her a hero in the eyes of the poor and downtrodden.

Background

Born as the youngest child of a minor noble family, Elentha Duan was looking forward to being married off to a prince in shining armor. She was loved and pampered – but not spoiled, because her lands were located on the borderlands and her parents knew Elentha should be able to deal with various challenges, from marauding monsters and bandits to court intrigues and rival neighbors.

Elentha's older brother Vadirik returned from faraway lands with a group of veteran mercenaries, wizards and a flame of hell-hounds. No-one knows the words he exchanged with his parents, but that night blood flowed through the castle's halls as Vadirik marched on, killing in rage anyone he saw. Elentha's second brother, Aloys, a celebrated knight, spirited her away. Vadirik caught them and struck his own brother with a demonic sword, gravely wounding him and causing him to age at an accelerated rate.

Elentha and an increasingly infirm Aloys escaped and travelled for years, supporting each other throughout many adventures. Meanwhile, back home, Vadirik made alliances with neighboring lords, or killed those who opposed him. When Aloys died, Elentha donned his black armor and swore to return home and take her revenge – no matter the consequence. She took a new name, which was a reference to her family crest, and began her campaign to take back her heritage.



Somewhere on the way she got lost. What started as a noble mission turned much darker: realizing she needed money for her war, she began attacking nobles, merchants, even well-to-do peasants. She also began to believe that Vadirik could not have succeeded without the support of other families and kingdoms of her anscetral lands and so she decided to punish anyone she deemed guilty.

Elentha, now known among her many followers as Black Rose, kills only when she must. She demands the loyalty and obedience of her followers and they are glad to give it, since she has humiliated a lot of people the peasants and the poor see as "evil." Tax collectors, guardsmen,

and bandits fall to her crusade and the commoners treat her as a heroine, a classic "rob the rich to give to the poor" kind of a character. This is a mistake – the only thing she cares about is her mission.

Current Motives

Elentha is becoming a minor power in the region and several local lords and merchants have pooled their resources to finally hunt her down. Supposedly, a famous and ruthless bounty hunter has signed the contract.

For some time now, she has been having strange dreams in which a mysterious being offers her wealth and power in exchange for her soul. Tired with her never ending quest, she is about to accept the deal, which scares some of her lieutenants.

Elentha needs fresh news from her lands and she pays well for information. However, her brother has a knack for rooting out spies.

Long Term Motives

Black Rose wants to return to her lands, kill Vadirik and his supporters, and reclaim the throne. To do this, she needs money, magic, and supporters. She actually has already amassed a small fortune and now is looking for reliable and loyal soldiers and hirelings.

Flaws

She doesn't see herself as a villain and may be convinced to explain her point of view – she might even be inclined to ask random adventurers who impressed her to join her ranks. Moreover, since money wins wars, she can be lured into a trap using a valuable trinket as bait – but make sure you're really well prepared to take her down.

Black Rose

Medium humanoid (human) Chaotic good

Armor Class 18 (plate)
Hit Points 143 (22d8 + 44)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Str +9, Con +6
Skills Athletics +9 Intimidation +5, Perception +6, Persuasion +5
Senses passive Perception 16
Languages Common, Dwarvish, Elvish
Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Indomitable (3/day). Black Rose can reroll a saving throw she fails. She must use the new roll.

Second Wind (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). As a bonus action, Black Rose can regain 20 hit points.

Actions

Multiattack. *Black Rose makes three attacks with her longsword.*

Thorn - Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) slashing damage, plus 7 (2d6) poison damage.

Thorn

Weapon (Longsword), rare

A black, magical poison ripples across the blade of this magical longsword.

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon.

A creature hit by this longsword takes an additional 2d6 poison damage and must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute.

Bodaecia - Warrior Queen

By Lilah Isaacs
Artist: Daniel Comerci

Following the death of her husband, Bodaecia finds herself caught in the midst of a war with a previously allied kingdom.

Background

Queen of the Ekhena people, Bodaecia married king Erasprus and gave birth to two daughters. Bodaecia faithfully supported his decisions during his prosperous rule. This included his decision to submit to and ally with the neighboring kingdom ruled by Emperor Claud.

It was Erasprus' belief that he could secure their prosperity if he conceded to Emperor Claud and he named the Emperor as co-heir alongside his two daughters. What king Erasprus did not account for, however, was the differing laws between kingdoms. Under Emperor Claud's rule there were no such laws which acknowledged a woman's right to rule.

Upon the death of king Erasprus, Emperor Claud ordered his military to pillage the Ekhena kingdom. King Erasprus' wife Bodaecia was dragged from her home and stripped of sovereignty. She then endured watching Emperor Claud's military publicly mock her daughters before expelling them for contesting his solitary rule.

Rather than suffer this insult and injury, Bodaecia resolved to reclaim her kingdom and avenge the royal family. With her daughters, she rallied her people and amassed an army to retaliate.

It is said that desperate times call for desperate measures and in Bodaecia's case this is unequivocally true. Though she possesses the faith and love of her people, over time some have begun to call her methods into question.



Players may hear rumors from a minority of the Ekhena who suggest that Bodaecia's methods have become far more brutal than they ever remember. The Ekhena people presume this is due to the humiliation and grief she suffered after king Erasprus' death.

Those who speak to the Ekhena spiritualist will hear concerns regarding the Queen's recent approval of an Archdruid by the name of Ferdorich. Further inquiry will yield information detailing that Ferdorich has promised the Queen victory over Emperor Claud so long as the Ekhena people give Ferdorich a child of his choosing for a sacrifice on each summer solstice that Emperor Claud has not been slain.

Current Motives

Queen Bodaecia is presently focused on Emperor Claud and his military. The well-being of her daughters is ever at the forefront of her mind. As

such, she tries to avoid offending Ferdorich because she believes he is instrumental to the victory of her people.
Queen Bodaecia can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **An Informant** – As the Queen, there isn't much happening that she doesn't know. She is aware of the Ekhena's concerns, however she believes this is simply resistance to change.

- **A Villain** – Provoking the ire of Queen Bodaecia is not difficult. Because she is hyper-vigilant of Emperor Claud's units, players passing through will be seized and brought before Bodaecia, then interrogated regarding their intentions. How they reply will determine how quickly and whether or not she deems them an enemy.

- A **Quest Giver** – If the players are interested, she may offer them a rank among her military to destroy the kingdom that pillaged hers.

Long Term Motives

Queen Bodaecia's long term goal is to not only restore her kingdom, but also to utterly annihilate Emperor Claud's in return for the humiliation he has wrought on her family.

Flaws

The Queen's retribution has clouded her judgment to the extent that she has given very little to no forethought regarding the Ekhena people and their concerns, or their growing disdain for Ferdorich's sacrificial demands.

Consequently, Bodaecia may come across as dismissive where the worries of her people are concerned. As time progresses, the players will witness an increasing unrest in the Ekhena people and a deteriorating faith in their Queen's acumen.

Due to the demeaning ordeal Bodaecia's family recently suffered, the Queen is no longer the patient and forgiving ruler she once was. Now she is swift and severe in her conduct and methodology.

She will not hesitate to thrust a player out of the Ekhena settlement, or if the insult is severe enough, subject them to pitiless punitive measures for their transgression. She has endured enough disgrace at the hands of Emperor Claud and she will suffer no more.

Archdruid Ferdorich

No one knows from whence Ferdorich came or where it is he goes. Though everyone knows of Ferdorich, no one knows where to find him.

When the Ekhena people are asked about Ferdorich, they will say that his passing is like the seasons. He comes and he goes as he pleases and his passing scarcely brings good tidings with it. For this reason, some of the people are concerned for their Queen and worry that perhaps she has blindly stumbled into a snare of ill-intent under the guise of a blessing. Should the players decide to confront Ferdorich, they will need to either;

- Find an ancient ritual buried deep within the oldest existing libraries
  or
- Seek the oral traditions of an elder spiritualist.

This should be done only if a player has chosen a Sage or Cloistered Scholar background and succeeds in a **DC 20 History** check.

Otherwise the players will need to wait until the next summer solstice when Ferdorich visits the Ekhena people in order to receive their sacrifice.

Arch Druid Ferdorich uses the stats of an **Archdruid** (VGtM, p 210).

Warrior Queen Bodaecia

Medium Humanoid (Human), Chaotic Neutral

Armor Class 18
Hit Points 229 (11d8 + 11)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Str +9, Dex +8, Con +8
Skills Athletics +9, Intimidation +8, Perception +5, Persuasion +8
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages Common and one other
Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Indomitable (3/Day). Queen Bodaecia can reroll a saving throw it fails. She must use the new roll.

Survivor. Queen Bodaecia regains 10 hit points at the start of her turn if she has at least 1 hit point but fewer hit points than half her hit point maximum.

Actions

Multiattack. *Bodaecia makes two weapon attacks.*

Spear of Sacrifice. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit*: 12 (1d8+7) piercing damage, or 10 (1d6+7) piercing damage if used with one hand to make a melee attack.

Blood Oath. When the Queen hits with a melee attack using the spear and reduces the target to 0 hit points, she gains 12 (4d6) temporary hit points.

At Any Cost. If Queen Bodaecia is not able to use *Blood Oath* on any of her foes, she will choose to sacrifice the life of her people to add to her stamina instead.

When she drops to or below 70 hit points, she may target one of her own people that she is able to fell in one strike with her spear.

Short bow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit*: 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

Legendary Actions

Queen Bodaecia can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Queen Bodaecia regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

Weapon Attack. Queen Bodaecia makes a weapon attack.

Command Ally. Queen Bodaecia targets one ally she can see within 30 feet of her. If the target can see and hear her, the target can make one weapon attack as a reaction and gains advantage on the attack roll.

Frighten Foe (Costs 2 Actions). Queen Bodaecia targets one enemy she can see within 30 feet of her. If the target can see and hear her, the target must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened until the end of the Queen's next turn.

Spear of Sacrifice

Weapon (spear), uncommon (requires attunement)

Though Queen Bodaecia has her people's best interests at heart, even the noblest intentions can be led astray in desperate circumstances.

In hearing of the Queen's plight, Archdruid Ferdorich bestowed a "blessing" upon the late king Erasprus' spear. He claimed this blessing bound the king's judgment to the weapon and assured the Queen would have her vengeance because the king called for Emperor Claud's annihilation.

Ferdorich warned that for every summer solstice which passed that the Emperor continued to live, she would be required to offer an Ekhena child instead. If she failed to follow through with this oath, the blessing would fade from king Erasprus' spear and Ferdorich foretold the end of the Ekhena people as recompense.

Ferdorich's blessing has turned the spear into a +2 weapon that draws life from those it kills and grants stamina to the wielder to continue fighting.

When you hit with a melee attack using this magic spear and reduce the target to 0 hit points, you gain 12 (4d6) temporary hit points.

Ownership of the Spear. If the players acquire this spear from Bodaecia before Emperor Claud's death, they are beholden to the oath attached to the spear. If the Emperor is not slain with the spear before the next summer solstice, the players must provide a sacrifice worthy in the eyes of Ferdorich, otherwise the spear loses its magical properties.

Brondike Deepdelver

By Alan Tucker
Artist: Hopsy



Brondike is a dealer in fine art, antiquities, and precious gems. He has a finely appointed shop in the most prestigious market area in town, where all the noble and wealthy tend to shop. His gregarious personality is only matched in flamboyance by his meticulously groomed and dyed hair and beard. He is, at once, loathed and treasured by all the highborn in the city, and beyond— loathed for his outlandishness and propensity for gossip, and treasured for his ability to discern and procure art of the highest quality and value.

Background

Brondike was born and raised as a typical dwarf, destined for spending his days in dark mine shafts and plying his strength and rough hands to working stone and metal. His quick wit and adoration of art and performance, however, eventually led him into conflict with his parents and his clan, and their desires for his life. He was given a choice of conformity or banishment and gladly chose the latter.

He amassed a fortune, buying baubles from uneducated adventurers who only wanted fast cash from their dungeon-crawling hauls, then selling the unusual trinkets to the rich and pretentious at a substantial mark up. He invested in property, constantly looking for undervalued structures with hidden secrets, then turning them into desirable business locations or residences. As a result of his shrewd dealings he has amassed a great deal of real estate within the city, unbeknownst to most who do business with Brondike.

While his boisterous, gossipy nature is his true personality, Brondike also knows how to gather and keep secrets. Being an unabashed patron of the arts, he has acquired a stable of performers, painters, and sculptors who he hires out to the wealthy for private parties, as well as for portrait and bust commissions. These artists are not only skilled in their craft, they are also good listeners, and Brondike keeps meticulous notes on the affairs within all the noble houses when his artists report back what they have heard.

Over the past several years, Brondike has developed an uneasy alliance with the thieves' guild in the city. Several of his properties are used as safe houses and waystations for the guild. Brondike doesn't always agree with the guild's ideals or methods, but he is enough of a pragmatist to know that they would operate without him, so why not turn a profit and stay in their good graces?

Current Motives

Brondike isn't interested in politics, but he will do everything in his power to make sure the business climate stays as is within the city. He is not above using his vast stores of intimate secrets for a little blackmail, though he usually does it through intermediaries, keeping his own reputation unsullied.

Brondike can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **An information giver** – he keeps his ears open when adventurers visit his shop and he has a way of gleaning information from patrons.
- **A quest giver** – he's collected a few maps which may lead the adventurers to lost treasure.
- **A fence** – Brondike knows ways of selling 'acquired' items, and he does so with a 20% handling fee.
- **A merchant** – Brondike both buys and sells rare items. He'd be more than happy to purchase art and antiquities from adventurers at a rate of 60% current market value.
- **A benefactor** - Introducing the PCs to the local thieves' guild— indirectly, of course.
- **A patron** - Taking an interest in any PCs with artistic talent, or those good at gathering sensitive information.

Long Term Motives

Someday, Brondike would like to go back to his parents and dwarven clan and make their lives as miserable as they did his in his younger years. More than once he has tried to surreptitiously buy the land where he grew up, so that he could have the pleasure of evicting his former clanmates and letting them know who put them out of a home.

Flaws

Brondike's garish tastes and boisterous nature make him hard to handle in anything but small doses. He is also aware of this and sometimes even becomes a caricature of himself when dealing with someone who he has little tolerance for, or when he comes upon a situation he's uncomfortable with. As a result, he has no true friends and he sees everyone as a tool— a means to an end. This callous side has led to the untimely demise of a handful of his artists over the years. While Brondike is unequaled in appreciation of the arts, he is absolutely ruthless regarding anyone who crosses him in any way— real or perceived.

Brondike Deepdelver in Waterdeep

Though he has real estate holdings throughout Waterdeep, Brondike's prestigious shop of art and antiquities surely sits within the Sea Ward at the intersection of Diamond and Ivory.

Brondike Deepdelver

Medium humanoid (hill dwarf), Chaotic neutral

Armor Class 13 (leather armor +2)
Hit Points 17 (3d8 + 4)
Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)

Skills Deception +5, Insight +4, Persuasion +5
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Common, Dwarvish, Elvish, Gnomish
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Dwarven Resilience. Brondike has advantage on saving throws against poison, and he has resistance against poison damage.

Stone Cunning. Whenever Brondike makes an Intelligence (History) check related to the origin of stonework, he is considered proficient in the History skill and adds +5 to the check, instead of his normal proficiency bonus.

Actions

Lil' Thumper - Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

Lil' Thumper

Weapon (Club), Common

Getting hit with this club can literally knock someone on their bottom.

A creature hit by this club must succeed on a DC 10 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Brulgurt the 'Cleaver'

By: Micah Watt
Artist: Daniel Comerci

"You think you smart? I lured you here. They don't call me the Cleaver for nuthin. You think you tough? Let's find out…"

Background

Brulgurt is not an ordinary troll. Unlike many of his kind he thinks before he acts, the legacy of an unfortunate encounter with a tribe of orcs that took his right hand.

With a small tribe of conquered goblins, Brulgurt sets cunning traps for travelers, explorers, and adventurers, luring them with rumors of treasure only to fall upon them at their most vulnerable. Once he has taken two or three victims, he moves on before he can be the target of a concerted hunt.

Brulgurt used to rule a section of the Wood of Sharp Teeth east of Baldur's Gate. He was undisputed until a nomadic tribe of orcs moved through. Their chief – aided by a shaman – severed his hand and drove him away. To his surprise his hand did not regrow, and he later discovered the shaman had magically preserved it, stealing his ability to regenerate it somehow. All other wounds healed as normal, but the hand did not.

Enraged, he assaulted the tribe, but they had taken a defensible temple ruin as a home base and he barely escaped with his life. He wandered the woods for a time, slaughtering beasts randomly until he realized that he needed magic to defeat the orc chief and his shaman to retrieve his hand.

He crafted himself a crude prosthetic claw of jagged and rotting bones (from the remains of former kills), and set out to find creatures with magic to take. The local fey beings escaped or confounded his attempts to subdue them, though he did eventually conquer some goblins. The



pathetic creatures were weak, but cunning, and when they could not produce the magic he sought, spun tales of fantastic magic objects adventurers's often possessed. Together, with his wicked slaves, he hatched plans to lure adventurers to him and take their magic for his own. One of the fawning goblins named him the 'Cleaver' "on account of how smart he was".

Brulgurt sends his minions forth with fake treasure maps leading to ambush sites, or to spread rumors in towns or villages (which involves slaughtering all but one villager, then telling them where to find treasure). Occasionally, when he is ready to move on, Brulgurt sends a couple of goblins on a raid they can't succeed on (such as attacking a guardhouse or heavily defended caravan) and then converts the camp into an ambush site. When the cowardly goblins

inevitably disclose the camp's location, he turns the tables on the hunters.

Current Motives

Brulgurt has yet to acquire magic powerful enough to overcome the shaman and retrieve his hand, so he continues to lay ambushes until he does.

He recently encountered Velen "Viper" Raddlemark (see entry in this book) and obtained a nasty scar from the hunter's magic dagger. The hunter escaped and Brulgurt would very much like to slay him and take the weapon.

Brulgurt can be used as a villain as follows:

- **A Treasure Map** – The party discovers a crude treasure map that leads to an ancient burial mound or temple ruins marked as "Mutch Golds Heer".

- **A Hunt** – Brulgurt has lingered in the area too long and an adventurer escaped the last ambush, returning with the tale. A local lord is hiring mercenaries to deal with the threat.

- **Bait** – Velen'Viper' Raddlemark (see entry in this supplement) has located Brulgurt and seeks to hire adventurers to weaken his foe. He tells the party it's a bandit hunt but does not disclose the troll's nature or cunning.

Long Term Motives

Brulgurt wants revenge on the shaman of the Tribe of the Troll Claw (as they are now known), and to recover his hand and somehow reattach it. Once he has accumulated magic items of either significant power or number (to arm his goblins) he intends to attack the orc stronghold.

Flaws

Brulgurt is cunning, but myopic. Any traps set will be difficult to avoid, and once his targets seem weakened or he has the advantage he will attack with direct force. He is relatively easy to fool with a ploy of weakness.

Similarly, he is not too bright by adventurer standards. His ambushes could be avoided or circumvented. He might also be able to be negotiated with if the adventurers can convince him they could slay the shaman and return his hand.

Details of the Tribe of the Troll Claw are covered in the adventure *The Temple of the Opal Goddess* on the Dungeon Masters Guild.

https://www.dmsguild.com/product/217584/Temple-of-the-Opal-Goddess

Brulgurt the 'Cleaver'

Large giant, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor, *ring of protection*)
Hit Points 84 (8d10+40)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	20 (+5)	7 (-2)	9 (-1)	7 (-2)

Saving Throws Str +5, Dex +2, Con +6, Int -1, Wis 0, Cha -1
Skills Perception +2, Stealth +4 (advantage)
Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Common, Goblin, Giant, Orc
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Keen Smell. Brulgurt has advantage on Wisdom (perception) checks that rely on smell.

Regeneration. Brulgurt regenerates 10 hit points at the start of his turn. If he takes acid or fire damage, this trait does not function at the start of the troll's next turn. Brulgurt dies only if he starts his turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Actions

Multiattack. Brulgurt makes three melee attacks: one with his bite, one with his club, and one with his prosthetic claw.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. one target. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Prosthetic Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. one target. Hit: 11 (3d4 + 4) piercing damage. Target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failure the target gains the poisoned condition for 1 hour.

Treasure. *ring of protection, cloak of elvenkind, wand of magic missiles, potion of flying, potion of invisibility, potion of fire resistance.*

Tactics. Whenever possible Brulgurt chooses the encounter site and rigs it with 1d3 + 1 traps (select appropriate traps from the DMG, p 122-123).

He is always accompanied by at least 6 **goblins** but may have up to 13 (which is the total of his current tribe).

While loathe to use any consumable items, Brulgurt understands the nature of his gathered treasure and uses it if he believes there is better magic to be gained, or is at risk of death.

He freely uses the *wand of magic missiles* on flying or hard to reach targets, but again tries to keep at least one charge remaining to avoid potential loss of the item.

Cephelosk Vezrizz

By Al Spader
Art: Eric Lofgren
Cartography: Jeff C. Stevens

Cephelosk is a trader and smuggler who sails his ship "The Astral Vengeance" all around the Sea of Swords. Cephelosk's home is on a small island just outside The Whale Bones. It is here that Cephelosk plans his jobs and stores his wealth.

Cephelosk has trade permits for all the major cities along the Sword Coast and can often be found at the docks of Neverwinter, Baldur's Gate, or even Waterdeep. Cephelosk often asks his crew to aid with some of his more questionable actions. If a crew member questions Cephelosk's motivations, their brains make a tasty meal for the Mind Flayer.

Rumors abound about Cephelosk's bond with the creatures of the sea. It has been reported that when he raids, he is assisted by various cetaceans. Stories even speak of a bond with a Kraken.



Background

Growing up in a mind flayer hive, Cephelosk learned how to contribute to The Grand Design. His purpose was to capture travelers and traders on the Darklake. Cephelosk operated with a small crew who called themselves the Silent Savants. With his crew by his side, and his flying nautiloid ship, Cephelosk brought a vast number of minds for his Elder Brain to consume and assimilate.

On his last mission with his crew, Cephelosk captured a particularly rowdy group of duergar. Transporting the group back to the hive took longer than the Silent Savants has anticipated. What they didn't know was that something awful had befallen their hive during this extended absence.

When the Silent Savants got to the hive, they found every single mind flayer dead and their elder brain shredded to pieces. After they had recovered from the trauma and accepted that the Grand Design had done this for a purpose, the Silent Savants were attacked by a combined force of githzerai and githyanki. The two groups did battle for several days while the Silent Savants fell back to the Darklake.

When they arrived at the Darklake, the Silent Savants boarded their nautiloid ship and attempted to flee. The gith pursued the nautiloid above ground and were eventually able to damage it enough that it plummeted two hundred feet from the sky, landing in the Sea of Swords. When Cephelosk awoke, he was on the shore of an island, bodies of mind flayers washed up on

the shore next to him. One by one Cephelosk counted his fallen crew members and laid them to rest. He was utterly alone.

After several days on the island, Cephelosk heard a voice in his head:

"You wish revenge on the evil people who destroyed your hive?" it asked.

"Yes, I would kill every last gith in all of this and every plane, a hundred times over if possible," Cephelosk responded.

"Very well, step into the waters and be reborn. Know this, there will be no going back to your people or any hive should you walk in."

With the only other choice death by starvation, Cephelosk stepped into the water.

Current Motives

Cephelosk's main goal is to collect a massive hoard of precious metals, gems, and pieces of art to trade to Taegmyrlos the Kraken in exchange for transport to Limbo in order to assault the Gith Empire.

Cephelosk can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **An information giver** – While traveling the ports of the Sword Coast, Cephelosk has heard many rumors and is willing to share them for a price.
- **A quest giver** – Cephelosk often hires adventurers to complete smuggling and raiding jobs. He will often make the raids sound more lawful than they truly are.
- **Transportation** – When Cephelosk travels from one port to the next, he will often offer free room and board on his ship, however, he asks the passengers to help with raiding and/or smuggling goods to the destination city.

Long Term Motives

Someday, Cephelosk, with his army of undersea allies, wishes to annihilate the Gith Empire and create a new mind flayer hive in Limbo. In this hive, the Gith will be transformed into mind flayer hybrids.

Flaws

Cephelosk is overly confident and prideful. He truly believes that he is controlling Taegmyrlos the kraken and fully thinks that he can extract revenge on the gith for destroying his hive. Unbeknownst to Cephelosk, Taegmyrlos actually traded information about his hive to the Gith that slaughtered it.

Cephelosk is prone to bouts of uncontrollable anger even though he is normally calm and pleasant to socialize with. These bouts of anger are typically triggered by his plans not working out as he anticipated or if a gith is in his presence.

Cephelosk's need to feed is usually satiated by the brains of sea mammals such as whales and dolphins, however, if he is spending an extended time away from the water, he is prone to consuming the brains of vagrants. He always makes sure to lure them to a secluded location before committing the act and then disposes of the body after.

Cephelosk's Lair

Cephelosk uses a small, uncharted island northwest of the Whale Bones as his home. With a large, concealed chamber in the front for the Astral Vengeance, this small set of caverns is where Cephelosk stores his hoard and his memories of the hive. He also uses the lair for planning his raids, and for negotiating with other creatures of ill repute.

Area 1. The Docks

This fifty-foot tall chamber is well hidden as from a distance the rocks all blend together creating the illusion that the rock face is solid. Only upon close inspection can a seafarer recognize there is a cavern in the cliff face.

A massive wooden dock runs down the left side of the cavern allowing for The Astral Vengeance to tie off and be protected from the weather. Other ships can anchor within the chamber but must use row boats to get to shore.

The Docks are protected by Cephelosk's pet **killer whale** (CR 3, MM, p 331) named Zellox. Zellox is fed the corpses of seals and dolphins whose brains have been consumed by Cephelosk.

Area 2. The Warded Halls

Two passages lead from the docks to the lair proper. Both passages are warded by psionically charged runes that look like carved stone. Saying the passphrase "Maelstrom Burns" deactivates the runes for 1 minute. If the runes are crossed



without saying the passphrase, a high-pitched buzzing occurs and characters within 20 feet of the runes must succeed on a **DC 17 Intelligence** saving throw or be affected by the *feeblemind* spell.

The right passage leads to the Meeting Room. On the way there is a giant pile of boulders blocking a small room. This pile of boulders has been placed there by Cephelosk using a *telekinesis* spell. Getting through the boulders is near impossible without ten **DC 20 Athletics** checks to move each enormous boulder or the use of a *telekinesis* spell.

The left passage also leads to the meeting room but branchesto the left into Cephelosk's study.

Area 3. The Hoard

Cephelosk's hoard is protected from prying eyes by a wall of boulders that has been placed there with a *telekinesis* spell. The room is actually an old weathered deep sea trench that used to fill with water. Millennia of tectonic activity have closed off the trench and eventually it dried out. The rench is seventy-five feet deep and is filled with the loot from all of Cephelosk's raids.

Cephelosk's most precious item in his hoard is "Silverclaw". Silverclaw is a +3 silvered scimitar that Cephelosk pulled from the dead hand of the legendary Sea Captain, Lucius Van Slevin. Lucious was a pirate who sailed the Sea of Swords and tried to board the Astral Vengeance. Van Slevin had no idea his opposing captain was a mind flayer. Cephelosk stunned Van Slevin and then ate his brain. The rest of Van Slevin's crew gawked in terror and fled. Cephelosk didn't pursue; he wanted the crew to spread word of his name.

Area 4. The Meeting Room

The meeting room is decorated rather regally with loot from Cephelosk's raids. The focal point of the room is a large table created from the shell of a nautilus turned on its side. A cloth map of the Sea of Swords often covers the table but when he has visitors, Cephelosk makes sure to put it away.

Along the far wall is a pool of water where Cephelosk keeps his pet **giant octopus**, Reinholst. When he is on missions, Reinholst often swims beneath the Astral Vengeance alongside Zellox.

When Cephelosk has visitors, he will gather them in the meeting room to discuss trade and tactics. The mind flayer oftentimes spoils his guest with delicious seafood as well as valuable baubles. With his guests happy and comfortable, Cephelosk feels he can more easily manipulate them.

Area 5. The Study

Cephelosk's study is filled with bookshelves piled high with old books. The books are meticulously organized into shelves of history, poetry, arcana, religion, the planes, and music.

A large, upholstered chair sits in the center of the room as does a large desk that is always strewn with notes and other interesting writings. Sometimes, when he is feeling rushed, Cephelosk may even leave out some of his personal poetry that he has tried repeatedly to write but has failed horribly at.

Cephelosk has a massive collection of books about planar travel and specifically Limbo. All of the books have meticulous notes in their margins. There is even a book that Cephelosk apparently wrote himself, detailing a mind flayer who sought revenge on a clan of Githzerai who attacked his hive. The book ends with the mind flayer capturing the Githzerai party and turning them into mind flayer hybrids.

Area 6. The Reflection Room

Perhaps the most intriguing room in Cephelosk's lair is the Reflection room. The walls of the room are lined with stone alcoves. Within the alcoves rests miscellaneous items from Cephelosk's hive.

Years after he made a deal with the Kraken, Cephelosk returned to his home hive. He walked into a tomb. The rooms looked exactly as they did the day he fled. The decayed skeletal remains of his hive members still lay where they had fallen. It was at this moment where Cephelosk truly felt grief.

In his moment of grief, Cephelosk devised a plan to convert the Gith Empire into mind flayers and to use them to create a hive of his own. It was then that Cephelosk realized that his grief made him more powerful, more dangerous.

In order to remember his first experience with grief, Cephelosk gathered trinkets and baubles from the remains throughout the hive. He also took items from each mind flayer's dwelling and brought them to his lair.

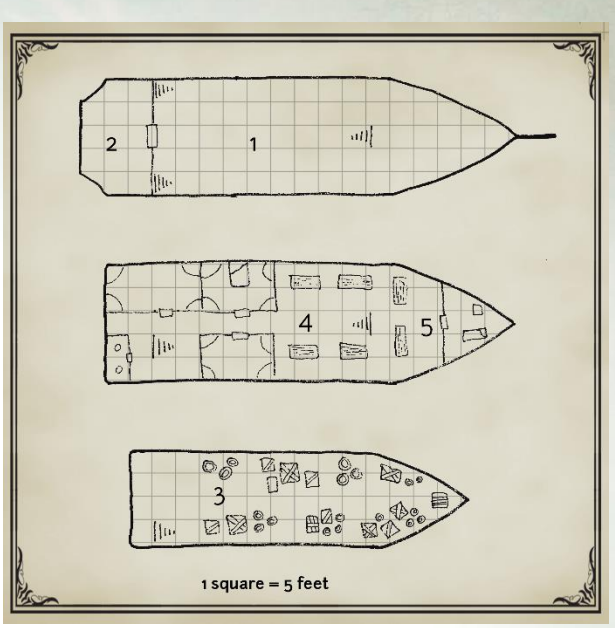
Cephelosk visits this room before he rests and repeats each mind flayer's name as he looks at the items that belonged to them. Cephelosk always finishes the ritual by saying, "You will not be forgotten, you will be avenged!"

The Astral Vengeance

Given to him by the great Kraken Taegmyrlos, the ship Cephelosk named The Astral Vengeance is sleek and fast. It is Cephelosk's belief that striking quickly and then getting away is far more important than weighing a ship down with weaponry and men.

The ship is painted black on its exterior and its sails are a deep purple to help with night time stealth. Cephelosk's flag atop the mainsail is a black background with a white nautilus shell.

Being sleek and fast has its advantages. Most important to Cephelosk is that the ship can be crewed by few people, requiring only half a dozen sailors to man the riggings and generate tremendous speeds.



Area 1. The Main Deck

The main deck of the ship is painted in a swirling pattern of multiple shades of blue. Cephelosk believes this pattern will make the ship blend in with the water to anything flying above it.

The two masts of the ship are fairly close together and their wide, triangular sails provide speed and maneuverability.

Every five feet along the railings of the ship are hundred-pound weights chained to the main deck. The weights are used for two purposes, the first of which is to wrap around enemies trying to board the ship. The crewmen wrap the chains around the boarders and then shove the weights off the railing into the sea below. The second use is for evasive maneuvers. If the *Astral Vengeance* needs to make a quick slice through the waters, the crew is instructed to push all the weights overboard in succession, dipping that side of the ship closer to the water and thus making a shorter turn.

Area 2. The Captain's Quarters

Located beneath the poop deck, Cephelosk's quarters are used to plan missions and to treat

with prospective allies or marks. A nautilus shell table, similar to the one in Cephelosk's meeting room but much smaller, sits under the windows on the far wall of the room. Lavish upholstered chairs surround the table, which is often used for dining instead of planning. A stone slab that Cephelosk uses as a bed sits along the port wall.

Area 3. The Hold

Located at the bottom of the ship, this is where all legal goods are stored. Food and drink for the crew, as well as other necessities needed for weeks at sea, are also stored here.

This is also where Cephelosk will store supplies or goods that he is transporting to other cities and villages. This hold is always open for port inspectors the moment the *Astral Vengeance* docks.

Area 4. The Barracks

This room, which runs almost the entire length of the ship, is where travelers and employees sleep when they aren't working. Hammocks dangle from the ceiling and each person is given a footlocker to store their things in.

Many sections of floor here aren't fastened to the ship proper and can be removed to reveal half a dozen 5 ft. x 5 ft. smuggling compartments. The wooden covers are set in such a way that they are flush with the floor and can only be removed by using *telekinesis*. This is where Cephelosk stores any illicit items or even people that he might be transporting.

At the stern of this room is a magically locked door that only Cephelosk knows the password to open. Anyone traveling with him is instructed to not tamper with the door under the penalty of brain consumption.

Area 5. The Locked Door

Beyond the locked door is a small staircase leading up to a landing that sits two feet above the water. Cephelosk uses this platform to communicate with his ocean allies. Zellox the killer whale will often surface here and await commands from Cephelosk. If there are any other ocean animals the mind flayer is communicating with, he will also ask them to visit here.

When he is feeling lost or nostalgic, Cephelosk will often come to this platform and stare at the stars. He will often try to communicate with Taegmyrlos the Kraken and ask him for guidance. More often than not, Taegmyrlos doesn't reply.

Cephelosk, Mindflayer Sailor

Medium aberration, lawful evil

Armor Class 15 (breastplate)
Hit Points 71 (13d8 + 13)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)	18 (+3)	18 (+3)

Saving Throws Int +8, Wis +7, Cha +3
Skills Arcana +8, Deception +6, Insight +8, Navigator's Tools +8, Perception +6, Persuasion +6, Stealth +4, Water Vehicles +8
Senses darksight 120 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages Common, Deep Speech, Undercommon
Challenge 7 (2900 XP)

Magic Resistance. The mind flayer has advantage on saving throws and other magical effects.

Innate Spellcasting (Psionics). The mind flayer's innate spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +8 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells requiring no components:
At will: detect thoughts, levitate, vicious mockery
1st level (4 slots): *charm person, command, sleep, dissonant whispers*
2nd level (3 slots): *mind spike, crown of madness, phantasmal force*
3rd level (3 slots): *slow, fear, hypnotic pattern*
4th level (3 slots): *confusion, phantasmal killer*
5th level (2 slots): *synaptic static, telekinesis*

Actions

Tentacles. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) psychic damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 15) and must succeed on a DC 16 Intelligence saving throw or be stunned until the grapple ends.

Extract Brain. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one incapacitated humanoid grappled by the mind flayer. *Hit*: The target takes 55 (10d10) piercing damage. If this damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the mind flayer kills the target by extracting and devouring its brain.

Mind Blast (Recharge 5-6). The mind flayer magically emits psychic energy in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence saving throw or take 22 (4d8 + 4) psychic damage and be stunned for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Clan Brothersguts

By Jean Lorber
Artist: provided by Wizards of the Coast

The remnants of an extended goblin family serve as bounty hunters and provisioners for a dark lord of the Feywild. Two brothers run the clan, but they have a tenuous relationship, a fact that could be exploited by attentive players.

Background

The original goblin clan arrived in the Feywild by chance—running through a portal while being chased by adventurers. They soon ran afoul of a Fey lord who subdued them. For his own amusement, the lord told the goblins he'd spare any who slay their own kin. A cruel, bloody melee ensued and while the lord did indeed spare those few left, the clan's bonds were shattered by this dark event.

The goblins now do the Fey lord's bidding. Their primary tasks are capturing Fey creatures to serve as his slaves and collecting dangerous ingredients for his spell components. The lord augmented some with painful and dark Fey magic and gave them weapons of cold iron, a dreadful substance to Fey creatures.

Mangribeed and his brother **Apiplek** lead the clan, but a recent dispute over a captured dryad has led to hard feelings. Morale has never been lower, but their lord has demands, so a-hunting they must go. The clan consists of the two brothers (stat blocks below), 4 **goblin bosses** (MM) and 4 **goblins** (MM). The latter two groups are armed with cold iron versions of their normal weapons, which do an extra d6 damage to any target of Fey origin.

Apiplek keeps a secret from his brother: he hides some of the creatures they capture in his "workshop" (a large, hollowed-out tree). He is seeking magic that could kill their Fey lord, but he knows his brother wouldn't approve of this risky plan. His collection, if discovered, would likely mean death for them all.



Current Motives

Mangribeed leads his small troop on sorties from the Feywild into Faerun, searching for colonies of Fey creatures, mostly in forests. His only goal is to capture a powerful Fey creature like a ki-rin or unicorn, which will bring him accolades from his lord. Success has eluded him so far.

Players could encounter Mangribeed in a small, rough camp, taking inventory of their latest raid and bossing his clanmates around. His paranoid mutterings can be overheard: *"Can't turn my back on you rats for a second, hrrm drrm..." "You'd like to stick a knife in my back, I just know…"*

Apiplek's goal is to collect more creatures for his own project while not arousing any suspicions. He is the better hunter, and scouts ahead for prey. Players could encounter Apiplek by himself in the dark understory of a forest, rummaging through hollow tree stumps and sniffling the air for the scent of Feylings. He can be heard to whisper: *"Where are you, my pretty things? I must have your magic…"*

Any PCs with a Fey or Feywild connection could easily have story hooks that involve the Brothersguts clan. They could be used in the following roles

- **Bounty hunters** - The goblins work for the Fey lord, but occasionally take on side jobs to make money. Someone from the PCs' past hires the clan to capture, torture and return the offending individual.

- **Guerilla terrorists** - Even without an army, Mangribeed wants to harass the village that ran him out of Faerun (see 'Long Term Motives' below). The clan hides in the nearby forest, waiting for a festival or some other time when the village's defenses would be dropped.

- **Dealmakers** - The brothers already possess a key NPC/item that the players need. They are securely lodged in a fortified position and therefore difficult to attack. Let the bargaining begin.

- **Information delivery** - During their travels, the brothers have learned a good deal about the plans of evil creatures around Faerun. They'll trade their knowledge for natural spell components (**DC18 Intelligence (Nature)** and d4 days to find).

- **Guide** - Players wishing to enter the Feywild or traverse a dangerous section of wilderness could strike a deal with Mangribeed. He betrays them to his lord the first chance he gets in hopes of a large reward.

Long Term Motives

Mangribeed seeks to please their Fey lord in hopes that he'll be rewarded with freedom and riches. This will enable him to enact his dearest wish: to return to the village that chased him out of Faerun, terrorize it, and burn it to the ground (with the help of a hired monster army).

Apiplek seeks to overthrow their Fey lord with powerful magic, obtained from his captives. One such pixie has promised to help, and Apiplek is smuggling spell components to her.

Flaws

Mangribeed is needlessly paranoid about fratricide, constantly on guard against Apiplek. If Apiplek's workshop is revealed, he sees it as a clear sign of treachery and attacks his brother.

Apiplek is loyal to Mangribeed. He risked his life to defend his brother during the clan's forced fight. Mangribeed's continued suspicion therefore hurts him deeply, which quickly becomes apparent during conversation. If his workshop is revealed he tries to explain his reasoning to his brother, then attacks those that revealed it.

Mangribeed Brothersguts

Medium humanoid (goblin), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15
Hit Points 50
Speed 30 ft, climb 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)

Condition Immunities none
Skills Nature +5, Intimidation +6,
Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Goblin, Fey, Common
Challenge 2 (450 XP)
Nimble Escape. The goblin can take the Disengage or Hide action as a Bonus Action on each of its turns.

Actions

Multi-attack. Mangribeed makes two claw attacks.

Cold Iron claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 11 (2d8+3) slashing damage plus an extra d6 damage if the target is of Fey origin. If the target is of Fey origin, it must make a DC12 Constitution saving throw or be Weakened for 2 rounds.

Helm of charm-turning

Wonderous Item, rare (requires attunement)

The wearer of this cold iron helmet has Advantage on saving throws versus spells from the enchantment school of magic. In addition, each successful save against such spells grants the wearer temporary hit points equal to their Wisdom modifier.

Apilplek Brothersguts

Medium humanoid (goblin), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 15
Hit Points 60
Speed 30 ft., climb 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	8 (-1)

Condition Immunities none
Skills Nature +5, Perception +5, Survival +5
Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Goblin, Fey, Common
Challenge 3 (700 XP)
Nimble Escape: The goblin can take the Disengage or Hide action as a Bonus Action on each of its turns.

Actions

Multi-attack. Apiplek makes two dagger attacks and one whip attack.

Cold Iron dagger. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 20/50ft., one creature. *Hit:* 6 (d4+3) piercing damage plus an extra d6 damage if the target is of Fey origin. Apiplek carries 6 daggers.

Cold Iron Whip. *Melee Weapon Attack*: DC13 Dexterity saving throw, reach 15 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 11 (2d8+3) slashing damage and the target is Grappled (escape DC 13). Until the grapple ends, the target is Restrained and has disadvantage on Strength Checks and Strength saving throws.

Circlet of the Iron Whip

Wonderous Item, rare (requires attunement)

The wearer of the circlet sprouts tendrils of cold iron filaments from their head (up to 15 feet long). As long as the circlet is worn, the wearer can wield these attached filaments as a whip, gaining the Cold Iron Whip attack and a +1 to attack and damage rolls using the whip.

Clan Kerrhylon Hirrathak

By: Troy E. Taylor
Artist: Daniel Comerci

Hirrathak, a dragonborn clad in the rough-hewn hides of a druid, sets a brisk pace on the woodland path. He leads with his oak staff, probing the ground ahead for snares and soft ground.

He offers a toothy, encouraging grin as he looks back at his compatriots. They are dragonborn, too. Before this day, they were adrift in this world, their allegiance to their respective clans forgotten and even that customary dragonborn pride diminished.

But after hearing Hirrathak's inspirational words, they now hold their heads high. Their eyes are alight, each one's stride longer and purposeful. Even in this small company, there is a sense of belonging.

Hirrathak rekindled that feeling.

Now, he intends to exploit it.

Background

Hirrathak, a former soldier, once shared that feeling of despair. Once his enlistment in an army of humans and dwarves ended, he lost his sense of accomplishment. He was aimless.

Then Hirrathak wandered into the forested domain of a dragon, Kerrhylon the Green. The encounter changed his life. The dragon reminded Hirrathak of their shared kinship, the pride that all dragonkind share, their superiority to all other creatures. He noted the green tinge to Hirrathak's otherwise muddy red scales, and encouraged the dragonborn to demonstrate his breath weapon. Hirrathak unleashed a cone of poison gas -- rediscovering his draconic ancestry in the process.

"Go and recruit your sisters and brethren in my name, Hirrathak," the green dragon commanded. So Hirrathak established a new clan. He went to the villages, town, and cities where the forlorn dragonborn lived. He shared the same message that had awoken him from his slumber.



The downcast dragonborn began to follow him.

Current Motives

Hirrathak is doing the difficult work of an apostle, going from place to place, recruiting those dragonborn without purpose.

He especially visits those city-dwelling dragonborn known as "baskers," those who gather beneath the noonday sun to meditate, basking in the warmth of the rays. He applauds their devotion to the practice, noting their inclination to seek out the natural world. As a druid, he says, he can help them gain a stronger connection with nature. He invites them into Clan Kerrhylon, to join with other dragonborn in living as they were meant to, in the green forests of the world.

To aid Hirrathak, the dragon gave him *boots of levitation.*

Hirrathak can be used as an NPC in the following ways:

- **A guide**. The dragonborn will help anyone lost in the woods or unable to reach their destination, if only to demonstrate his superior abilities. He might deliver PCs to Kerrhylon as a snack, or he might escort them faithfully to their destination.

- **An itinerant preacher**. It is possible that villagers don't want to hear the dragonborn's message. The PCs come upon him being harried out of town. He might present himself as a victim.

- **As the leader** of a forest compound. In this community filled with mostly dragonborn followers, he welcomes all, as long as any visitors recognize the superiority of the dragonkin and behave accordingly.

- **As a military leader**. The PCs encounter him as he leads a warparty of dragonborn attempting to take over a village.

Long Term Motives

In forest enclaves, Hirrathak and the green dragon Kerrhylon indoctrinate their followers in the superiority of the dragon races. These dragonborn are fed a steady diet of propaganda, telling them it is their destiny to hold positions of authority over other races. Their goal is to build a following sufficiently large enough to capture nearby villages, bring them under dragonborn control, then slowly build out. Kerrhylon will be a new power in the region. Hirrathak will be its chief priest and enforcer. Their dragonborn followers will form a loyal army and faithfully subjugate any peoples they encounter.

Flaws

Despite his new philosophy, Hirrathak retains feelings of loyalty and comradeship with the humans and dwarves he once fought alongside in the army. If he meets any of them — or even their close relatives — he will treat them as an exception to his requirement that dragonborn be obeyed in all things

Hirrathak

Medium humanoid (dragonborn), neutral evil

Armor Class 11
Hit Points 27 (5d8 + 5)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	11 (+1)

Skills Medicine +4, Nature +3, Perception +4
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages Common, Draconic and Druidic
Damage resistance: Poison
Draconic ancestry: Green (poison, 15 ft. cone, Con save)
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Spellcasting. The dragonborn is an 4th level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following druid spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *druidcraft, shillelagh, thorn whip*
1st level (4 slots): *entangle, faerie fire, goodberry, thunderwave*
2nd level (3 slots): *hold person, spike growth*

Actions

Quarterstaff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit (+5 to hit with shillelagh), reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6+1) bludgeoning damage*, or 5 (1d8+1)* bludgeoning damage with *shillelagh* or if wielded with two hands.

Poison breath. The dragonborn exhales poisonous gas in a 15 ft. cone. Each creature in the area must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Dargin Graypaw

By: Patrick E. Pullen
Art: Patrick E. Pullen
Cartography: Rich Robinson



Dargin is a male gnoll that operates a small band of thieves out of an abandoned warehouse near the docks. The gang call themselves The Fiends.

Background

Dargin is cruel and very much a bully. He runs his organization of thieves with a tyrannical approach. The motley crew of underlings follow the gnoll mostly out of fear. He is unforgiving of mistakes and will not hesitate to torture and/or kill those who make too many.

Unfeeling and callous, the gnoll lacks any sense of empathy. Simply crossing paths with the monster could be a bad experience if he is not in a good mood.

The most mundane and trivial things can anger Dargin. It is said that he once ripped the ear off of a man because the gnoll didn't think he was listening very well.

The Fiends are made up of mostly humans, but there are also a couple of tieflings and an ill-tempered halfling in Dargin's gang. They are known for breaking into establishments during the night hours and taking the most expensive goods that they can carry. After acquiring a decent stash, the gang then peddles the goods to sailors and travelers that frequent the docks.

The gang of thieves have been known to occasionally take noble children hostage for big ransoms. After such endeavors the group tends to lay low for a while to let things cool down.

Such brashness is usually very rare and extremely well planned by Dargin himself. As much as the gnoll's anger tends to get out of hand he is not, by any means, stupid and can be very cunning.

When it comes to fighting, Dargin will do what needs to be done to ensure victory. There is no such thing as a fair fight, as far as he is concerned.

Current Motives

Dargin has amassed a small horde and seeks to grow his organization of thieves so that he can buy a large ship. He is currently looking for a big pay-off and may kidnap someone important to hold as a ransom.

Dargin can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **An information giver** – The gnoll is not against taking money in exchange for information.
- **A quest giver** – It is possible the gnoll may want to rid himself of a rival and place a bounty on one of them.
- **A fence** – Dargin can sell pretty much anything brought to him, for a hefty fee.

- **A merchant** – Dargin has a few things in his hoard that he would like to get rid of, for inflated prices of course.

Long Term Motives

Dargin's long-term goal is to eventually save up enough wealth to buy a ship and become a pirate captain on the open seas.

Flaws

A quick temper can lead the gnoll into making a mistake that he normally wouldn't. Dargin is not one to normally fall into a trap or ambush, but if angered, he may slip up.

Dargin Graypaw In Waterdeep

The Dock Ward is the obvious setting for Dargin Graypaw's warehouse hideout. The Fiends could ply their nefarious trade from Knife's Edge, Fishgut Alley, Smugglers Run or Crook Street.

Dargin Graypaw

Medium humanoid (gnoll), Chaotic Evil

Armor Class 16 (studded leather)
Hit Points 84 (13d8 + 26)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Int +3
Skills Acrobatics +7, Athletics +3, Perception +3, Persuasion +3, Stealth +7
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Common, Gnoll, thieves' cant
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Cunning Action. On each of his turns, Dargin can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Rampage. When Dargin reduces a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on his turn, he can take a bonus action to move up to half his speed and make a bite attack.

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). Dargin deals an extra 14 (4d6) damage when he hits a target with a weapon attack and had advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of Dargin that isn't incapacitated, and Dargin doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Actions

Multiattack. Dargin makes three attacks with his spear, or two attacks with his spear and one bite attack.

Spear. *Melee weapon attack:* +6 to hit, 10 ft. reach, range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, or 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

Bite. *Melee weapon attack:* +6 to hit, 5 ft. reach, one target. Hit: 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage, or 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

Dargin's Lair

Dargin lairs in an old warehouse.

Area 1: Entrance

The two large barn doors are chained and padlocked on the outside. Inside, the thieves keep the doors secure with two large wooden beams.

> The derelict warehouse appears to have not been used in quite some time. Two large barn-like doors are chained and locked shut.

Area 2: Store Room

This large open room is full of open crates and old tools. It leads intruders to believe that the place is nothing more than an old unused warehouse.

> This storage room has several crates with open lids. Old rusty tools are scattered about the area.

A successful **DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation)** or **Wisdom (Perception)** check reveals a lack of dust in well-traveled areas. This should tip the adventurers off that the place is not abandoned.

Area 3: Thieves' Chambers

The thieves' bed chamber is occupied by six rickety bunk beds. There are also four locked chests and a shabby wardrobe.

> This room smells badly and looks very unclean. Six bunk beds occupy the room, all of the sheets are stained and filthy. On the north wall is a wardrobe that has seen better days and there are four chests in the room.

During daylight hours the beds will be occupied with sleeping members of the gang.

At night there is a 40% chance that 1d4 gang members will be here, awake and hanging out. Each chest contains raggedy clothing and 1d10 gp of mixed coins. The wardrobe has many outfits used for disguises.

Area 4: Kitchen

This kitchen and dining combo is where the gang hangs out to gamble and eat. The old wood stove has seen better days. The wooden shelves contain dirty plates, cutlery, flour, and a few spices and wine bottles. A large rectangular table with 8 wobbly chairs dominates the center of the dining area.

During daylight hours there will be a 30% chance of this area being occupied with 1d4 members of the gang.

At night there is a 60% chance that 1d6 gang members will be here, awake and hanging out.

Area 5: Dargin's Chambers

The gang-leader's chamber is the best kept room in the hideout (which isn't saying much). An old but once nice four poster bed lies on the west wall. There is a locked footlocker at the foot of the bed and a slightly tilted wardrobe on the north wall. Hidden inside the wardrobe is a secret door which leads to the Hidden Loot Room in Area 6.

The secret door can be found only by actually searching. It can be found with a **DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation)** or **DC 16 Wisdom (Perception)** check.

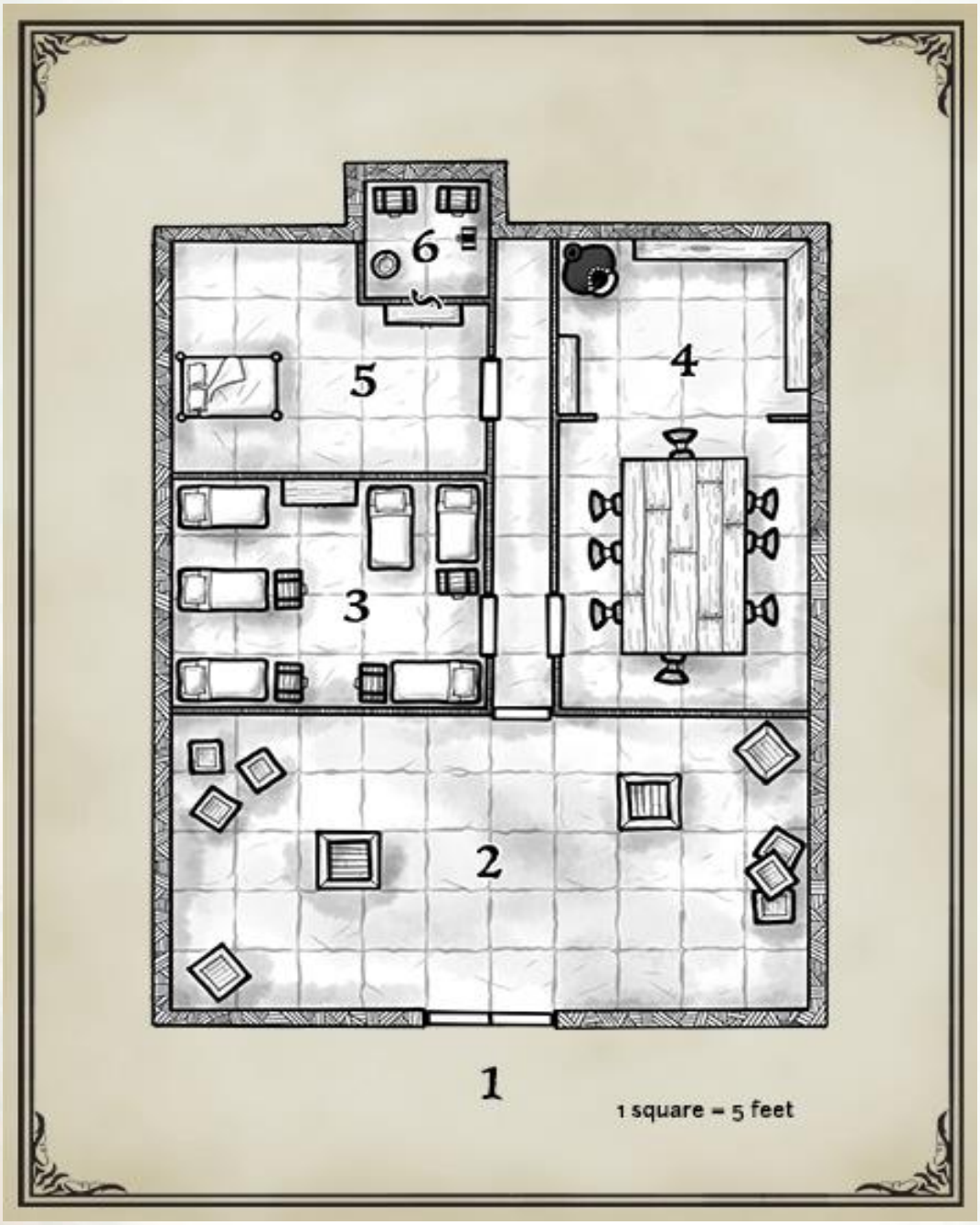
Dargin keeps odd hours and is very unpredictable. At any given time, day or night, Dargin has a 40% chance of being here in his chambers.

If you determine that he is here, there is a 50% chance that he is asleep. Note: if the PCs have made any noise while inside the hideout, Dargin will be awake. The wardrobe has a few nice sets of clothing and a nice sword with an intricate gold and leather scabbard worth 300 gp.

Area 6: Hidden Loot Room

This small hidden space contains a barrel of dwarven ale, two locked chests and a small lockbox.

Inside the chests are 300 gp of mixed jewels/ 400gp of various art, and 2,134 gp in mixed coins. There is a *ring of water walking*, a *potion of gaseous form* and a *silvered dagger +1* inside the lockbox.



Dick Blarney

By: Remley Farr
Artist: Daniel Comerci

Dick Blarney is a playboy rapscallion and debutante carouser with selfish tendencies. His recent illness, however, has caused him to reevaluate his lifestyle and values since death will take him soon.

Background

Blarney was born to a wealthy halfling family of plantation owners, welcoming him to the inner circle of high society. Sent to the best schools and pampered by countless nannies and servants, Blarney rarely learned the meaning of the word "no," except from his silent high elf master-at-arms, Colonel Yondro.

Yondro, like Blarney, was raised in a wealthy conclave and rose within the ranks of his society's military. With his people no longer at war, Yondro plied his trade to those who would pay, and Dick Blarney's family handed over substantial coin to have Colonel Yondro instruct their son in fencing—anything to establish a sense of rule within the boy. Yondro never told the child no, instead smacking him with the flat end of a rapier during moments of impudence.

The plan to tame young Blarney failed. Instead of following Colonel Yondro's austere, ordered demeanor, Blarney grew up to be even more rambunctious—but now he knew how to fight. As an adult, Blarney used his elven martial arts to fight anyone who spoke against him.

Antics can only carry a man so far, and old social smears eventually push back. Blarney's consequences caught up to him when rivals hired a peculiar assassin—an asymptomatic prostitute who carried a life-threatening disease of which she was immune, but her consorts weren't. The sickness spread through Blarney quickly, and word of his dilemma spread quicker. Now his light has faded, as all bright things do.



Current Motives

Blarney is coming to terms with his impending death, spending most of his time in his mansion. Only manservants and maids see the halfling now. He knows the world will remember him as a pig-headed idiot... but maybe he can do one good thing to redeem himself, at least in his own eyes.

Blarney can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A fighting instructor** – He is a master duelist with a whole mansion to train in. A student who learns his style would give him a sense of worth.

- **Information** – He knows the deep, dark secrets of any noble family within 100 miles and may make a deal with a party who can use his information to dethrone other scandalous individuals.

- **Inheritance** – He has no heir. His mansion estate will be seized by the local court—but if an adventuring party needs a base of operations, he could will the deed to their entourage.

- **Vengeance** – There is no redemption. There is only one last strike. Blarney forgoes his new philosophy and seeks aid in utterly destroying his enemies one-by-one.

Long Term Motives

Not much is available for Blarney in the long term. He doesn't want to father children for fear of passing his disease to them, but he wishes to be remembered for something righteous—even if only one person will think of him so.

Flaws

His about-face behavior, though well meaning, only arose because of Blarney's sudden descent. He still has deep-rooted superiority problems and can be aggressively terse with people he finds beneath him. A person of low social standing will have more issues associating with him than someone of a more aristocratic caliber.

Dick Blarney

Small humanoid (halfling), chaotic good

Armor Class 20 *(leather armor +1)*
Hit Points 66 (12d8 + 12)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)

Skills Acrobatics +8, Deception +8, Persuasion +8
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Common, Elvish, Gnomish, Halfling
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Lightfooted. Dick Blarney can take the Dash or Disengage action as a bonus action on each of his turns.

Suave Defense. While wearing light or no armor and wielding no shield, Dick Blarney's AC includes his Charisma modifier.

Actions

Multiattack. Dick Blarney makes three attacks: one ranged attack with his dagger and two unarmed strikes against a separate target. He carries 6 daggers. Once he runs out of daggers, he makes three unarmed strike attacks.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit*: 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage.

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit*: 8 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, the target must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone.

Duśan Prales

By Jean Headley
Artist: Provided by Wizards of the Coast

/DOOshan PRAHless/ – spirit of the primeval forest

Background

Duśan Prales was once a Green Knight, an elven paladin who pledged to protect the forest that was sacred to his community. He has kept this pledge faithfully for centuries, long past the time when his people lived here. The strength of his devotion coupled with the magic of the forest has changed him into a fearsome creature, unrecognizable as an elf. Over the lonely centuries his wisdom has grown, and his ability to relate to people has waned.

Hidden in the forest, the location lost to time, is a small cache containing Duśan's sword, shield, and armor. Duśan now exclusively uses *barkskin* and the magical shield and club he created from the forest.

In the past few years, people have returned to the area. They have established a small village and they are using the forest for wood and game. Duśan finds this unacceptable, since they are killing healthy trees and beasts, rather than culling the sick or weak. They are invading his home and defiling the sacred place of his people.

In addition, some sort of blight has struck his forest. Duśan has found patches of corrupted foliage scattered throughout the forest. He is spending much of his time trying to heal the patches of sick forest, and the rest of his time tracking down the source. Some days he blames the villagers, believing they have brought this corruption with them, and on these days he pays his "neighbors" a visit.



Current Motives

Duśan Prales is seeking the source of corruption that has entered his domain. In addition, he seeks to drive off the people who have built a village nearby.

Duśan Prales can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **An information giver** – he knows this forest, and surrounding lands like other people know their hands and feet. He can guide the party through, or preferably, around the forest.
- **A quest giver** – he has been unable to find the source of corruption which is plaguing him, and he is willing to help the adventurers if they are willing to help him.
- **A healer** – if the adventurers prove themselves, Duśan Prales may give them a safe place to rest, mosses and herbs for

their medicine kits, and draughts of healing water.

- **A boss or mini-boss** - Duśan Prales doesn't want people hunting in his forest, and he certainly doesn't want them cutting down trees and planting crops. He has been raiding the village livestock, and killing any villager he can catch in the forest. The villagers may contract with the party to eliminate the threat Duśan poses.

Long Term Motives

Duśan Prales still protects his beloved forest, and that is still his primary motivation. He also seeks to expand the forest and make it stronger.

Flaws

Time and magic have eroded Duśan Prales' memories. He no longer remembers that he is supposed to be a bringer of Light into dark places. He only remembers that he is the guardian of this place, and he seeks to guard it from everyone and everything. He doesn't speak much, and has nearly lost the ability to do so. Though slow and deliberate in his thoughts and decisions, he is quick to anger.

Though he has become very wise in the ways of the forest and nature, he is unable to recognize that *he* is the source of the corruption in his forest – a corruption that began only after he attacked innocent people. Each new blighted area appears after an attack on the villagers.

Duśan's club

Weapon, rare (requires attunement)

You gain a +1 bonus to melee attacks and damage rolls made with this club.

The club has three charges. Expending one charge allows you to cast the *Conjure Animals* spell as a 3rd level Druid. The club regains 1d4 - 1 charges each day at dawn.

Duśan's shield

Shield, rare

In addition to its normal AC bonus, you gain a +1 bonus to AC while using this shield.

Once per day, you may cast the *blinding smite* spell as a 3rd-level spell, adding it to a successful shield bash. Once used, this ability cannot be used again until you finish a long rest.

Duśan Prales

Medium humanoid (wood elf), true neutral

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 200 (20d10 + 80)
Speed 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	11 (+0)	19 (+4)	13 (+1)	20 (+5)	9 (-1)

Saving Throws Str +11, Con +10
Skills Hide +6, Perception +11, Survival +11
Senses Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Common, Dwarven, Elven
Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Barkskin Duśan Prales has cast *Barkskin* so often that it has become a permanent part of his being, giving him a natural AC of 17.

Fey Ancestry. Duśan Prales has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and is immune to magical sleep.

Spellcasting Duśan Prales is a 20th level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks), and he has the following spells available to him:

Cantrips (at will): speak with animals
1st level (4 slots): *ensnaring strike, command, cure wounds, purify food and drink, thunderous smite, wrathful smite*
2nd level (3 slots): *lesser restoration, misty step, moonbeam*
3rd level (3 slots): *aura of vitality, magic circle, plant growth, protection from energy, remove curse, revivify*
4th level (3 slots): *aura of purity, death ward, ice storm, staggering smite*
5th level (2 slots): *destructive wave, raise dead, tree stride*

Magical Weapons Duśan Prales' club and shield are magical.

Actions

Multiattack. Duśan Prales makes three melee attacks.

Club *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit: 10* (1d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage, plus 7 (1d4 + 5) piercing damage.

Shield Bash *Melee Weapon Attack*: +9 to hit, reach 5ft., one creature. Hit: 9 (2d4 + 5) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 17 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Eberdeb Shadowcloak

By Travis Legge
Artist: Daniel Comerci

Eberdeb Shadowcloak was once a peaceful forest gnome, content to live out his days in the sleepy village of Farandweigh. Unfortunately, fate had other plans. Caught between two warring human forces, the settlement of Farandweigh was destroyed. The gnomes there were slaughtered, and their structures razed to the ground; collateral damage in a war they had nothing to do with. Eberdeb barely survived the conflict. Now he has sworn vengeance on the tall folk for the loss of his people.



Background

Eberdeb was a loving, peaceful gnome. He spent his days marveling at the beauty of nature in the company of the tiny woodland creatures that flourished near Farandweigh. In his youth he took to the ways of the druid instinctively, rapidly mastering the basics of druidic magic. The first century of his life was spent in blissful harmony, surrounded by the animals and gnomes he so loved.

When war came to the village of Farandweigh, it spared no horrors. The forces on both sides were brutal and ruthless, bringing magical and mundane arms to bear with no restraint or concern for bystanders. Fireballs roared through the village, shattering the structures the gnomes had built. Earth elementals, summoned by careless wizards, ripped their way through gnomish burrows, trampling the small folk in their own homes. Eberdeb was knocked unconscious by a tree that had been felled by a powerful spell. When he woke, he saw nothing around him but blood and ashes.

After a tenday of mourning and ritual, Eberdeb swore revenge on the large folk. He made an oath to the spirits of Farandweigh's dead that the humans would pay for their war crimes a hundred-fold. Ever since, Eberdeb has bent every effort to make good on the promise.

Current Motives

Presently, Eberdeb fights a guerilla war against any human settlement he encounters. For the moment, he wishes to inflict maximum casualties with minimum risk, so he is playing it safe. He knows that his quest will likely end with him in a grave, but he is in no hurry to meet that fate.

Eberdeb can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **The primary villain.** Eberdeb's quest is likely to put him at direct odds with most adventuring parties. The gnome's moral approach to his quest and the reasoning behind it can make for powerful roleplaying opportunities from a group, especially if the adventurers learn the full truth behind Eberdeb's hatred of humans.

- **Ally of convenience.** If the adventurers have an adversarial relationship with a particular human or group of humans,

Eberdeb could form a temporary alliance with the party in order to take down a mutual enemy. For added complication, the DM may choose to add some motivation for the party to keep this enemy alive. Such a motivation could lead to the adventurers having to turn on Eberdeb to prevent him from killing the target late in the quest.

- **Rival.** As with the ally of convenience option, in this scenario Eberdeb and the adventurers are pursuing the same target. However, where the gnome works with the party in the ally of convenience hook, Eberdeb begins this hook as a deadly rival.

- **Hunter.** Perhaps due to a case of mistaken identity, or perhaps the party was involved in the war that destroyed Farandweigh. Whatever the reason, Eberdeb is hunting the party. He will not relent until the adventurers are destroyed. In this scenario, Eberdeb specifically targets the party for destruction.

Long Term Motives

A total of 35 gnomes lived in Farandweigh. If Eberdeb should manage to kill 350 humans, he will consider the blood debt paid. Though he has a grim outlook about his future, he will likely return to peaceful solitude in the event that he satisfies his vengeful oath.

Flaws

Eberdeb acts from pain and rage. He is not a cruel gnome, nor does he take joy in his vengeance. He feels that it is absolutely necessary and is very unlikely to be dissuaded from his cause. However, clever and empathetic adventurers may be able to plead for leniency, mercy, or otherwise convince Eberdeb to stay his hand temporarily, depending on the situation. Eberdeb will also avoid unnecessary suffering of any living thing, including the flora and fauna of a region. Crafty adventurers may use this against him with a little planning.

Cursing Dagger

Wondrous Item, rare

You gain a -1 penalty to melee attacks made with this magical weapon.

On a successful hit, the target must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or become cursed if it is a creature. The magical curse takes effect whenever the target takes a short or long rest, filling the target's thoughts with horrible images and dreams. The cursed target gains no benefit from finishing a short or long rest. The curse lasts until it is lifted by a *remove curse* spell or similar magic.

Bear Paw Gauntlet

Wondrous Item, rare

You gain a +1 bonus to armor class and a +1 bonus to melee attacks and damage rolls made with this magical gauntlet.

The Bear Paw Gauntlet deals 1d6 + 1 slashing damage. In addition, on a successful hit, a creature must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Eberdeb Shadowcloak

Small humanoid (gnome), lawful evil

Armor Class 12* (17 with *barkskin*)
Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)
Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)

Skills Medicine +5, Nature +4, Persuasion +4
Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Common, Gnomish, Dwarvish
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Spellcasting. Eberdeb is a 4th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks.) He has the following druid spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): druidcraft, resistance, thorn whip
1st level (4 slots): cure wounds, entangle, jump, speak with animals
2nd level (3 slots): barkskin, flaming sphere

Wild Shape. Eberdeb can use an action to magically assume the shape of a black bear, boar, crocodile, or draft horse. He can use this feature twice and regains expended uses when he finishes a short or long rest.

Actions

Cursing Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d4 + 2) slashing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or become cursed if it is a creature. The magical curse takes effect whenever the target takes a short or long rest, filling the target's thoughts with horrible images and dreams. The cursed target gains no benefit from finishing a short or long rest. The curse lasts until it is lifted by a *remove curse* spell or similar magic.

Bear Paw Gauntlet. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d6 + 1) slashing damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Faetha Daevnir

By: Emily Smith
Artist: Vagelio

Abandoned by her family and expelled from Brixmarsh Academy, Faetha is a young drow sorcerer with the heart of an artist. She channels her sorcerous magic into her art, allowing her to bring anything she draws or paints to life.

Background

Born of the noble House Daevnir, of Menzoberranzan, Faetha struggled from a young age against her family's dark and righteous devotion to the tenets of Lolth. After disappointing her mother by failing to assassinate the daughter of a rival House, Faetha was sent to Brixmarsh Academy, a school of magic in Ylraphon.

During her first year at Brixmarsh, Faetha found herself struggling to keep up in her classes. Try as she might, she simply could not memorize all of the gestures, arcane lore, and words of power her professors required. She channeled her frustration into something productive, painting. As she grew more frustrated and upset, she began to notice her paintings gained magical quirks the trees would seem to sway in the breeze or a deer would bound across a field. Through experimentation, she realized she could bend her emotions into magical energy and, by doing so, create real worlds with real creatures out of paint. Devoting all of her energy to this work she soon abandoned her schoolwork completely and was subsequently expelled from Brixmarsh.

Desperate to make her paintings more real, Faetha turned to experimentation on animals, monsters, and eventually people. Through emotional and physical torture, she was able to isolate concentrated emotions in blood and tears and infuse them in her paints, gaining the ability to create entirely new worlds inside of her portraits. Faetha painted herself a sanctum, a castle perched at the top of a craggy mountain.



She created a magical trap that would suck people inside of the painting, where she could use them for further experimentation. She uses her magic to travel in and out of her magical realm, gathering rare ingredients and creatures for her experiments.

Current Motives

Faetha believes that great sacrifice is necessary for great achievement. This new magic could revolutionize the world or even create brand new worlds. It could be used to provide the poor with lavish mansions, help people in dangerous areas by painting them safe villages, or help those who have lost their flocks by painting them new ones. Ultimately, her motives are good, though her means are evil.

Faetha can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A quest giver** – Faetha knows the location of various creatures and artifacts, and can pay the adventurers handsomely for their procurement.

- **A merchant** – Faetha is eager to acquire rare creatures and artifacts.

- **A villain** – Faetha will not allow anyone to get in the way of her research, destroying those who stand in her way for the "greater good".

Long Term Motives

Once Faetha perfects her techniques, she plans to reforge the world in her ideal image. While this may bring peace, much suffering and sacrifice will come before any peace can be achieved.

Flaws

Faetha is single-minded in her fervent devotion to her work. She often fails to notice the details of the world around her.

After being abandoned by her family and failing in her studies, she also suffers from low self-esteem and an inferiority complex, despite being one of the most powerful sorcerers of her time. She desperately wants to be a part of the idyllic communities she imagines.

Faetha Daevnir

Medium humanoid (drow), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 12 *(15 with mage armor)*
Hit Points 135 (18d8 + 54)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Cha +9, Con +7, Int +6
Skills Animal Handling +6, Arcana +10, Deception +9, Performance +9, Persuasion +9
Damage Resistance nonmagical bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage (from *stoneskin*)
Senses Darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages Elvish, Undercommon, Common
Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Fey Ancestry. Faetha has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put her to sleep.

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, Faetha has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Magic Resistance. Faetha has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Innate Spellcasting. Faetha's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 17). She can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *dancing lights, disguise self, invisibility*
1/day each: *darkness, faerie fire*

Spellcasting. Faetha is an 18th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). Faetha has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt, mage hand, minor illusion, prestidigitation, shocking grasp*

1st level (4 slots): *chaos bolt, detect magic, identify, mage armor*
2nd level (3 slots): *cloud of daggers, mirror image, misty step, skywrite, snilloc's snowball swarm*
3rd level (3 slots): *conjure animals, counterspell, dispel magic, fireball, lightning bolt*
4th level (3 slots): *banishment, conjure minor elementals, conjure woodland beings, stoneskin*
5th level (3 slots): *animate objects, bigby's hand, conjure elemental*
6th level (1 slot): *globe of invulnerability*
7th level (1 slot): *prismatic spray, conjure celestial*
8th level (1 slot): maze
9th level (1 slot): *time stop*
*Faetha casts *stoneskin* and *mage armor* spells on herself before combat.

Actions

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Reactions

Spell Reflection. If Faetha makes a successful saving throw against a spell, or a spell attack misses her, she can choose another creature (including the spellcaster) she can see within 120 feet. The spell targets the chosen creature instead of Faetha. If the spell forced a saving throw, the chosen creature makes its own save. If the spell was an attack, the attack roll is rerolled against the chosen creature.

Faithsbane

By JVC Parry
Art: Rick Hershey / Fat Goblin Games

Faithsbane is a sentient mace with a dark history that tracks down worshippers of Helm and corrupts them, or destroys their soul. It often ends up in collections of religious artifacts, or in the treasure hoards of powerful monsters.

Background

Centuries ago a valiant paladin of Helm, known as Helanna Brighthand, led the forces of good against a throng of devils who invaded the Material Plane. The devils had corrupted the heart and soul of a mortal king, who made a deal with the Archdevil Mammon to provide him an heir. In return, the king unwittingly signed away his kingdom to the tiefling child that was born of the deal. With the kingdom rapidly becoming overrun with legions of infernal soldiers, the order of Helm was sent forth to deal with the invading evil.

Helanna Brighthand was one of the order's most valiant and devoted warriors. Her deeds were well known throughout the kingdom, and many heralded her as an avatar of Helm. Over the years, she had slain many a foul foe bent on destroying the realms, and supported those in need of aid. In this time, Helanna had risen through the ranks of the order from a mere acolyte to one of the highest-ranking knights.

When it came time to face the infernal minions, Helanna fought bravely to defend her allies and try to preserve the life of the child who was the source of the strife. As the battle wore on, she saw that the Archdevil's bargain hinged on the life of the child. Should the young boy die, Mammon and his legions of devils would be banished back to the Nine Hells.

Brighthand fought toward the child but suffered greatly at the hands of the infernal warriors. Slowly dying from her wounds, the knight managed to reach the child and killed him,



breaking her oath of protection, but saving the kingdom. As she died, her soul became corrupted by the act and became trapped in her previously holy mace. The weapon was infused with infernal hatred and became known as *Faithsbane*.

Current Motives

Since the great battle long ago, *Faithsbane* has been passed through the hands of relic hunters, merchants, and acolytes of Helm. Through corruption and possession, it has worked its way back into the armory of the order of Helm. Not for the first time.

Faithsbane has claimed the lives of many clerics, paladins, acolytes, and priests of Helm over the centuries, and has not yet lost its infernal hatred of the order.

Faithsbane can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **An information giver** – upon finding the mace, characters may have a vision of the battles of the past, the location of a temple of Helm, or receive some insight

into the weaknesses of a devil they have been hunting.

- **A quest giver** – *Faithsbane* can communicate with the characters in its true form, or do so through a possessed host. It desires to be placed back into the armory of a temple of Helm, where it can corrupt their faithful into committing atrocious acts.

- **A reward** – The characters could be given *Faithsbane* as a reward by someone unaware of its true nature. The sentient weapon can hide its abilities from those it wishes and could possess one of the characters to turn them to its infernal cause.

Long-Term Motives

Faithbane's long-term goal is nothing short of the destruction of the order of Helm, and any who would dedicate their lives to them. Should it end up in the hands of a truly epic hero, it may even try to take down that hero. The weapon happily corrupts and influences those who come across it to further this goal.

Flaws

Faithsbane is such a powerful weapon that it has a tendency to be stolen from its preferred host by creatures attracted to magical items. Because of this, it often ends up in the hoards of magical beasts and monstrous creatures, lost and forgotten at the bottom of a pile of glistening gold. Without a host to corrupt or possess, *Faithsbane* may lie dormant for decades, awaiting a foolish adventurer to pick it up.

Faithsbane

Weapon (mace), legendary (requires attunement by a cleric or paladin)

You gain a +3 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. It has the following additional properties.

Break Faith. While attuned to this weapon, you have advantage on saving throws against divine magic.

Corrupting Presence. While attuned to this weapon, whenever you cast a spell or use a class feature that would deal radiant damage, you can choose to deal necrotic damage instead.
Religious Knowledge. While attuned to this weapon, you gain proficiency in History and Religion checks. If you are already proficient in these skills, you add twice your proficiency bonus to checks.

Sunder Soul. Whenever you use it to reduce a cleric or paladin of a lawful deity to 0 hit points, the mace slays the creature and destroys its soul, unless it is a construct or undead. A creature whose soul has been destroyed by Faithsbane can be restored to life only by a wish spell. When it destroys a soul, Faithsbane restores spell slots to its wielder equal to the remaining spell slots of the slain creature. For example, if you were to slay a 5th level cleric, who had two 1st level and one 2nd level spell slot remaining upon death, you would regain these spell slots yourself, up to your spell slot maximum for each level. These spell slots fade after 24 hours if not used. In addition, you can use these spell slots to cause Faithsbane to deal an extra 1d8 necrotic damage on a hit.

Sentience. Faithsbane is a sentient lawful evil weapon with an Intelligence of 12, a Wisdom of 16 and a Charisma of 19. It has hearing and darkvision out to a range of 60 feet. The weapon can speak, read and understand Common, and can communicate with its wielder, including those who have not attuned to it, telepathically. Its voice is hushed and ominous. While you are attuned to it Faithsbane also understands every language you know.

Personality. Faithsbane is a black and twisted personality that speaks in dark whispers and bleak omens. The mace's purpose is to destroy the faithful of Helm. It actively seeks out these devotees and zealots, passing through the hands of merchants, collectors, and acolytes until it finds itself at the belt of a worshipper. Once in the hands of its target, it corrupts their souls, turning them away from their godly master, and using them to kill others of their faith. When its host has ceased being useful, Faithsbane destroys them, body and soul.

The Fissure of Muljillnor

By Josh Kelly
Artist: Provided by Wizards of the Coast

The Fissure is an ancient deep druid of the underdark. He wages a guerrilla war against the fire giants who enslaved his sacred volcano to power their great forge.

Background

A Dwarven child named Eld disappeared from a caravan traveling through the Underdark over a thousand years ago. He was rescued, some might say abducted, by a circle of deep druids who raised him as one of their own.

The druids of the Underdark revere an ecology of rock, river, and fire that is alien to surface dwellers. Their lives are as slow as stone, their strength as relentless as gravity. Their magic is as deep and as powerful as the earth itself.

When Eld came of age his circle entrusted him to care for the lake of magma that lay beneath the volcanic mountain of Muljillnor. Centuries later, a tribe of fire giants tunneled into the heart of the great volcano, enslaved its magma core and began extracting her precious metals. Eld was communing deep inside the mountain's heart when this happened. He was siphoned away with the currents of molten rock, lashed with freezing water, and hammered against a colossal anvil. By the time he could extract himself from a surprised fire giant's helm the man once called Eld had been driven completely insane.

Since that day the mad druid has waged a relentless sabotage campaign against the fire giants. The giants refer to this relentless nuisance as The Fissure of Muljillnor, a title the druid has accepted in lieu of his own forgotten name.

He spends months lurking inside the volcanic stone, surfacing at odd times to wreak havoc before disappearing back into the rock. The



Fissure has smothered furnaces with ash, destroyed equipment with swarms of rust beetles, and crushed food stores under rockfalls.

The Fissure regularly raids the slave pens of the fire giants, not through any concern for the enslaved, but as a means to hamper the giants they unwillingly serve. The rescued creatures have spread the legend of a mad dwarf who moves through walls and smolders with a deep hatred for the fire giants.

The Fissure never leaves Muljillnor, but he can send messages over great distances and has contacts among the former slaves he has freed. The Drudger and Deep Gnomes know that if they need to move against the fire giants, they have a willing, if unreliable, accomplice inside their lair.

Current Motives

The Fissure is always seeking powerful allies or unwitting pawns to further his guerrilla war against the fire giants.

The Fissure can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A Quest Giver** - The Fissure asks the players to infiltrate the slave population and lead an uprising against the fire giants.
- **A Guide to the Underdark** - If the characters become lost, The Fissure can speak to them through the stones and will guide them to Muljillnor, where he expects them to join in his mad schemes.
- **An Unreliable Rescue** - If the players are enslaved by the fire giants, The Fissure can burrow into their cell and free them, for a price.

Long Term Motives

The Fissure seeks to destroy the forge of the fire giants by any means necessary. What he lacks in resources or allies he makes up for in fanatical zeal.

Flaws

Conversing with The Fissure can be a frustrating task. He pauses for long moments as he listens to the stone around him. He speaks his thoughts aloud and betrays his own lies. He can erupt with red-hot anger and then slow his thoughts to a crawl.

Lava Dagger

Weapon (dagger), uncommon

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magical weapon.

On a successful hit, the dagger deals an additional 3 (1d4 + 1) fire damage.

The Fissure of Muljillnor

Medium humanoid (dwarf), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 16 (hide armor)
Hit Points 135 (18d8 + 54)
Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Int +5, Wis +6
Skills Arcana +5, Insight +6, Nature +6
Damage Immunity fire
Damage Resistance poison
Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 120 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages common, Underdark, Dwarf, Terran
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

One with the Earth. The Fissure can cast *Meld into Stone* on himself as a bonus action. When The Fissure melds into the stone he regains 3d8 + 3 hit points. He can move 25 ft. per turn through the stone and retains his tremmorsense. When The Fissure casts Meld into Stone, roll 1d6. On a result of 1, 2, or 3 The Fissure is able to cast this spell without expending a spell slot.

Whispers of the Earth. If The Fissure spends 5 minutes in quiet meditation he can send a short audio message to a creature he's previously met, or a location he's previously been.

Spellcasting. The Fissure is a 10th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 16, +6 to hit with spell attacks.) He has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (4): *druidcraft, mending, firebolt, poison spray, resistance*
1st level (4 slots): *cure wounds, fog cloud, jump*
2nd level (3 slots): *lesser restoration, heat metal*
3rd level (3 slots): *daylight, dispel magic, fireball, meld into stone*
4th level (3 slots): *conjure minor elementals, stoneshape, stoneskin, wall of fire*
5th level (1 slot): *conjure elemental, insect plague*

Actions

Multiattack. The Fissure makes two attacks with his lava dagger.

Lava Dagger. *Magical Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., range 20/60, one creature. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage, plus 3 (1d4 + 1) fire damage.

Fur'gudlu

By Elven Tower
Artist: Grace Rathbun
Cartography: Elven Tower

Fur'gudlu is a deranged, psychotic sahuagin living in the big city. He is known in the city, he works in the market for a cruel man called Robben who owns a fish shop. Robben mistreats and hits Fur'gudlu publicly all the time but keeps him because he is extremely skilled at filleting fish. Some people feel pity for him but no one dares confront Robben.

That is Fur'gudlu's public persona. At night, when he returns to the river that crosses the city or the sewers, he is back at home with his kin. A small community of sahuagin lives in the underground waterways of the city and Fur'gudlu is their leader. Fur'gudlu is cruel and despicable beyond measure. He and his goons call themselves The Dark Depths and offer their services in the darkest circles in the city. They enjoy assassination, torture, and imprisonment jobs; although they are so cruel and unmeasured that most of their targets end up dead.

Every morning, Fur'gudlu appears again at the market to work. He is often late and Robben smacks him for that. Other sahuagin believe Fur'gudlu does this to be in the open and defer any suspicions towards him, appearing to be a harmless misfit; a sad part of society. Nothing is farther from the truth. Fur'gudlu is demented. He suffers from a kind of multiple personality disorder. The Fur'gudlu in the market is truly afraid of Robben and will endure all the physical and verbal abuse he is given. However, when a contact approaches him or he needs to investigate or run errands for The Dark Depths, he is back to his real cruel self.

Background

Fur'gudlu's story goes back to the deep seas. The deep sahuagin societies are not complicated in



the least. They value strength and ruthlessness. Whoever is the strongest and cruelest is the leader of a tribe. Leaders do not last long; they are often challenged by younger and faster sahuagin.

Fur'gudlu was one such challenger. He fancied himself strong enough to be the next tribal leader. He thought wrong. The tribe chief defeated Fur'gudlu in single-handed combat. Fur'gudlu was barely alive. The tribal leader had him thrown to the sea bed outside their cave to be shark fodder. Fur'gudlu crawled to a coral reef in an effort to hide from predators. It was then that a band of tritons arrived. The triton hunters had been tracking the sahuagin for days. It was a massacre. Fur'gudlu watched from the sidelines while the tritons killed his kin.

Fur'gudlu survived the night and did the best he could to heal his wounds with algae. He returned to the cave the day after to find the remains of his kin. The tritons sacked the place; the gold they had was gone, but Fur'gudlu was not looking for

that. His eyes glinted with malice when he saw the flute. A Flute of the Deep Mother is a magical object each tribe leader has. It proved one's worth as a tribe chief.

In possession of the flute, Fur'gudlu swam to other tribes to recruit followers. He built a small community and parted with them for the surface world. They settled in the underground waterways of a big city and set up shop. Fur'gudlu is particularly equipped for their line of business because of the flute. The flute, when played, turns the performer invisible for the time of the performance. Since it can only be heard underwater, it is the key to Fur'gudlu's operation. He is the perfect assassin.

Current Motives

Fur'gudlu's main goal is to increase his personal wealth and the Dark Depths' standing in the heinous circles of the city.

Fur'gudlu can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A main enemy** – The Dark Depths are performing evil deeds in the city and someone must stop them. The innocent sahuagin in the market might even help the party find the evil sahuagin.
- **A quest giver** – Some works are not best suited for sahuagin themselves, so Fur'gudlu outsources these odd jobs to mercenaries and sellswords.
- **A hireling** – A party that needs something done can hire the Dark Depths to do it. Unknown to them, it will be a very messy job.

Long Term Motives

Ultimately, Fur'gudlu's goal is to return to the depths of the sea a hero. He now understands that, as long as he is away, no one will challenge him. but down in the depths he will not last long. Fur'gudlu is not sure what the answer to this predicament is, but he wishes to find the means of power to return and keep ruling.

Flaws

Fur'gudlu's mental state is his worst enemy. Not only does he live with an alternate version of himself, but he is also prone to emotional outbursts of all kinds. Slowly, over time, these outbursts have become more frequent. One day his façade in the market might be ruined.

Fur'gudlu, like other sahuagin, considers his race and heritage infinitely superior to humans. Under the right situation, his patronizing of humankind will prove harmful to him.

Fur'gudlu places too much value in the Flute of the Deep Mother. Should it be stolen or broken, his overconfidence would stumble.

Fur'Gudlu in Waterdeep

Robben's fishmarket, wherein the Sahuagin Fur'Gudlu receives his daily torment, could well be situated within the Trades Ward of Waterdeep, situated on or near the High Road for best visibility. The sewer lair of the sahuagin might find its placement under the Trades Ward, or further south beneath the Dock Ward.

Fur'gudlu's Lair

The sahuagin community are laired in an empty cavern system under the city. They broke some of the pipes to create pools and access to the city. Their lair also has access to an underground stream that ultimately reaches the sea.

Area 1: Sewers Pipes

The piping system is the only way to reach the lair from the city. The sewers are labyrinthine. Finding the lair will require a map of the city's infrastructure.

The pipes are punctured in two spots to give access to **Area 2** and **Area 5**.

Area 2: Hatching pool

This room has direct access to the sewer pipes. The sahuagin dug this chamber deep to create a pool. In the deepest part they place eggs for hatching. There are always **Sahuagin** and at least one **Dark Depths' Thug** present in this area.

Area 3: Storage and Supplies

This cavern chamber is a common place where all supplies are stored. Sahuagin do not build furniture or boxes so everything is on the floor in disarray.

The contents of this room vary from time to time but there are usually food bits, valuables, gems, gold pieces, and shark bones laying around. Four **Dark Depths' Thugs** guard this location at all times.

Area 4: Fur'gudlu's Quarters

Fur'gudlu claimed this chamber for himself as the leader of the tribe. Whenever he is not wearing the Flute of the Deep Mother on a necklace, it is stored in a chest in this chamber.
The room features a throne made of bones of different creatures. The throne is not finished yet, but it is sturdy enough to sit on.

Area 5: Sleeping Quarters

Sahuagin usually sleep in the underground stream, but this area is also reserved for rest. Sahuagin do not use beds or bed clothes; to surface dwellers it is not apparent that this room is used for sleeping.
At any given time, there is a 40% chance that 1d4 **sahuagin** are sleeping in this room.

Area 6: Deep Mother Altar

In this area the sahuagin built an altar to the Deep Mother, a goddess of their culture. The altar consists of a few wooden planks as a base, on top of the planks the sahuagin placed a dead stingray, dead fish, and bones from recent kills. For a casual observer, it only appears to be a bunch of odd items placed in an organized way.

Area 7: Underground Stream

The underground system flows west to the sea. It is thirty feet deep on average. The majority of sahuagin sleep in this part of the lair. They also use this for fishing, and as a last resort emergency exit back to the sea.

At any given time, there are 1d8 **sahuagin** and 1d2 **Dark Depths' Thugs** sleeping or on guard in this area.


City's Sewers
1 square = 5 feet
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
Underground Stream

Flute of the Deep Mother

Wondrous Item, Rare (Requires Attunement)

The Flute of the Deep Mother is a magical instrument crafted by sahuagin priestesses. These flutes are gifted to tribe leaders as a symbol of strength. The flute is crafted with sea floor clay. It is always shaped in the form of a reptilian creature. The mouth of the reptile with a kissing gesture is the mouthpiece of the flute. The eyes of the reptile are hollow and part of the whistling mechanism of the flute.

In order to use the flute, the user must cover each eye whole with a finger and 'kiss'(blow) the mouthpiece. Once attuned to the flute, the user can use the flute as an action to become invisible. The user remains invisible for as long as they keep playing the flute. The flute can only be heard underwater. There is a 30% chance it's sound calls forth a shark if it is played under the sea.

Using the flute takes a toll for non-sahuagin. Every time the flute is used by a non-sahuagin, the user must succeed a DC 10 Constitution save to avoid a slow transformation into a sahuagin. Upon each failure, the user will start manifesting sahuagin physical traits and mannerisms. It is left to the DM to decide what features are changed and how fast the transformation is.

Fur'gudlu (Sahuagin)

Medium humanoid (sahuagin), lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (breastplate)
Hit Points 85 (9d8 + 36)
Speed 30 ft., swim 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Con +6, Int +5, Cha +4
Skills Perception +7, Stealth +8
Senses darksight 120 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages Common, Sahuagin
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Legendary Resistance (1/Day). If Fur'gudlu fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Blood Frenzy. The sahuagin has advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that doesn't have all its hit points.

Limited Amphibiousness. The sahuagin can breathe air and water, but needs to be submerged at least once every 4 hours to avoid suffocating.

Shark Telepathy. The sahuagin can magically command any shark within 120 feet of him, using a limited telepathy.

Actions

Multiattack: Fur'gudlu makes three attacks: one with his bite and two with his cleaver.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (2d4 + 4) piercing damage.

Cleaver. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Dark Depths Thug (Sahuagin)

Medium humanoid (sahuagin), lawful evil

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 31 (6d8 + 6)
Speed 30 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dex +3
Skills Perception +5
Senses darksight 120 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Common, Sahuagin
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Blood Frenzy. The sahuagin has advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that doesn't have all its hit points.

Limited Amphibiousness. The sahuagin can breathe air and water, but needs to be submerged at least once every 4 hours to avoid suffocating.

Shark Telepathy. The sahuagin can magically command any shark within 120 feet of him, using a limited telepathy.

Actions

Multiattack: The Dark Depth Thug makes two attacks: one with his bite and one with his spear.

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

Spear. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage. (two-handed)

Gekal the Last Windpraiser

By Drew Derby
Art: Eric Lofgren

This wandering orc is the last of his tribe. For years he has haunted rocky crags and crooked mountain paths under the cover of night. He stalks unsuspecting travelers for miles then appears in their camps without a sound, as if carried by the wind. He kills without hesitation or remorse and he plunders whatever riches he can find as a small repayment of an eternal blood debt.



Background

The Windpraisers were a small orcish tribe that inhabited the Great Shifting Plains. The orcs were unusual amongst others, as they were deeply spiritual and peaceful. Their faith, in which they revered a pantheon of totemic bird spirits, called for them to live in harmony with the other orcish tribes, which they did for many hundreds of years.

Gekal was born the only son of the Windpraiser tribe's elder shaman. Under his father's tutelage, Gekal learned to communicate with the avian spirits that allowed the tribe to prosper in the plains. The spirits of the plain blessed them with an ever-yielding bounty, and little in the way of competition. Gekal came of age during a time of great prosperity for the orcs.

However, the pastoral existence of his people was not meant to be. After many centuries of isolation, the human kingdoms came to discover the Great Shifting Plains. Word spread quickly of the verdant beauty and natural riches the land had to offer and settlers soon arrived with hopes to cultivate its resources.

For a time, the Windpraisers avoided their new cohabitants. Everything changed with the arrival of "The Red Doom"-a deadly group of warriors lead by the High Wizard Arnok. Arnok was the most revered wizard in his kingdom, given land and title and named Archmagus by the king himself. His king had tasked him with traveling the realm to hand-pick and enlist the greatest warriors he could find. Their sole purpose was the swift domination of any land the king sought conquered.

The arrival of the Red Doom left the Windpraisers no choice; for the first time in hundreds of years the orcs marched to war. Generations of peace had not softened the tribe's natural martial prowess. Aided by both their keen hunting abilities and powerful shamanistic might, the Windpraisers would meet The Red Doom on the battlefield. They descended upon the invaders under the cover of night, appearing in the enemy

camp without a sound, as if carried by the wind of the plains. The sneak attack halved The Red Doom's forces, and a great battle ensued thereafter. The battle lasted for three days and four nights. Driven by the sheer will to protect their land, a superior knowledge of the battleground, and an ancestry of combat, the Windpraisers prevailed. They had suffered great losses, but they were able to repel The Red Doom.

The King, enraged at the unexpected defeat of his prized vanguard, dispatched the remainder of his forces to put down the plains dwellers. Beneath royal banners waving in the wind, they tore through the remainder of the mighty Windpraisers. Gekal foresaw the fall of his people and, in the face of certain death, he fled to the southern mountains where he disappeared into the narrow and winding paths where no army could follow. His people annihilated, Gekal would never again set foot on the plains of his ancestors.

Current Motives

Gekal stalks small groups coming into the mountains. He seeks bloody revenge against the kingdom of man for the annihilation of his people and the desecration of his ancestral lands.

Gekal can be used as an NPC as follows:

- Guide - If you are able to track down Gekal he can be convinced to accompany the party for up to five miles surrounding the range of mountains he can be found in.

- Ancestral Blessings - Once you gain his trust you can ask him to bestow the powers of his ancestral spirits upon the party. Gekal is able to perform a ritual equal to a short rest.

  This restores all spell slots and heals the party for 2d8+2. Also, the party gains advantage on death saves for twenty-four hours.

- As a villain - If you camp in the mountains or five miles surrounding them, Gekal will approach the sleeping campers, silently as the night. He will take magic items, potions, and foods specifically.

Flaws

The last Windpraiser is often heard in the mountain passes paying tribute to his fallen tribesman. Gekan's tribute includes a ritualistic song and dance. He can be heard singing praises to the bird spirits, the sky, and the great winds that blow through the stone walls of the mountain passes. Travelers call it the "singing breeze" and know to take great caution.

Gekal

Medium humanoid (orc), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 12 (leather armor)
Hit Points 40 (9d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +4, Wis +6
Skills Arcana +4, History +6, Religion +6
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Common, Draconic, Goblin, Orc
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Aggressive. Gekal deals an extra 2 points of damage when he hits with a melee attack (included in the attack).

Spellcasting. Gekal is a 9th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). Gekal has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips: 4 guidance, resistance, sacred flame, spare the dying
1st level (4 slots): *bane, bless, cure wounds, guiding bolt*
2nd level (3 slots): *hold person, lesser restoration, silence*
3rd level (3 slots): *bestow curse, dispel magic, spirit guardians*
4th level (2 slots): *banishment, control water*
5th level (1 slot): *insect plague*

Actions

Staff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage, or 9 (1d8 + 4) if used with two hands.

Windpraiser's Feather

Wonderous Item, rare

A long, golden white feather tipped in the red blood of a hunter's first kill. An ornamental feather created by the great shaman of the orc tribes that once roamed the vast grasslands.

The bearer gains advantage on Stealth checks.

The Staff of Arnok

Wonderous Item, very rare (requires attunement)

Taken from the bloody battlefield where The Red Doom met its end, this long staff is made from raw, unshaped, elven oak. The great staff is bound in straps of bull leather that has been worn through by the ages. A half-moon stone is fixed to the top of the staff and there are many small runes of unknown origin branded upon it.

While attuned to this staff, you gain a +1 bouns to melee attacks and damage rolls.

In addition, you have advantage on saving throws against any spell that target only you (no in an area effect). In addition, if you roll a 20 for the save, and the spell is 5th level or lower, the spell has no effet on you and is instead absorbed by the Staff of Arnok. That same spell can be stored and later cast from the Staff of Arnok, using the attuned caster's Spell Attack modifier and Spell Save DC. In addition, the damage and duration of the stored spell is halved, and any concentration spells have a duration of 30 seconds. Example: an absorbed slow spell would require no concentration and have a duration of 30 seconds.

The spell remains for one day or until it is used. This ability can only be used once per long rest.

Gundigoot Garrick

By MT Black
Artist: Matt Morrow / Purple Duck Games

Gundigoot Garrick is a gnome who owns a bookstore in Waterdeep called The Scroll Truth. Most people who know him consider him harmless, but he hides an astonishing secret.

Background

Gundigoot was born in Berdusk, a significant city in the Sunset Vale. His parents mysteriously disappeared when he was very young, and he was raised in rather squalid conditions by adopted human parents.

In his youth, he became a proficient thief, motivated both by his poverty and a desire to impress his peers. His thieving career took a strange turn when he broke into a small, odd tower in a better part of the city. Inside, he discovered a library, and became enraptured by the grand volumes it contained.

In the following months, Gundigoot spent countless hours in the mysterious tower (which seemed abandoned), flipping through the books and slowly improving his rudimentary reading skills. More than anything, he discovered that he desired to spend his life amongst books.

Alas, the tower was not abandoned after all. One evening, Gundigoot entered the library to find someone else there. The occupant was Tamber Fane and she was a minor wizard and the owner of the tower. She soon recognized the young gnome's precocity and took him on as her apprentice.

Gundigoot studied hard over the following years and became an accomplished enchanter. Upon completing his apprenticeship, he set off for Candlekeep, a prestigious library he had dreamed of ever since he learned of it.



After Gundigoot completed an arduous set of challenges, the monks admitted him to the library as a novice. Frustrated by the order's restrictions, he put his talents to use and accessed forbidden parts of the library. In the depths of the archives, he made an astonishing discovery, a fragment of parchment hinting at how to locate the famed Lost Library of Cormanthyr.

The monks finally uncovered Gundigoot's illegal activities and expelled him. He wandered Faerûn for years before settling in Waterdeep. There he opened a shop called *The Scroll Truth*, where he deals in books and parchments both common and rare... but he also dreams of grander things.

Current Motives

Gundigoot still worries that the monks of Candlekeep will discover his theft of the parchment and pursue him, so he avoids

attention. His current focus is on saving the resources he needs for his grand venture.

Gundigoot can be used as an NPC as follows:

- An information broker – he has much information to share, gleaned from both his patrons and his books.
- A quest giver – he has found a few clues relating to local dungeons amongst his scrolls and might sponsor a party to explore.

Long Term Motives

Gundigoot has two long-term goals: he wants to launch an expedition to find the Lost Library of Cormanthyr, and he wants to determine what happened to his parents.

Flaws

Gundigoot has never quite outgrown the poverty of his youth. He gobbles his food, is very mean with his money, and has even defrauded some of his wealthier customers.

Gundigoot Garrick in Waterdeep

Gundigoot is a resident of Waterdeep as described.

Reading Spectacles

Wonderous Item, uncommon

Rectangular shaped lenses secured within a thin wire frame.

Once per long rest, you can use a bonus action to cast the *comprehend languages* spell with a duration of four hours. You only gain the ability to understand written languages and you must be touching the surface on which the words are written.

Gundigoot Garrick

Medium humanoid (gnome), Chaotic good

Armor Class 13 (16 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 40 (9d8)
Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	19 (+4)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +7, Wis +4
Skills Arcana +7, History +6
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Common, Gnomish, Elvish, Abyssal, Infernal
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Spellcasting. Gundigoot is a 9th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). Gundigoot has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *friends, mage hand, mending, message*
1st level (4 slots): *detect magic, identify, mage armor, magic missile*
2nd level (3 slots): *arcane lock, hold person, scorching ray*
3rd level (3 slots): *bestow curse, dispel magic, slow*
4th level (2 slots): *confusion, greater invisibility*
5th level (1 slot): *cloudkill*

Actions

Quarterstaff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 2 (1d6 - 1) bludgeoning damage, or 3 (1d8 - 1) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands.

Reactions

Parry. Gundigoot adds 3 to his AC against one melee attack the would hit him. To do so, he must see the attacker and be wielding his quarterstaff.

Joy and the Grinmen

By Remley Farr
Artist: Rick Hershey / Fat Goblin Games

Joy, the Whispercraft

Joy dominates a gang of subservient, hive-mind goblins, the Grinmen. This rabble of green-skinned thralls obeys her every whim. Joy is a siphoner of silence, a secret shaper, the hollowed-out husk waxed in mayhem. With a flick of her knife, she brings happiness to her Grinmen's faces—hacking away their lips, exposing their carnal grimaces, and muting their ability to whisper.

Background

Joy is a campfire tale spread mostly by goblinkind after raids and feasts. She's a name that goblins never bring up unless they want an ominous silence accompanied by a scolding wallop. The term "joy" itself is profane in goblin speech, so is the belief: Speak her name, then speak no more.

The skulking madame's ethos of tribal terror began like all famous goblins do: a word whispered among campfire tales. Warlords become warlords by proof of deed and displays of power, but witches like Joy? Words are all she needs.

Was she hatched in a festering swamp from a frozen crocodile's egg? Was she carved in the pyroclastic afterflow of a seamsplit volcano? Or did she simply chose to exist one day, barfed out of cosmic hell—born in reverse, maybe—a walking lodestone of nightmares. She is a born purpose spliced with wild fey witchcraft, a demigod mayhaps? Her domain is whispers. Your secrets are in her library.

Tucked away in a pocket dimension, Joy and her Grinmen distill every whispered word onto scrolls, posters, books, and shelve them when the ink is dry. The Grinmen, everloving to her, don't



fill her mind with unnecessary babble. Their lack of lips prevents them from whispering, allowing her to reach into the far corners of the planar worlds, absorb the secrets born only in whispers, and pickle them to purity.

Wish to know a secret? Step inside. Make a deal. But speak softly. She can't hear you if you speak too loudly—that is why goblins shout and scream. They know she can hear them if they're quiet.

Current Motives

Joy keeps her lair hidden in a dingy alley or a musky bog. While there, she collects secrets by assimilating them mentally, then orders her Grinmen to properly document them.



Hush Tranquil Repose Silence and Lull

Joy can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A library** — she's a walking "restricted section." Does the party need dirt or information about someone? Joy may charge them by the hour to peruse, just don't disturb her Grinmen!
- **A trader of truths** — have the PC's whisper their darkest secrets to her, and she may use her magic to erase the secret, and events, from existence.
- **A quest giver** — Joy desires a larger collection. A PC who can tap other NPC's for specific information (whispered, of course) can receive her favor.
- **An ambassador** — Goblins don't want to attract her ire, so her sway over goblin political relations is stronger than most warlords. Need to get in with some goblins? She may send a Grinmen herald to help you for a price.

Long Term Motives

Joy knows so many secrets, except her own. Her history, her childhood, her *true* name—all assumptions. She is lost. She is frantic. She is digging through the void to find her purpose in the world, unable to remember younger years. The secrets stacked in her mind have buried her foundations.

Flaws

Socially odd, Joy doesn't communicate well with non-goblins. She is used to dealing with loud, cantankerous hellions who she can block out due to her natural ability to hear quiet sounds over loud ones. She prefers to be surrounded by quiet cacophony, and her library is atrocious for studying. A lumbering giant is silent to her—a creeping rogue is like a blaring train.

The Grinmen

Warlords and dregs, sorcerers and servants—no goblin is too high or too low to be ensnared as one of Joy Whispercraft's immortal Grinmen. Whatever skills they possess, Joy will dredge into a sharpened point. Each Grinmen has a purpose, and each purpose serves the Whispercraft in her desire to learn all secrets of the world. Their lips have been severed by their mistress so that they cannot whisper—they can only shout.

Hush

The eldest of the Grinmen, **Hush** (Martial Arts Adept, VGtM, p 216) is a hoarder of wares. Whether valuable or junky, Hush finds affinity in the oddest of trinkets. As the de facto leader of the Grinmen when Joy isn't around, Hush manages his mistress' library, specifically the museum. Joy herself has no desire for Hush's oddities, so he keeps them on display for his own amusement—and for anyone who would care to look upon his collection.

Motives

Joy collects secrets. Hush collects trinkets. He will form an odd attachment to one object that the party is currently possessing, and he is unable to be swayed from this desire. He rarely focuses on magical items or world-altering artifacts—his desires are more personal to the party: A picture of the rogue's dead parents? An engagement ring that the fighter is saving for his lost love? Or a letter of heroism written by the princess for the party's success in a previous war? The item is sentimental to the party, and that's why Hush wants it.

Flaws

Hush can divulge information or give favors to the party in exchange for the trinkets he desires, so much that the party can pad their bargain to their advantage. Rather than react to Hush's desires with "You will never have this item!" the party can make better progress with "Oh, you want this? Then you'll have to *really* pay for it!" Preying on his tunnel vision for desire can net the party a real benefit in their goals.

Tranquil

The second eldest of the Grinmen, **Tranquil** (Gladiator, MM, p 346) is a mass of raw power curdled with a desire to kill. A warlord from a forgotten clan, Tranquil is Joy's emissary when someone needs to die. The sight of this lipless, battle-scarred monster is an omen to other goblin clans—run if you can, die if you can't.

Motives

Tranquil collects the faces of those he's meant to kill, then commands his subordinate, Repose, to forge them with magic into steel discs for his armor. He wears their faces proudly, each one locked in screaming terror. To wear these discs like a mask is to see into the life of the slain, and Tranquil can be commonly found in his private quarters, wearing the discs and achieving delight by living out his quarries' mortality, especially at their life's end, which crescendos into an orgasmic finality as Tranquil snuffs it out.

Flaws

The face-hacker for the Whispercraft is proud of his work, allowing anyone to wear the faces and marvel at his deeds. Finding information regarding his victims will be easy since buttering him up with praises and showing a desire to indulge in his handiwork will rarely fail. He is a sociopath, but a proud one.

Repose

An afterbirth of magic, **Repose** (Mage, MM, p 347) is the only Grinmen to remember his life before becoming indoctrinated into Joy's service. Born as Yash Burblack, Repose had a spark of sorcery lurking within his flesh. He was too withered to fight, but the sorcerous spark was too minute to harness into his clan's magi commune. To make something useful of the weakling, the clan's high

mage buried him alive beneath a smoldering campfire. If he truly wanted to survive, his inner magic would awaken, igniting the campfire. The fire, instead, snuffed out, and Repose chose not to fight, but surrender himself as worthless and become one with the worms and grubs. When he opened his eyes, he found himself in Joy's library, sprawled in front of Tranquil, who was holding the severed face of the high mage who buried Repose beneath the ground.

Motives

Repose lacked the time needed to fully stoke his magic. Now that he is with Joy, he has all the time needed—and access to spells that wizards and sorcerers all over the world thought were secret. With enough time and enough pressure, the smallest magical increments can become cosmically insane. Repose is constantly improving his skills in magickery, and he is fiercely loyal to Joy and Tranquil for giving him a second chance when he had given up. He is by far the most loyal of the Grinmen, and the most dangerous if left unchecked.

Flaws

Repose is always trying to prove himself and become more advanced in his arcane power. He can be goaded to helping the party without even knowing it. A carefully worded challenge, especially if sprinkled with the right amount of "I bet you couldn't…" can cause him to explode in an infantile desire to prove people wrong. He is also fiercely devoted to Tranquil, a trait that may be exploited if the party is clever enough.

Silence and Lull

First, a story: Once there was a goblin warchief that ordered his greatest stonemason slave to build a rock effigy of him. The warchief boasted of his power, accepting any challenger to fight him beneath the statue. Tranquil admired the warchief's vanity, and gladly added the warchief's face to his collection. As for the statue? Hush took it for his collection, and Repose used his magic to bring the statue to life—but not before Joy realized that the goblin statue was so large, *two* goblins could be made from it! Thus, Silence and Lull entered the world.

Motives

Silence and Lull are the grunt workers of the Grinmen and main caretakers of the library. With their affinity for stone, they please their superiors by erecting new library wings and repairing old ones. They are constructors incarnate, able to summon swathes of building materials to their bidding. They do what their masters command, and they defend their territory with the carnage of a vain warchief.

Silence and Lull each use the **Druid** (MM, p 346) stat block with the following adjustments:

- Each has 75 hit points
- Each takes damage when the other takes damage
- Add spells: *mold earth* (cantrip), *earth tremor* (1st), *earthbind* (2nd)
- Add damage vulnerability: bludgeoning, thunder

Flaws

Silence and Lull are two bodies with one mind—their coordination is on point, but any wound suffered by one body is felt by the other. They have double the health threshold of a regular goblin, but that threshold is shared among their bodies. Also, Silence and Lull are susceptible to any magic that manipulates earth or stone.

JOY'S LIBRARY

A self-reliquary curdling in whatever realm you plant it—Joy's Library is a hub of knowledge or doom waiting to be pilfered by adventurers. Does the party seek one of the world's unlimited secrets? Does the party need the services of a particular Grinmen? Or does the party need to flee this wretched place?

1ST FLOOR

AREA 1 - GREAT HALL

Six columns support the above floor in this massive hallway. Stairs lead down from the double front doors in the south side.

AREA 2 - REPOSE'S PRACTICE ROOM

This battle-blasted location is where Repose researches and tests out his magic. The refuse of his experiments litter the ground, and the walls and doors in this area are the thickest of the library.

AREA 3 - ROOM OF FIRE

Fire elementals in jars, cinders from long dead volcanoes, phoenix feathers, and an endless supply of fire-based reagents rest on shelves and in cases.

AREA 4 - ROOM OF AIR

An empty djinni's lamp, mist from a vampire, staves to conjure lightning, and several racks of weightless air-based ingredients float within this room.

AREA 5 - ROOM OF WATER

Ice from a white dragon's drool, a lich's extracted heart, a lake corked in a bottle, and vials upon vials of other water-based solutions line the walls.

AREA 6 - ROOM OF EARTH

A boulder from the planet's core, a bulette's tongue, a xorn's hoard, and a dwarven kingdom's worth of riches lie in locked boxes in here.

AREA 7 - SUPPLY CLOSET

Basic cleaning and maintenance supplies.

AREA 8 - STAIRS AND STATUES OF SILENCE AND LULL

These twin stairs lead upward to the second floor. Silence and Lull "rest" here in the form of snarling stone statues when they aren't needed.

AREA 9 - MENAGERIE

Several beasts from all over the different worlds are kept in here, like a small zoo. A magnificent tree grows through the ceiling and into the floor above.

AREA 10 - GALLERY

Portraits of various kingdoms and countrysides bedeck the walls, and miniature recreations of townships and capital cities rest in the floor. These artworks are updated every minute, morphing as cityscapes change in real time. The rug is a map of the Underdark.

2ND FLOOR

This floor is covered in a maze of twisting bookshelves, each filled with personal secrets, including some kept by the PC's.

AREA 11 - TRANQUIL'S ROOM

Tranquil sleeps here. It's stocked with every weapon imaginable.

AREA 12 - HUSH'S COLLECTION

This is where Hush keeps his gallery of oddities, each displayed in its own macabre setting no matter how mundane or archaic the item is.

Area 13 - Kitchen/Larder

The tree from the menagerie branches up from the floor and out across this room. A variety of different foods sprout from it, including raw animal meat and rare spices.

Area 14 - Study

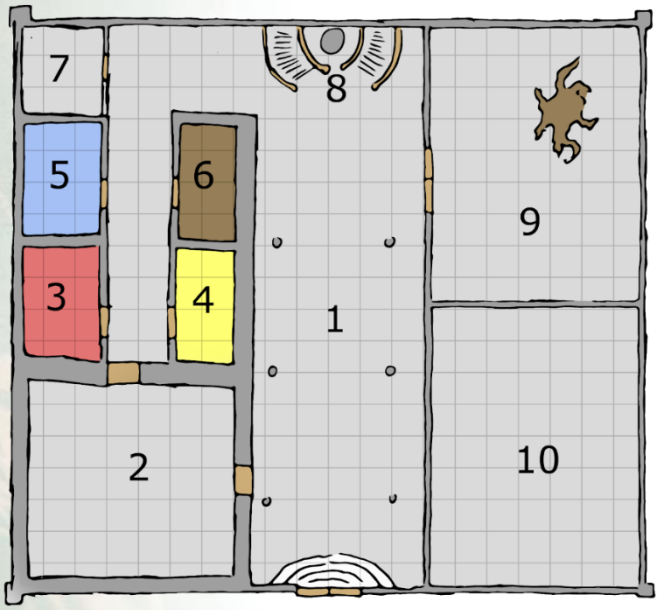
This is where the Grinmen have their own desks that they can set up and peruse information with. The party can conduct their research here.

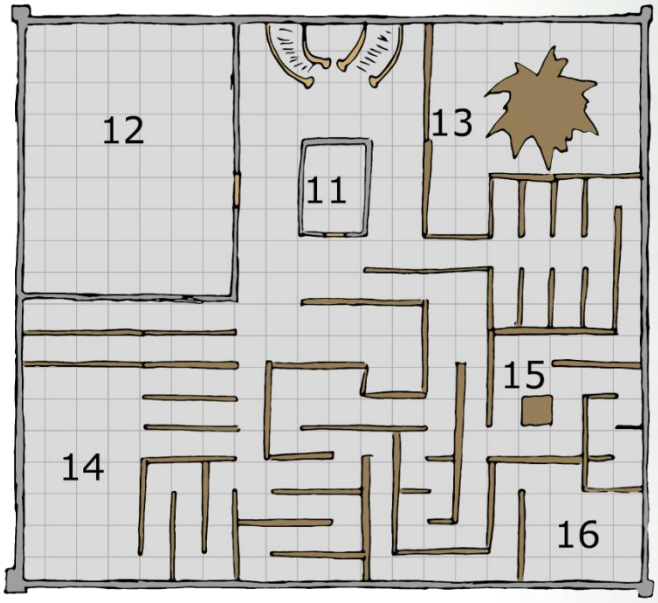
Area 15 - Tranquil's Faces

A display rack of the faces that Tranquil has harvested. Some of them still whisper for help.

Area 16 - Joy's Study

Where Joy ponders over notes and sleeps.





Joy

Small humanoid (goblin), neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (leather armor)
Hit Points 59 (14d6 + 24)
Speed 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	18 (+4)	12 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Int +4
Skills Acrobatics +7, Deception +5, Perception +4, Stealth +10
Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 12
Languages Common, Goblin
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Assassinate. During her first turn, Joy has advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn. Any hit Joy scores against a surprised creature is a critical hit.

Evasion. If Joy is subjected to an effect that allows her to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, Joy instead takes no damage it she succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

Nimble Escape. Joy can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of her turns.

Sneak Attack. Once per turn, Joy deals an extra 14 (4d6) damage when she hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally who isn't incapacitated and Joy doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Actions

Multiattack. *Joy makes two attacks with her dagger.*

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d4 + 6) piercing damage.

Kalzok

By: Joe Raso
Artist: Dean Spencer

Kalzok is a minotaur pirate captain whose crew prowls the southern Sword Coast. They strike out from a small island hideout that is encircled by a maze of treacherous reefs, which Kalzok's natural abilities allow him to navigate with ease.

Background

Kalzok was born to a pair of fervent demon cult leaders in Calimport. They arranged bloody hunts of slaves let loose in the Muzad, the underground labyrinth of ruins hidden beneath the city. They dedicated these violent festivities to the demon lord Baphomet.

Kalzok's parents viewed his birth as a great boon from Baphomet for the work they'd done in his name. His parents hid the minotaur in the Muzad where the young minotaur grew up quickly. They indoctrinated him into their violent hunts as soon as Kalzok could hold a weapon, training him to hunt and kill.

Yet for all these attentions, Kalzok's father felt no love for his monstrous son. He viewed Kalzok as a tool to garner ever greater powers from Baphomet. Once Kalzok had grown strong enough to defeat most men, his father organized what he believed would be his greatest achievement, a hunt with his own bestial son as the quarry.

However, before the hunt began, Kalzok's mother warned him of his father's plans. Infuriated, Kalzok cut a bloody swath through his father's cultists and freed many of the slaves who were bought to die in the cult's violent events. Kalzok and his escaped slave companions hijacked a ship from Calimport's wharf and headed out to sea.

Kalzok enjoyed his new freedom. His perfect recall of the routes they sailed allowed his crew to



traverse dangerous passages that others feared to navigate. In the dangerous waters of the Nelanther Isles, they stumbled upon an old smuggler's hideout. It was protected by treacherous reefs that encircled the tiny island it was built upon. They now use this hideout as their base to prey upon ships sailing in the nearby waters.

Current Motives

Kalzok revels in the freedom of piracy on the high seas. His crew's savage attacks on ships satisfied much of the minotaur's natural lust for carnage and destruction. Kalzok still wears the armor he wore during the bloody hunts in the Muzad as a way to never forget what his father tried to do.

Kalzok can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **An information giver** – Kalzok's recall of dangerous sailing routes is unmatched.

Adventurer's seek his council to help find a mysterious island or ship lost at sea.

- **A quest giver** – Kalzok has begun to dream of vengeance against his father's hunts and the debauchery of Calimport. He seeks maps of the city and its hidden passages to further his plans. He may hire adventures to map sections of the underground in hopes of finding the best way to bring devastation to the city.

- **A merchant** – Kalzok and his crew occasionally come to port to sell some of their booty or purchase supplies for their ship and hideout.

Long Term Motives

Although Kalzok escaped his parent's demon cult and gained some control over the natural rage running through his minotaur blood, he is still one of Baphomet's chosen. Of late his dreams have been filled with visions of returning to Calimport to enact revenge on all those who live there. In these dreams he unleashes a wave of fire and destruction upon the city by collapsing the underground mazes of the Muzad through a series of massive explosions.

Flaws

Kalzok's minotaur blood burns fiercely within him. He tells himself that he has mastered the savage impulses that previously ruled his life, but this is untrue. Destructive urges are ever present, and his anger can erupt at the most inopportune times.

Mariner's Halberd

Weapon (Halberd), rare

You have a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic halberd. In addition, the Marnier's Halberd floats on water and can support 450 pounds of weight before it begins to sink.

Kalzok the Pirate

Large monstrosity, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor plus shield)
Hit Points 93 (11d10 + 33)
Speed 40 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)

Skills Perception +9
Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 19
Languages Common, Abyssal
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Charge. If Kalzok moves at least 10 feet straight toward a target and then hits it with a gore attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 9 (2d8) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a **DC 14 Strength** saving throw or be pushed up to 10 feet away and knocked prone.

Labyrinthine Recall. Kalzok can perfectly recall any path he has traveled.

Reckless. At the start of its turn, Kalzok can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls he makes during that turn, but attack rolls against him have advantage until the start of its turn.

Innate Spellcasting. Kalzok's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 14). Kalzok can cast the following spells requiring no material components: 1/day each: Hunter's Mark, Heroism (self only)

Actions

Multiattack. *Kalzok makes two attacks with his halberd.*

Halberd. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (2d12 + 6) slashing damage.

Skull Bola. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 10/30 ft., one target. *Hit: 6* (1d4 + 4) bludgeoning damage. A Large or smaller creature hit by the Skull Bola must make a **DC 13 Dexterity** saving throw or be knocked prone.

Gore. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage.

Kalzok's Hideout

Writing and Cartography: Joe Raso
Art: Provided by Wizards of the Coast

Background

Kalzok the minotaur pirate discovered an old smuggler's hold on a tiny island in the Nelanther Isles, not far from Nemessor. The island sits amid a dangerous archipelago encircled with scores of hidden shoals that is avoided by all but the most daring or foolish navigators. The area's waters are notorious for claiming the ships of unwary sea captains who tried to steer through the gauntlet of hidden reefs.

Plot Hooks

Aside from accidentally discovering Kalzok's island hideout, the heroes may have other reasons to seek out the pirate lair:

- **Missing Smokepowder.** The representatives of the Lord's Alliance grow concerned when they've discovered a large cache of Smokepowder was stolen from Baldur's Gate. Evidence suggests that the minotaur pirate Kalzok was the culprit. The Alliance seeks heroes to retrieve the dangerous shipment before it's used for nefarious purposes.
- **Fenced Goods.** A merchant company recently lost a ship sailing near the Nelanther Isles. A minotaur ship captain was seen selling goods that may have come from the missing ship. The merchant company has placed a bounty on the Kalzok the pirate and offer a reward for the return of their property.
- **Future Lighthouse.** Merchants from Port Nyanzaru wish to make shipping between Chult and Waterdeep safer. They've identified an island suited for the construction of a lighthouse. These merchants hire the heroes to explore the island and ensure that it's safe to build on.

Approaching the Island

Kalzok's island is located in the midst of a dangerous set of reefs that are difficult to navigate. Numerous shipwrecks lie scattered in these waters and most old seamen wisely avoid the area. The minotaur travels these waters with ease because of his perfect recall of where he's travelled.

Dangerous Waters

Anyone who succeeds on a **DC 12 Intelligence (History) check** knows that the waters surrounding the island are exceedingly dangerous because of countless rocks and shoals that are hidden below the surface.

A **DC 20 Intelligence (Navigator Tools) check** is needed to navigate the waters safely around the island. A failure will result in the crew facing significant challenges, some of which could include:

- Becoming stuck after running aground on a sandy or rocky shoal
- Needing repairs to the keel, rudder or hull
- Causing the boat to keel over on its side or even capsize

Chapter 5 of the Dungeon Masters Guide includes more ideas for running encounters at sea.

Merrow Watch

A Merrow tribe have a lair near Kalzok's island. After an early violent confrontation with the minotaur and his crew, the Merrow have grudgingly agreed to allow the pirate captain free passage. In return Kalzok throws metal weapons into the sea whenever they approach the island to maintain their truce.

The Merrow have agreed to stay away from any ships having the body of a humanoid hung from its bowsprit. Any ship that does not display this gruesome marker has a good chance to be attacked by a patrol of 2d4 + 3 **Merrow** (CR 2, MM, p 219). The Merrow are vicious and violent, but will retreat if more than half of them fall in battle. They will try to drag any fallen victims into the water with them as they retreat below the waves.

The Merrow watch the island closely. They don't like Kalzok's presence on the island and look for any opportunity to attack to wipe them out, such as after invading PCs arrive.

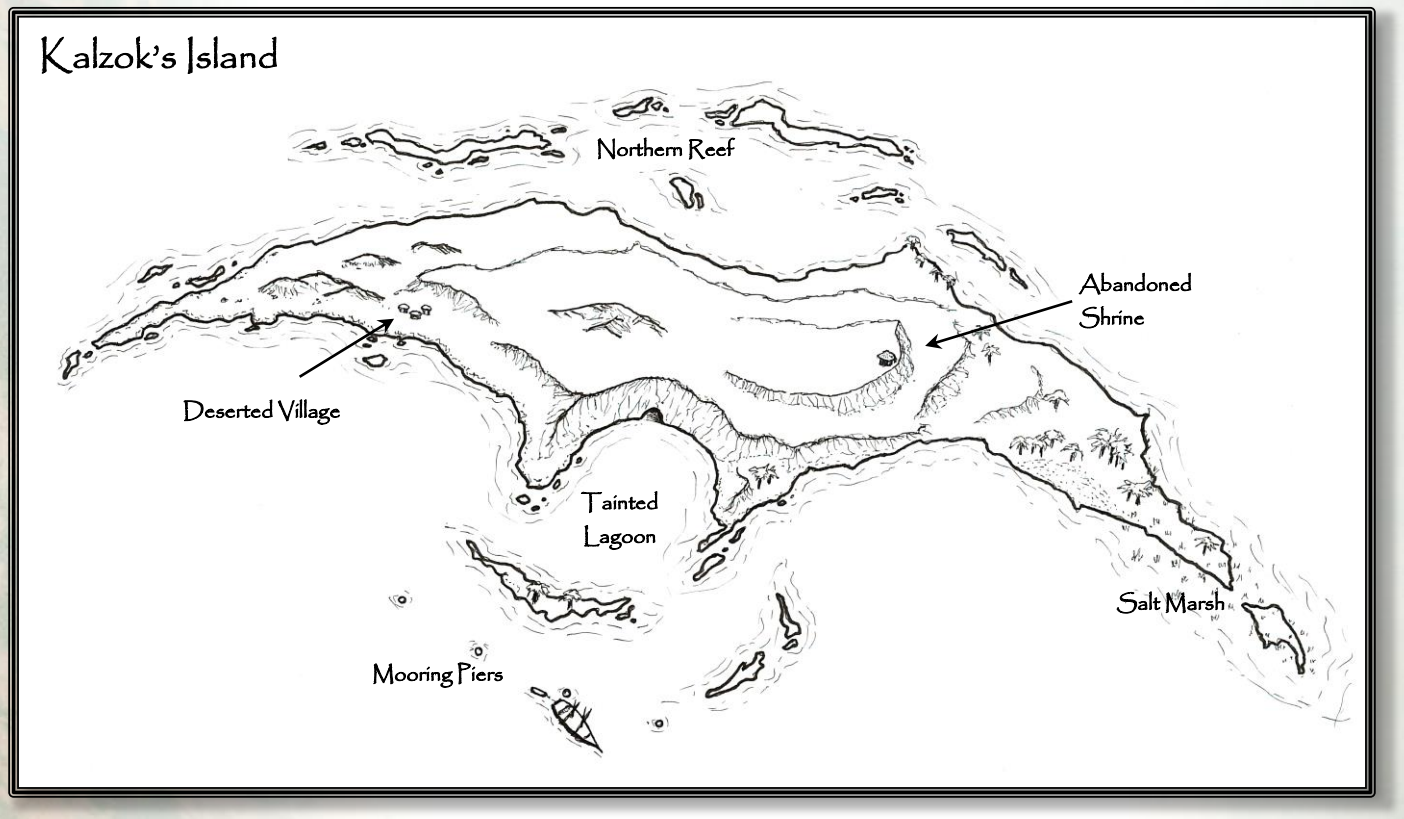
Kalzok's Ship

Kalzok has acquired a fast sailing ship. It has three lateen sails that provide remarkable speed and maneuverability. The crew have dubbed it *"The Bloody Knife"* because of the ship's red colored planks and the speed with which it cuts through waters.

The waters around the island are exceedingly shallow requiring most sailing vessels to weigh anchor hundreds of feet off shore. The *Bloody Knife* is anchored just south of the island whenever Kalzok and his crew are present in their lair. The ship will always keep a crew of at least four **bandits** (bandit; CR ⅛; MM, p 343) to watch over the ship while anchored near the island.

Ship Stats - "The Bloody Knife"

Cost 15,000 gp, 2 ½ mph, crew 15, passengers 15, cargo 50 tons, AC 15, HP 250, Damage Threshold 20.



Kalzok's Island

General Overview

Kalzok's island is curiously bare, with most of the land covered with scrub grass and the occasional low-lying shrub. For reasons unknown very few birds or animals live the main island, though a variety of giant animals including snakes, lizards and crabs have been seen along the coast.

Although Kalzok's hidden pirate lair is the primary focus of this article, this island provides lots of opportunity for an enterprising DM to create further adventures for their group. Below are a few ideas that can easily be expanded upon to challenge your players.

Points of Interest

Northern Reef - Approaching the island from the north is exceedingly dangerous because of a series of small islands and coral reefs that hide just below the surface. This has resulted in a large number of ship wrecks riddling this area.

These waters also team with sea-life, supporting a large population of **giant crab** (CR 1/8, MM, p 324).

Deserted village – A group of 10 abandoned wooden huts are located on the south-western side of the island. It's clear the huts haven't been lived in for many years, but who lived here, or why they left is uncertain.

One of the crew is also convinced they saw a shrouded figure watching from atop the hills that rise to the west. Others who were with the crewmember did not see this mysterious figure, nor has it been seen since. Because of this, Kalzok's crew avoids the area for fear of it being haunted.

Mooring Piers – Off the south-central part of the island stand four massive wooden posts firmly affixed to the sea-floor, rising a good twenty feet above the surface. The posts mark the closest approach most sea-worthy sailing vessels can make to the island without running aground. Kalzok's crew moor their ship here whenever they stay on the island.

Salt-Marsh – In comparison to the rest of the island, the eastern tip is covered with lush vegetation. A grove of palm trees has taken root among tall marshy grasses that extend into the sea. This part of the island is infested with **giant lizards** (CR ¼, MM, p 326) and **crocodiles** (CR ½, MM, p 320)

While initially exploring the island, a crew member was killed by a large crocodile. The rest of the crew has avoided this area since that event.

Abandoned Shrine – At the highest point of the island sits a small, dilapidated shrine to Lathander. A *detect magic* spell reveals a faint enchantment effect.

The first character who makes an effort to take care of the shrine will receive a boon from the shrine. That individual will receive the benefit of a *Bless* spell that lasts until the character completes a long rest. Once this boon is granted, the abandoned shrine's magic dissipates.

Hidden Lair

The main entrance to Kalzok's lair is found on the south side of the island in a set of caves that open into a shallow lagoon at the base of a rocky cliff.

Watchers Above

One of Kalzok's crew is always stationed atop the cliff to watch for trouble. The crew has little fear of intruders and so are not very attentive. Unless the cliff watchers are otherwise alerted, **Stealth checks are made at advantage** to avoid the notice of these cliff top sentries.

During the day a tiefling sailor named **Darrid Knucklbones** keeps watch**.** He uses the statistics of a **bandit captain** (CN tiefling, bandit captain; CR 2, MM), but with the following adjustments:

- Darkvision 60 ft.
- Hellish Resistance: resistance to fire damage
- Infernal Legacy (spell save DC 12): knows the thaumaturgy cantrip. May cast hellish rebuke once per day as 2nd-level spell. May cast darkness once per day.
- Action: **Heavy Crossbow**. Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d10+3) piercing damage.



In the evenings, a tougher than normal **kobold** named **Scraps** keeps watch. (LE kobold; CR ⅛, MM, p 195), but with the following changes:

- 11 hit points
- Armor Class 14 (studded leather)
- Action: ***Light Crossbow****. Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8+2) piercing damage.

The watchers ring a heavy handbell to warn the rest of the pirate crew of danger. They use their crossbows to fire at intruders, and receive ¾ cover against attacks from the below the cliff. The edge of the cliff is approximately 50 feet above the water's surface by cave entrance and can be climbed with a successful **DC 12 Strength (Athletics)** ability check.

Nearby, a set of stone stairs descend into the rock, eventually arriving at **Area 17**. It takes approximately 90 feet of movement to travel that distance.

Tainted Lagoon

A shallow sheltered cove sits at the base of a rocky cliff. The waters of this cove are tainted by Kalzok's crew as they dump privy buckets and other waste into the lagoon.

Swimming in these waters is not advised for two reasons. First, the tainted waters harbor disease because of the fouled waters. Anyone who swims here must succeed on a **DC 12 Constitution saving throw** or become infected with **Sewer Plague** (see DMG, p 257).

Second, the waste has attracted a school of sharks. At any time, 1d4 **reef sharks** swim here (CR ½, MM, p 336). These sharks will hungrily attack any creature swimming in the waters of the tainted lagoon.

Any loud noise in this area will attract the attention of the watchers atop the cliff.

General Features of the Caves

Kalzok's crew discovered this set of caves a little over a year ago, its previous occupants had long since disappeared. The rooms and tunnels have been carved out of natural caves to construct this complex.

The floors, walls and ceilings are roughly finished and still show the chisel marks of the original builders of this lair.

Thick wooden doors inset into simple plank walls were built to close off rooms. Unless otherwise noted, doors open into each room. The doors do not have locks, but are instead secured with a simple latch mechanism. When closed, the doors can be opened using a **DC 12 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools)** ability check or smashed open with a **DC 16 Strength (Athletics)** ability check.

Within the complex, everything feels slightly damp and an acrid smell of unwashed bodies perpetually hangs in the air. Oil lamps are hung in all tunnels and are kept lit providing ample light throughout.

Lair on Alert

The carved stone walls of the cavern cause sounds to echo throughout the pirate lair. Loud noises easily carry through the tunnels alerting all within that something may be wrong.

In the event that an alarm is raised, Kalzok's pirate crew fight ruthlessly making good use of the cavern's layout when skirmishing with invaders.

The crew is extremely loyal to Kalzok given that he freed many of them from slavery and possibly death at the hands of Baphomet cultists in Calimport. They savor the freedom that their rough pirate life has brought them and have no intention of being caught alive for fear of being thrown back into slavery.



Area 1 – Cave Entrance

A 25-foot wide, 10-foot high arching cave entrance at the base of the cliff opens into a large natural cavern approximately 60 feet long and 40 feet wide. The waters of the tainted lagoon fill most of this cavern, to a 5-foot depth. The ceiling rises 15 feet above the water at its highest point. Any stalactites that once hung from the ceiling were broken long ago leaving a rough and bumpy ceiling.

Area 2 – Dock

A natural stone landing hugs the northern and western sides of the cavern, rising a few feet above the water. A sturdy 10 by 20-foot wooden dock rests against this landing. A rowboat that can hold 8 medium sized humanoids is docked here. The boat is used to shuttle crews to and from vessels moored at sea. Two narrow passages slope upward as they exit the back of the cave.

Sacks and crates pillaged by the crew are stacked on the east side of the platform. A series of barrels are lined up against the western wall They consist of two barrels of ale, one barrel of wine, one barrel of cider vinegar and a final empty barrel.

Jakes, a human **bandit** (bandit; CR ⅛, MM, p 343), sits on a crate contently smoking a pipe while looking out at the tainted lagoon.

Area 3 – Shrine to Umberlee

This oval chamber is roughly 30 feet long and 20 feet wide with three exits. The southern passage descends to the dock (Area 2). The eastern passage heads towards a storage area (Area 4), while the northern passage leads to a door (Area 6) before turning west.

On the western wall is a statue of two curling waves hiding a mysterious womanly figure peering from behind. Surrounding this statue are thick blue and green candles, all currently unlit. Beside the candles sits a wooden bucket filled with seawater and seaweed.

Tunket the Blessed a human **cult fanatic** (CR 2, MM, p 345) can usually be found here pretending to tend to the shrine and collecting the offerings left by the Kalzok's crew. If combat breaks out in the complex, Tunket supports Kalzok's crew from a distance but will flee to safety if it appears the battle is going poorly.

Treasure: A ceramic offering plate rests in front of the status holding 20 sp. Tunket carries a key that opens a locked chest found in (Area 10). Tunket also wears a *Necklace of Prayer Beads* hung with a bead of Blessing and two beads of curing (DMG, p 182).

Area 4 – Plundered Storage

This long and narrow chamber is packed with hundreds of pounds of goods and supplies stolen by Kalzok's crew. Another storage area can be seen through a narrow opening to the east (Area 5).

Treasure: Most trade goods valued at less than 10 gp can be found here (PHB, p 157). If sold at market, the aggregate of these goods could bring 1,000 gp.

Area 5 – Dangerous Cargo

Five wooden kegs take up very little space in this chamber. The only exit from this oddly shaped room is to return to the Plundered Storage Area (Area 4).

A successful **DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation)** or **Wisdom (Perception)** check will uncover a piece of paper jutting from below one of the kegs. If examined, the following words are written in both Common and Elvish, "SMOKEPOWDER! EXPLOSIVE!". The pirate crew removed these warning labels when they were brought here in hopes of making it easier to smuggle into the stolen goods into city ports.

If not entertaining the crew in the Mess Hall (Area 8), **Mog the Scarred**, a half-orc **bard** (CR 2, VGtM, p 210), can be found here checking on the state of the *smokepowder* kegs.

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.

(*from Waterdeep Dragon Heist, pg 192)*

Treasure: Mog has 10 gp as well as a shawm inlayed with semi-precious stones worth 15 gp that he treasures. The smokepowder kegs are both extremely dangerous and exceedingly valuable. Both nefarious and upstanding groups in cities along the sword coast will pay handsomely to acquire these items.

Area 6 – Breeding Baths

This large irregularly shaped cavern is 50 feet across at its widest point. Half of the room is occupied a dark pool of salty water. Two 10-foot-long wooden poles hang beside the pool. One pole ends in a two-foot diameter fish net while the second has a hand-sized curved hook. A small bucket filled with dead sardines gives the room a pungent aroma.

This chamber is where **Ardoa Stingerhands** a halfling **druid** is usually found (CR 2, MM, p 346). This young halfling uses the pool to breed **medusa's hair** (new Monster) which are harvested to create *Medusa's Hair Jars.* The pool contains one **adult medusa's hair** and **a bloom of medusa's hair polyps**. Any creature other than Ardoa who comes within 10 feet of the pool risks being attacked by the adult creature and possibly pulled into the pool.

The room also serves as Ardoa's sleeping area. A simple cot rests near the door and a small locked chest sits nearby. Ardoa carries a key for the chest. A **DC 12 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools)** ability check will unlock the chest or a **DC 16 Strength (Athletics)** ability check will break it open.

Beside the bed is a table covered in small glass jars. Five of these jars are sealed *Medusa's Hair Jars* (see sidebar).

Treasure: The chest contains a potion of healing, a scroll of animal friendship, 1 bloodstone worth 50 gp and a pouch filled with 25 sp.

Medusa's Hair Jars

Wondrous Item, Uncommon

Small glass jars are filled with sea water and masses of Medusa's Hair Polyps. You can use an action to throw the jar up to 30 feet. The jar shatters on impact and is destroyed. Each creature within a 10-foot radius of where the jar landed must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or take 1d4 points of poison damage, half as much on a successful saving throw. All Medusa's Hair Polyps in the jar are killed once the jar shatters.

Area 7 – Kitchen

This area is used as a kitchen by Kalzok's pirate crew. The north side of the room is occupied by a large table and is covered with pots, pans, and cooking utensils. The walls of the room are lined with food supplies in a variety of barrels, sacks, and crates.

A fire pit with an iron grate for cooking sits in the south-west corner of the chamber. A hole is cut through the rock above the fire pit allowing smoke to escape. Creatures of size Tiny or smaller may clamber through this hole, which opens onto the cliff, 15 feet above the tainted lagoon's waters.

Usually found here are Ash and Kett, human **thugs** (CR ½, MM, p 350). They are a couple who have taken over most of the cooking duties for the crew. They are seldom found apart, which has led to the crew calling them "The Twins" even though they look nothing alike. They passionately care for each other and will fight recklessly to protect the other when threatened.

Treasure: Ash and Kett each carry a simple skeleton key that opens a lock chest in their room (Area 13).

Area 8 – Mess Hall

This room serves as the main gathering place for Kalzok's crew. The room is furnished with a pair of wooden tables and ten stools. The room also

contains two nearly-empty kegs of ale, a water barrel and two-dozen pewter mugs.

At most times there will be (1d4 + 1) **bandits** resting here (CR ⅛, MM, p 343). When not checking on the smokepowder kegs in Area 5, **Mog the Scarred** will be here entertaining the crew.

Area 9 – Privy

This tiny room hides the foul smells of a simple privy. Kalzok's crew infrequently dump the contents of these buckets into the tainted lagoon.

Area 10 – Tunket's Chambers

This chamber belongs to **Tunket the Blessed, a cult fanatic** (CR 2, MM, p 345). Tunket is pretending to be a traveling cleric of Umberlee, when in truth is a cultist of Baphomet.

The room contains a comfortable bed covered with luxurious furs, a small writing table, simple chair, and a locked chest. Tunket carries the key for this locked and trapped chest. A **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation)** check reveals a poison needle trap that activates if a key is not used to open the trap. Triggering the trap forces a character to make a **DC 12 Dexterity saving throw**. Failure causes 1 point of poison damage and the fingers of the offending creature turn blue for 24 hours. The lock may be picked and the trap deactivated with a **DC 15 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools)** ability check. The lock can also be smashed with a **DC 20 Strength (Athletics)** ability check.

Tunket will only be found here if not attending to Umberlee's Shrine (Area 3).

Treasure: The locked chest contains a few items Tunket has brought as well as an aggregate of the offerings collected from the shrine. This includes three sacks of coins, filled with 200 cp, 100 sp, and 50 gp. Also contained within are 3 tiger eye stones each worth 10 gp, 2 potions of healing, and a silver holy symbol dedicated to Baphomet worth 10 gp.

The chest also holds a Tunket's journal. It is filled with writings praising Baphomet, a log detailing the search for Kalzok and the hopes to have the minotaur return to Calimport in order to bring down Baphomet's fury upon the ungrateful city's populace.

Area 11 – Mica's Chambers

This large room is claimed by **Mica**, a goliath crewmember who is Kalzok's second-in-command and recently his romantic interest. The room contains a simple cot, a large chair, a wooden box filled with personal effects and a crate of clothes taken during recent raids. Mica is rarely here and will instead be found in Kalzok's room (Area 12)

Treasure: The crate of clothes contains a variety of high-quality clothes made from expensive fabric. If sold, the collection could receive 100gp from discerning buyers.

Area 12 – Kalzok's Room

This is Kalzok's personal room. It is furnished with a large mattress, three crates filled with furs and linen and a high-quality locked chest that can be opened with a key Kazok carries. A **DC 20 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools)** ability check or **DC 25 Strength (Athletics)** ability check may also open the chest.

Kalzok and Mica are usually be found here enjoying each other's company.

Mica uses **swashbuckler** statistics (CN, goliath swashbuckler; CR 3, VGtM, p 217) with these changes:

- Stone's Endurance: Once per day, as a reaction, Mica can decrease damage she has taken by 1d12 + 1.
- She wears enchanted leather Mariner's Armor (DMG, p 181)

Treasure: The locked chest contains a potion of greater healing, 2 spinel gems worth 100 gp each, a jade figurine of an octopus worth 100 gp, a silver ring worth 20 gp, 5 pearls worth 100 gp

each and a large sack of coins totaling 2,500 cp, 1,000 sp and 250 gp.

Also, stored at the bottom of the chest is a non-magical brass amulet with a labyrinthian engraving – a symbol of the Baphomet cult in Calimport that he escaped from.

Area 13 – The Twins Room

This room used to be similar to the other Common Quarters (Areas 14-16), however Ash and Kett have claimed it for themselves alone.

In addition to three sets of bunkbeds, the couple have also secured a locked chest to store a few treasures they've amassed. They both carry a key to the chest, or it may be opened with a successful **DC 12 Dexterity (Thieves' Tools)** ability check or smashed open with a **DC 16 Strength (Athletics)** ability check.

Treasure: The lock chest contains a *ring of resistance (poison),* two blue velvet masks inlaid with silver stitching worth 25 gp and a pouch with 50 gp.

Area 14, 15, 16 – Common Quarters

These rooms are sleeping chambers for Kalzok's crew. The rooms are furnished with sets of bunkbeds, with each room able to accommodate up to 8 crew members. At any time, each room may have 1d4 **bandits** resting in them.

Treasure: Each bandit present will have a belt pouch storing 5 sp.

Area 17 – Stairs to the Clifftop

A set of rough-cut stone steps ascends from this hallway, eventually opening at the top of the cliff. It takes approximately 90 feet of movement to travel from the caves to the cliff top. The stairs are dark and unlit.

Medusa's-Hair

Medusa's Hair are unusual creatures that are related to jellyfish. They are normally encountered far out at sea or when dead specimens wash ashore.

The Medusa's Hair life cycle begins when an adult implants its eggs into the body of a creature it killed. Over the course of a few weeks, the eggs hatch, freeing thousands of polyps that then affix themselves to the decaying body upon which they feed. Eventually, the mass of polyps explode into a bloom of tiny, free-swimming creatures. The individual creatures eventual drift apart feeding on any creatures of their size or smaller that they capture within their stinging tentacles.

Most specimens that have been seen are Medium sized or smaller, though some sailor stories persist of large whales being captured by massive versions of these jellyfish-like animals.



Bloom of Medusa's Hair Polyps

Medium Swarm of Tiny beasts, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)
Hit Points 22 (5d8)
Speed 5 ft., swim 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)	6 (-2)	1 (-5)

Damage resistances bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from non-magical weapons, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned
Senses blindsight 20 ft., passive perception 7
Languages -
Challenge ½ (100xp)

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a tiny medusa polyp. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

Water Breathing. The swarm can breathe only underwater.

Water Based Creature. The swarm cannot survive long outside of water. If the swarm ends its turn outside of a body of water, it is considered Prone and takes 3 (1d6) acid damage as its body slowly dissolves.

Actions

Sting. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target in the swarms' space. *Hit*: 5 (2d4) poison damage. If the target is a creature other than an undead, it must succeed on a **DC 10 Constitution saving throw**, and the target must succeed on a DC10 Constitution saving throw or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Juvenile Medusa's Hair

Small beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 7 (2d6)
Speed 5 ft., swim 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
4 (-3)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)	7 (-2)	1 (-5)

Damage resistance bludgeoning from non-magical weapons, poison
Condition Immunities stunned
Senses blindsight 30 ft., passive perception 7
Languages –
Challenge ¼ (50 XP)

Water Breathing. The Medusa's Hair breathe only underwater.

Water Based Creature. The main body of Medusa's Hair cannot survive long outside of water, though its tentacles can reach outside of its normal watery habitat with no ill effects. If the Medusa's Hair's body ends its turn outside of a body of water, it is considered Prone and takes 3 (1d6) acid damage as its body slowly dissolves.

Actions

Sting. *Melee Weapon Attack*: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit: 3* (1d4+1) poison damage. If the target is a creature other than an undead, it must succeed on a **DC 12 Constitution saving throw** or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Adult Medusa's Hair

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)
Hit Points 26 (4d8+4)
Speed 5 ft., swim 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	1 (-5)	7 (-2)	1 (-5)

Damage resistance bludgeoning from non-magical weapons, poison
Condition Immunities stunned
Senses blindsight 30 ft., passive perception 7
Languages –
Challenge ½ (100 XP)

Water Breathing. The Medusa's Hair breathe only underwater.

Water Based Creature. The main body of Medusa's Hair cannot survive long outside of water, though its tentacles can reach outside of its normal watery habitat with no ill effects. If the Medusa's Hair's body ends its turn outside of a body of water, it is considered Prone and takes 3 (1d6) acid damage as its body slowly dissolves.

Actions

Multiattack. The adult medusa's hair makes two attacks with its sting.

Sting. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4+1) poison damage. If the target is Medium or smaller, it is grappled (escape DC 10) and restrained until the grapple ends. Also, if the hit target is not undead, it must succeed a **DC 15 Constitution saving throw** or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Kalzok's Crew

Mica

Mica is a goliath who acts as Kalzok's second in command and recently his romantic partner. Mica is tall, standing just over 8 feet. She is both sleek and powerful.

Mica is utterly devoted to Kazlok. She is distrustful of Tunket and does not like the growing influence the false-priest has with Kalzok.

Mica uses **swashbuckler** statistics (CN, goliath, CR 3, VGtM, p 217) with these changes:

- Stone's Endurance: Once per day, as a reaction, Mica can decrease damage she has taken by 1d12 + 1.
- She wears enchanted leather Mariner's Armor (DMG, p 181)

Mica will normally be found in Kalzok's room (area 12).

The Twins - Ash and Kett

This human couple are nicknamed "The Twins" by the rest of the crew because they do everything together. They will do anything to protect the other from harm.

They are considered **thugs** (CR ½, MM, p 350) in combat. They will either be found cooking in the Kitchen (area 7) or in their personal chambers (area 13).

Mog the Scarred

This jovial half-orc **bard** (CR 2, VGtM, p 210) joined Kalzok's crew shortly after their escape from Calimport. One side of his face is scared after an unfortunate incident handling packets of *smokepowder.*

Mog is usually found in the Mess Hall (area 8) entertaining the crew or checking on the barrels of smokepoweder (area 5) to ensure all is safe.

Tunket the Blessed

Tunket recently joined Kalzok's crew pretending to be a traveling cleric of Umberlee. In truth, Tunket is a cultist of Baphomet sent by Kalzok's mother to try and bring the minotaur back to her Baphomet cult in Calimport. Tunket believes Kalzok is one of Baphomet's chosen and attempts to stoke the minotaur's urge for violence and destruction. No one in the crew yet suspects Tunket is not a cleric of the bitch queen.

Tunket uses **cult fanatic** statistics (CE, CR 2, MM p 345) and wears a *Necklace of Prayer Beads* hung with a bead of Blessing and two beads of curing (DMG, p 182).

The cultist can be found either at the Shrine to Umberlee (area 3) or in their chamber (area 10).

Ardoha Stingerhands

Ardoha is a young halfling druid who found a way to cultivate blooms of young Medusa's Hair. Ardoah uses **druid** statistics (N halfling, CR 2, MM, p 346) with the following changes:

- Lucky: Ardoah can reroll a 1 on a d20 for any attack roll, ability check or saving throw.
- Brave: Ardoha has advantage on saving throw against being frightened.
- Halfling Nimbleness: Ardoha can move through the space of any creature that is of a size Medium or larger.

Ardoah is almost always found tending to her Medusa's Hair (area 6).

Darrid Knucklebones

Darrid is an experienced Tiefling pirate who joined Kalzok's crew early on. He uses the **bandit captain** statistics (CE tiefling, CR 2, MM, p 344) with the following changes:

- Darkvision 60 ft.

- Hellish Resistance: resistance to fire damage
- Infernal Legacy (spell save DC 12): knows the thaumaturgy cantrip. May cast hellish rebuke once per day as 2nd-level spell. May cast darkness once per day.
- Action: **Heavy Crossbow**. Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d10+3) piercing damage.

During the day Darrid keeps watch at the top of the cliff overlooking the cave entrance, otherwise he will be found playing cards in the Mess Hall (area 8).

Scraps

Scraps is a tougher than normal **kobold** who does his best to fit in with the rest of the crew. (LE kobold, CR ⅛, MM, p 195), but with the following changes:

- 11 hit points
- Armor Class 14 (studded leather)
- Action: **Light Crossbow**. Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, range 80/320ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8+2) piercing damage.

During the evenings Scraps keeps watch at the top of the cliff over the cave entrance. During the day he can be found in the Mess Hall (area 8).

Other Sundry Sailors

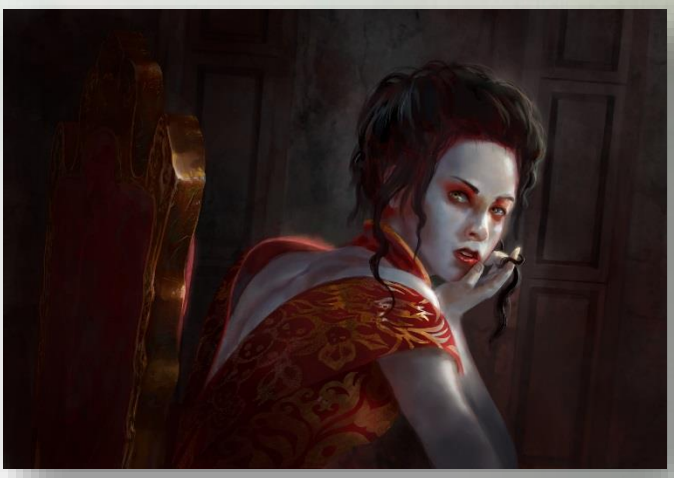
Here are suggested names for other members of Kalzok's crew, each using the **bandit** template:

- Aug
- Baela
- Enik
- Gendry
- Jowels
- Kilgar
- Lug
- Noggy
- Pugswallow
- Rags
- Rhyden
- Silga
- Skeg
- Tabs
- Verni
- Zogg



Lady Anya Kormakoff

By Elven Tower
Artist: Felipe Gaona / Fat Goblin Games
Cartography: Elven Tower



Lady Anya Kormakoff is a respected member of the city's council, and she represents the healer's guild. Her good standing with the council and the churches secures her position. Known to very few is the fact that she is a vampire.

In order to hide her vampirism, she and her assistant, Darifer, came up with an elaborate feeding plan. She placed Darifer in charge of disposing of the dead and the very ill from the healer's guild. No one knows that Darifer brings the Lady fresh organs, blood, and sometimes even living people close to their demise.

Darifer himself sometimes feeds Lady Anya his own blood, she has postponed turning him into a vampire spawn for that reason.

Background

Lady Anya's story goes back almost four-hundred years. Back in the day, Anya was a farmer. She worked day and night in the field and the barns. Being from a small, humble family, there was no other way to make ends meet.

Her otherwise dull life took a sharp turn when gypsy brigands raided the province. Young Anya was taken captive by the gypsies who turned out to serve a vampire lord. The vampire lord's real name was unknown. Everyone referred to him only as Lord Vapponia. The undead lord had his brigands bring fresh people for him to feed on. A despicable creature he was, but he saw something in Anya he liked, and decided not to kill her.

Anya remained a slave for a few years until one day a fabled vampire hunter appeared on their doorstep to destroy Lord Vapponia. Anya hid in the corner while the hunter destroyed her master. The vampire hunter was about to deal the finishing blow when he stopped in his tracks. Anya had come from the shadows and stuck a short blade in his back. The vampire hunter fell to the ground and died. Lord Vapponia lay on the ground, severely wounded but still alive. It was then that Anya's rage for past years of servitude made her act. She grabbed the hunter's wooden stake and finished the job, killing Lord Vapponia. Unbeknownst to her was the fact that, by hatefully killing the vampire lord, she sealed the evil agreement of the forces of darkness. She became what she hated - a vampire.

Since the early days of her vampirehood she has survived by hiding and killing from the shadows, and occasionally impersonating a member of society. In present times, her strategy has shifted. Immortality changes a person over the course of centuries.

A decade ago she secured a lordship position by marrying a man of power. Said man "died" a few months later, unfortunately. She became a wealthy widow. Step by step, and with inhuman patience, she climbs the ladder of society and nobility. The model is not sustainable indefinitely; sooner or later people will wonder about her unending youth. For now, she uses her magic to appear older than she looks, but eventually she

will have to move to a different city and start over.

Current Motives

Lady Anya Kormakoff's main goal is to continue increasing her leverage in the city's council. She means to take over the council by seducing, threatening, or disposing of unwanted competitors.
Lady Anya Kormakoff can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A main enemy** – An informant or councilman may disclose her vampirism to the party and ask them to get rid of her. Her wealthy position will make an approach a difficult endeavor.

- **A quest giver** – Even without revealing her vampiric nature, Lady Anya may use the party for her own goals. She can hire them for espionage, threats, and even to assassinate a competitor.

- **An ally** – Lady Anya controls the healer's guild. If the party needs a healing spell or resurrection they will have to get Lady Anya's favor. She does not accept gold for these kinds of services, she expects a favor too.

Long Term Motives

Lady Anya Kormakoff's long term goal after taking over the city council is to create her own vampire coven. Once she controls how the city works she is free to create vampire spawn and slowly build her army.

Flaws

Lady Anya Kormakoff is overly confident and prideful. She believes she is two steps ahead of everyone else. She has had almost four-hundred years of experience in surviving and manipulating people. Ultimately, her overconfidence is her vulnerability.

Lady Anya Kormakoff is particularly interested in gems and jewelry. She is capable of overspending her resources to acquire a piece of jewelry that catches her attention. She has used violence to get what she wants if a deal is not possible.

Lady Anya's diet is depressing at best. She has had troubles keeping her thirst for blood at bay. Over the past month she has killed three peasants violently to feed. The city watch is already connecting the dots. Three exsanguinated corpses in a month can only mean one thing.

Lady Anya Kormakoff's Lair

Lady Anya's lair is nothing but her own manor in the great city. The basement of her manor has been adapted to hold her coffin where she sleeps. This chamber is also connected to the healer's guild through an underground tunnel.

Area 1. Meeting Room

This room features a large twelve-seat table designed for secret meetings. It directly connects with the Kormakoff Manor through a flight of stairs.

The walls are decorated with eight beautiful landscape paintings. Each painting is magical and can summon an undead **Shadow** (CR ½, MM, p 269) to protect the lair. Shadows are summoned when someone gains access to this chamber uninvited.

Area 2. Meandering Tunnels

A raw, unworked tunnel connects **Area 1**, **Area 3,** and **Area 4**. This tunnel is dark and dusty.

The constant cry of bats from **Area 4** can be heard from here.

Area 3. Storage & Supplies

This cavern chamber features an alternative escape method from the lair. The tunnel that exits this chamber slants upward as it goes until it

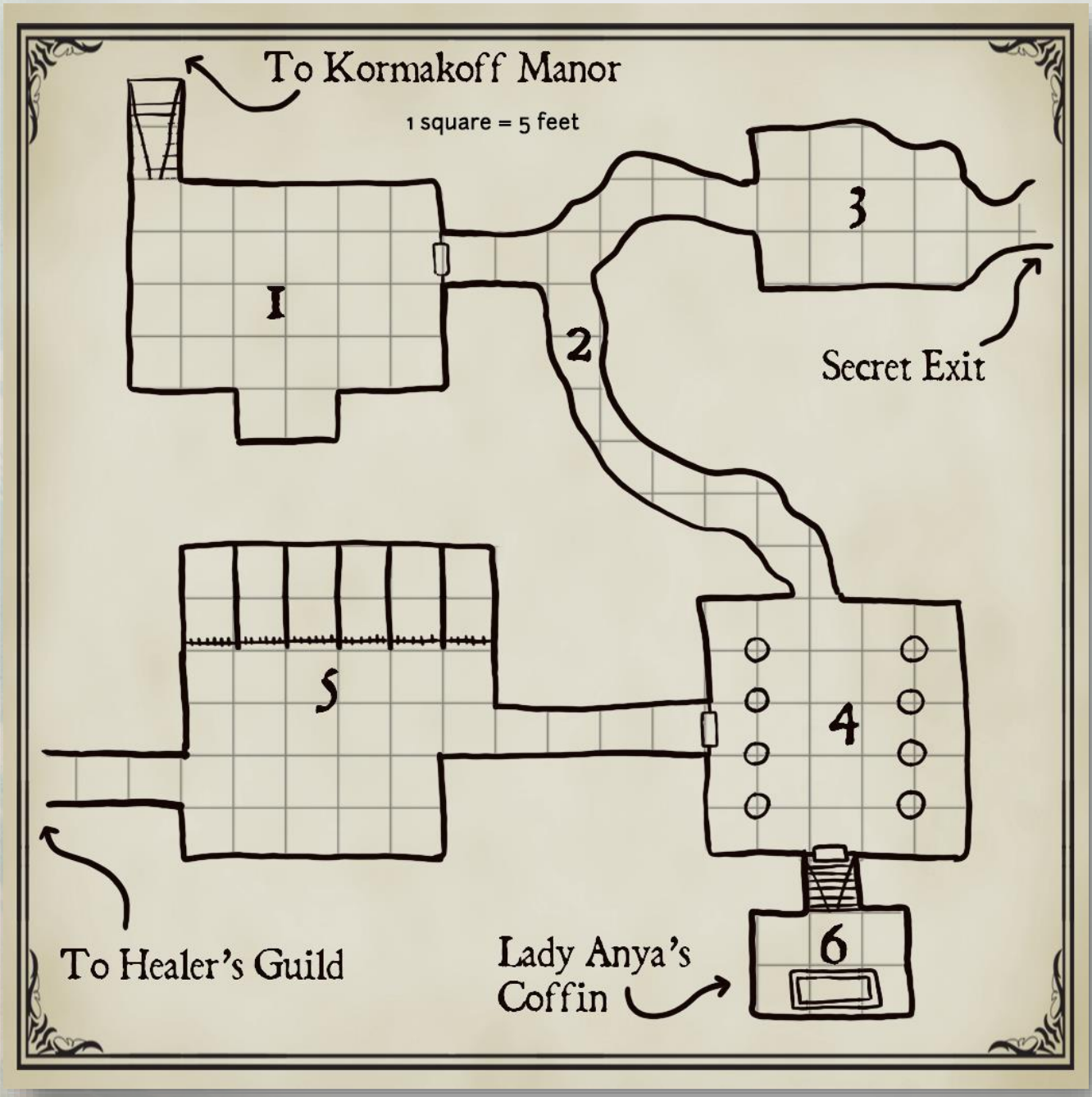
becomes vertical. This natural cavern is what Anya and her bats use to exit the cave at night.

Swarms of Spiders (CR ½, MM, p 338) attack any creature that enters this room. There is a 50% that two **Carrion Crawlers** (CR 2, MM, p 37) find their way here when the party is present.

Area 4. Gallery

Lady Anya Kormakoff is often in this chamber, meditating. The walls are covered with bookcases. There is also a desk where she reads. She has read all the books in this chamber.

Lady Anya's spellbook is in one of the bookcases, it contains all of her prepared spells. A terrible smell of death permeates this room. Six **Ghasts** (CR 2, MM, p 148) hide in this room, ready



to kill anyone other than Lady Anya and her assistant, Darifer. The Ghasts are hiding in small alcoves in the ceiling. They drop on their prey as soon as they can.

The alcoves are difficult to see because every spot on the chamber's ceiling is covered with bats. Thousands of bats live in this chamber. If Lady Anya uses her ability *Children of the Night* in this room to call forth **Swarms of Bats** (CR ¼, MM, p337), they arrive in the next round (instead of 1d4 rounds.)

Area 5. Feeding Room

This room is no different from a jail. The north wall features six small cells. From time to time Darifer brings living prey for his mistress.

Near the south wall there are some beds and cupboards with medical equipment. Darifer has become a skilled healer after years of working for Lady Anya. He performs autopsies and dark experiments here.

The tunnel heading west leads to the healer's guild. It opens up in Darifer's office there. No one else knows of this tunnel.

Area 6. Coffin Room

This small chamber contains Lady Anya's coffin. The box is made of stone. The lid is engraved with an effigy of her chest and face. Her eyes have two grand inlaid rubies.

If Lady Anya is defeated in battle she turns to vapor and returns to this place to rest. This is the only place where she can truly be destroyed. A magical whip used for interrogation is inside her coffin.

The Scouring Whip

Wondrous Item, Rare (requires attunement)

The Scouring Whip is a device created for the sole purpose of inflicting pain on its targets. For that reason, it is very useful in interrogations. You can wrap the whip around a creature as an action if the creature is willing or incapacitated. From that moment on, the creature experiences extreme pain. The pain is so intense that any intimidation or negotiation is done with advantage against the creature.

Every ten minutes of exposure to the whip's ability imposes a level of exhaustion to the target. Thus, the whip is potentially deadly after an hour of continuous use.

Lady Anya Kormakoff (Vampire Lord)

Medium undead (shapechanger), lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 144 (17d8 + 68)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +9, Wis +2, Cha +4
Skills Arcana +8, Perception +7, Stealth +9
Damage Resistances necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing and slashing from nonmagical weapons.
Senses darksight 120 ft., passive Perception 17
Languages Common
Challenge 13 (10,000 XP)

Shapechanger. If the vampire isn't in sunlight or running water, it can use its action to Polymorph into a Tiny bat or a Medium cloud of mist, or back into its true form.

While in bat form, the vampire can't speak, its walking speed is 5 feet, and it has a flying speed of 30 feet. Its statistics, other than its size and speed, are unchanged. Anything it is wearing transforms with it, but nothing it is carrying does. It reverts to its true form if it dies. While in mist form, the vampire can't take any actions, speak, or manipulate objects. It is weightless, has a flying speed of 20 feet, can hover, and can enter a hostile creature's space and stop there. In addition, if air can pass through a space, the mist can do so without squeezing, and it can't pass through water. It has advantage on Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution saving throws, and it is immune to all nonmagical damage, except the damage it takes from sunlight.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If the vampire fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Misty Escape. When it drops to 0 hit points outside its Resting place, the vampire transforms into a cloud of mist (as in the Shapechanger trait) instead of Falling Unconscious, provided that it isn't in sunlight or running water. If it can't transform, it is destroyed. While it has 0 hit points in mist form, it can't revert to its vampire form, and it must reach its Resting place within 2 hours or be destroyed. Once in its Resting place, it reverts to its vampire form. It is then Paralyzed until it regains at least 1 hit point. After spending 1 hour in its Resting place with 0 hit points, it regains 1 hit point.

Regeneration. The vampire regains 20 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point and isn't in sunlight or running water. If the vampire takes radiant damage or damage from Holy Water, this trait doesn't function at the start of the vampire's next turn.

Spider Climb. The vampire can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Vampire Weaknesses. The vampire has the following flaws:

Forbiddance. The vampire can't enter a residence without an invitation from one of the occupants.

Harmed by Running Water. The vampire takes 20 acid damage if it ends its turn in running water.

Stake to the Heart. If a piercing weapon made of wood is driven into the vampire's heart while the vampire is Incapacitated in its resting place, the vampire is Paralyzed until the stake is removed.

Sunlight Hypersensitivity. The vampire takes 20 radiant damage when it starts its turn in sunlight. While in sunlight, it has disadvantage on Attack rolls and Ability Checks.

Spellcasting. Lady Anya is a 9th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). She has the following wizard spells prepared:

At will: mage hand, prestidigitation, ray of frost
1st level (4 slots): *comprehend languages, charm person, fog cloud*
2nd level (3 slots): *detect thought, mirror image, alter self*
3rd level (3 slots): *animate dead, fireball, nondetection*
4th level (3 slots): *blight, greater invisibility, polymorph*
5th level (2 slots): *animate objects, scrying*

Actions

Multiattack (Vampire Form Only): Anya makes two attacks, only one of which can be a bite attack.

***Unarmed Strike (Vampire Form Only*)**: Melee Weapon Attack: +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 8 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage. Instead of dealing damage, the vampire can grapple the target (escape DC 18).

***Bite (Bat or Vampire Form Only*)**: Melee Weapon Attack: +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one willing creature, or a creature that is Grappled by the vampire, Incapacitated, or Restrained. Hit: 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken, and the vampire regains hit points equal to that amount. The reduction lasts until the target finishes a Long Rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0. A humanoid slain in this way and then buried in the ground rises the following night as a vampire spawn under the vampire's control.

Charm: The vampire targets one humanoid it can see within 30 ft. of it. If the target can see the vampire, the target must succeed on a **DC 17 Wisdom** saving throw against this magic or be charmed by the vampire. The charmed target regards the vampire as a trusted friend to be heeded and protected. Although the target isn't under the vampire's control, it takes the vampire's requests or actions in the most favorable way it can, and it is a willing target for the vampire's bite attack. Each time the vampire or the vampire's companions do anything harmful to the target, it can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success. Otherwise, the effect lasts 24 hours or until the vampire is destroyed, is on a different plane of existence than the target or takes a Bonus Action to end the effect.

Children of the Night (1/Day): The vampire magically calls 2d4 swarms of bats or rats, provided that the sun isn't up. While outdoors, the vampire can call 3d6 wolves instead. The called creatures arrive in 1d4 rounds, acting as allies of the vampire and obeying its spoken commands. The beasts remain for 1 hour, until the vampire dies, or until the vampire dismisses them as a Bonus Action.

Lady Yana

By Jean Lorber
Artist: provided by Wizards of the Coast

Half noblewoman, half serial killer, all aspiring Demogorgon cultist.

Background

A raging madness lurks behind the smiling, public face of the beloved Lady Yana. Born into a noble family, she hid her broken mind and nascent sorcerous powers from all but a few governesses (who all met untimely fates). Later married to a middling lord, she whiled away her days in dreary court formalities, all the time yearning for a chance to unleash her thirst for blood.

Opportunity arrived two years ago, in the form of a chance encounter with an imprisoned cultist of Demogorgon. Drawn to the cult's apocalyptic vision, Yana arranged a whispered conversation with the cultist before the cultist's execution. She was given information about how to send a message to the cult, and did so at her first opportunity.

With newfound glee at her prospects, Yana was in extra high spirits. She handed out gifts to commoners, and sent food to orphans, all the while hoping to visit dark deeds upon their homes.

At the same time, she planted rumors among the peasants of secret treasure in the nearby forest. She then laid in wait for treasure seekers and gleefully dispatched them, intoxicated by her own chaotic magic.

Two years have passed, Yana has committed multiple murders, but no response from the cult…



Current Motives

Yana is planning her next murder in the ruins of a temple at the edge of town. But the act is growing less satisfying. She pledges her kills to Demogorgon, but no answer ever comes from her evil prince. She wonders whether the quality of her victim has been lacking. When your players come into town, her eyes widen in delight as she sees a chance to tackle bigger prey.

Yana can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **Social cat-and-mouse** - Investigation and social interactions with Yana, her husband, and their court will likely be needed to pierce Yana's secret plans. Accusing her without proof could be fatal.

- **A quest giver** - Yana might ask the PCs to investigate a nearby ruined castle or

temple. However, the quest is merely a pretext to ambush them, aided by her fiendish minions (see below) and some pre-set traps.

- **An extended skill challenge** - The destruction of an entire town (see below) would take many steps and several hours. In addition to fighting Yana and the cult, the players could think of ways to quench the initial pyres, slow the spread of the flames, and rescue trapped villagers.

Long Term Motives

Unbeknownst to Yana, her pledged murders did indeed catch the attention of Demogorgon's cult. They received her message, but only decided to approach her recently when the cult's seer detected echoes of her evil deeds.

Yana must still prove herself further in order to get their help, made clear in a message to her:

"Our lord wishes you to build him a monument of boiled blood and charred flesh. Plan to raze your city, and you will have us."

To assist with her plans, the cult sends her 3 quasits, which arrive in the night, scratching at her door. One carries the message and a golden idol of Demogorgon (see magic item below).

Ecstatic at the cult's attention, Yana will take up the challenge with glee. With little specialized resources available to her she will fall back on an effective, time-honored method to destroy an all-wooden town, burn it to the ground. She plans on positioning several caches of highly flammable materials in the densest parts of town, simultaneously igniting them and killing any who attempt to suppress the flames.

On the night before the conflagration, 6 cultists (MM), and 2 cult fanatics (MM) show up to assist.

Flaws

Lady Yana cannot bear to keep all her secrets to herself. She has told everything to her handmaiden Philarea. Yana revels in sharing the gory details of her evil deeds, watching Philarea recoil in horror. Philarea knows she will be killed if she tells anyone, but the burden is driving her mad. The once-popular handmaiden is now withdrawn, her nails chewed to the quick and her hair disheveled. The whole castle has noticed.

Yana is also unable to ignore acts of violence or destruction. She can inexplicably be found at skirmishes or battles, watching enraptured from the sidelines. She can sometimes be seen lingering in the castle's stockyard, watching livestock be slaughtered for dinner.

Lady Yana in Waterdeep

A woman of means who's seen often about town, Lady Yana keeps a house in the Sea Ward on Morningstar Way.

Lady Yana

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic evil

Armor Class 11 (14 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 49 (11d8)
Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)

Skills Deception +6, Persuasion +6, Religion +4
Senses passive Perception 9
Languages Common, Abyssal
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Spellcasting. Yana is a 5th level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC14, +6 to hit with spell attacks).
Cantrips: *Blade ward, fire bolt, minor illusion*
1st Level (4 slots): *Burning hands, mage armor*
2nd Level (3 slots): *Crown of madness, scorching ray*
3rd Level (2 slots): *Blink, fireball*

Metamagic-distant spell (2/day). When Yana casts a spell that has a range of 5 feet or greater, she can double the range of the spell. When she casts a spell that has a range of touch, she can make the range of the spell 30 feet.

Demogorgon idol. Yana carries an idol (AC16, HP10) that grants her the ability to summon a dretch (MM) every round. If Yana is killed this feature disappears from the idol. The idol is worth 500 gold pieces, but reeks of charred flesh and seems to stare malevolently at its carrier.

Actions

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 3 (d4+1) piercing damage.

Lars Hamerstien

By: Jeff C. Stevens
Artist: Eric Lofgren
Cartography: Mobral Rox

Lars Hamerstien is an intergalactic bounty hunter far from his homeworld and galaxy.

Background

While transporting a captured alien bounty known as Xul'Na'Chak in his MX-555 spacecraft, Lars Hamerstien encountered a meteor shower, which damaged the MX-555, causing the navigation system to falter. The unresponsive craft drifted for days before entering an anomaly – a rift in time and space. Lars, after falling unconscious while passing through the rift, awoke in his dying ship above a strange planet.

The MX-555's sensors deemed the planet habitable; with oxygen, flora, and gravity similar to that of his homeworld. The spacecraft slowly drifted into the planet's atmosphere where its landing program took control of the ship. Though he could not pilot the vessel himself, the ship's onboard computer settled the craft safely on the strange planet.

The craft's damaged computer system opened the cell doors, allowing his prisoner, Xul'Na'Chak, to escape when the ship landed, but not before grabbing its equipment and several energy cubes from the ship's workshop.

Surprisingly, many of the Common words for this world are similar to his native language. He's not ventured far from the MX-555, but he's already encountered strange beasts and, from a hidden position, seen and heard bizarre humanoids traversing the land.



Current Motives

Lars Hamerstien wants nothing more than to repair his spacecraft and begin finding a way to return to his home planet.

Lars Hamerstien can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A villain**– Although a brave man, his new surroundings may have gotten the better of him, causing him to become violent and aggressive toward foreign creatures.

- **A quest giver** – Lars could be friendly if he meets the right creatures in this world. He only wants to repair his ship. To do so, he

needs gold, copper, and diamonds. He also needs to restore the hull of the MX-555, which could be completed with a *mending* spell.

- **A merchant** – Lars has many alien items. Even though it goes against everything he's been trained to do, he may trade items for gold, copper, or diamonds which he needs to repair the MX-555's circuits and computers.

Long Term Motives

Unless persuaded otherwise, or unless some fantastic event changes his mind, Lars wants to repair the MX-555 and return to Earth.

Flaws

Being an alien on this world, Lars is unfamiliar with its many creatures, races, and customs. He has disadvantage on all Charisma skill checks and saving throws for the first ten days he interacts with an unfamiliar creature.

Lars Hamerstien

Medium humanoid (human), lawful neutral

Armor Class 15 *(spacesuit +1)*
Hit Points 97 (15d8 + 30)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Str +5, Dex +6, Int +7
Skills Athletics +9, Deception +6, Perception +3, Stealth +7, Survival +3
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages understands some Common as his native language is similar
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Indomitable (2/day). Lars rerolls a failed saving throw.

Sharpshooter. As a bonus action, Lars can add 1d10 to his next attack or damage roll made with his laser pistol.

Survivor. Lars regains 10 hit points at the start of his turn if he has at least 1 hit point but fewer hit points than half his hit point maximum.

Actions

Multiattack. Lars makes three unarmed strike attacks or one laser pistol attack. He may use his bonus action to make an additional laser pistol attack.

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

Laser Pistol (reload). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, 40/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (3d6 + 3) radiant damage (see Laser Pistol).

Energy Cell

Wonderous Item, legendary

Energy cells are 1-inch glowing blue cubes used to power the Jump Pack, Laser Pistol, and Space Suit.

Space Suit

Wonderous Item, legendary

The Space Suit is considered *magical leather armor +1*. In addition, while wearing this armor, you gain the following benefits:

Resistance to Acid
Resistance to Cold
Resistance to Fire

The space suit uses energy cells to power its additional features. Each cell provides 4 charges.

Breathe underwater – 2 charges for a 60-minute duration
Shield (as a reaction, per the spell) – 2 charges

Laser Pistol

Wonderous Item, legendary

The laser pistol has multiple settings, both written in English and color coded. All attacks are ranged attacks and have a range on 40/120 ft.

The laser pistol is powered by an energy cell, with each cell containing 20 charges to use as follows:

Green (3 charges): 3d6 radiant damage.
Blue (2 charges): 2d6 lightning damage and the creature can't take reactions until the start of its next turn.
Yellow (1 charge): 1d6 radiant damage and the creature is blinded until the start of its next turn.
Red (1 charge): Setting the pistol to red and pulling the trigger initiates the pistol's self-destruct sequence. Once activated, the pistol begins to quietly beep. The beeps speed while the self-destruct charges, which takes 3 rounds. At the end of three rounds, the pistol explodes, creating a 15-foot sphere of radiant energy. All creatures in this sphere must make a DC 18 Constitution saving throw, suffering 8d8 radiant damage on a failed saving throw, or half damage on a successful saving throw. The self-destruct sequence can be cancelled by changing the pistol's setting and pulling the trigger.

Jump Pack

Wonderous Item, legendary

The Jump Pack is fueled by an energy cell, with each cell providing 5 charges. While wearing this item, you can use an action to expend 1 or more charges to perform the following actions, which act like the spells they refer to.

All of the below effects are self-only.

Longstrider: 1 charge
Feather Fall 1 charge
Jump: 1 charge
Levitate: 3 charges

The MX-555

Though the spacecraft cannot fly, all of its other processes, including the main guns, defense system, and engines still work.

Main guns: *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 0/300 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5d8 + 10 radiant damage.

Entrance

An access hatch at the rear of the ship is activated by a device on Lars's suit, a switch located on a control panel in the cockpit, or by a numbered keypad on the rear of the ship, next to the access hatch. The proper number sequence is 2018. A character succeeding on a **DC 20 Intelligence (Investigation)** check notices those number keys smudged with grease, though they can't discern the correct order of the sequence.

Entering the sequence incorrectly causes the MX-555 to retaliate, emitting an electrical current along the hull. Any creature within 5 feet of the ship must succeed on a **DC 15 Dexterity** saving throw or suffer 3d6 lightning damage and be stunned until the end of its next turn.

Once entered correctly, the ship whirs and hums as the hatch lowers, creating a 10-foot-wide step.

Several large containers fill the main interior. These boxes can be empty, or they can be filled with whatever flavorful objects the Dungeon Master wishes.

Workshop

The workshop contains nuts, bolts, screws, a metal hammer, soldering iron, a magnifying glass on a stand, a set of eight screwdrivers (equivalent to thieves' tools), and other miscellaneous foreign objects.

A creature succeeding on a **DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation)** check notices a crate resting under the workbench. The crate contains 1d6 X 1d4 fully-charged energy cells.

Prison Cells

The bed in the smallest cell is made and appears to be unused.

The larger cell looks lived-in with the bed disheveled and several empty ration kits laying on the floor.

Cargo Hold

Several foreign objects are found in the cargo hold: four bottles of wine, a set heavy boots, a green survival suit (cold weather gear), a banjo, four flasks of oil, a crate containing 20 rations (labeled *meatloaf, spaghetti, chicken, bread pudding, liver and onions*…), a mess kit made of aluminum and containing metal utensils, five healer's kits, 100-feet of rope, and a climbing kit.

A ladder leads from the cargo hold to the cockpit.

Cockpit

Two leather covered, very comfortable chairs, complete with buttons on the arms to raise, lower, recline, vibrate, heat and cool the chair bisect the cockpit. Lights of various size and color flash on the dashboard. A creature searching the cockpit and succeeding on a **DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation)** check finds a red metal cylinder under each of the chairs (fire extinguishers).

Fire Extinguisher

Wonderous Item, legendary

An easily discernable trigger is attached to the top of each of the cylinders. Each cylinder has five charges. Pulling the trigger expends one charge and releases a 20-foot cone of cold which extinguishes a 10-foor area of fire within the cone. A creature in this area must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or suffer 2d6 cold damage.

Several switches and levers are found on the dashboard. Consult the below table for the switches and their effects.

Meeting Room

Six swiveling chairs made of a foreign substance (plastic) circle a white table made of the same material. Three maps of foreign planets and two maps of star systems line the table.

Bedroom

A very comfortable, neatly made bed rests next to a small nightstand which holds three small notebooks and two blue-ink pens.

A vanity lines the south wall and contains three sets of white *traveler's clothes* and one set of *fine clothes* embellished with metals and badges.

Restroom

A small sink is found on the north wall and a toilet / shower combination at the south wall.
A creature using the toilet and pressing a green button found on the wall next to it sees a blue mist spray on its waste, which then dissipates.
A creature succeeding on a **DC 10 Wisdom (Perception)** check notices five rolls of soft, thin, white paper resting on a shelf above the toilet.

Possible Developments

Being strangers to this planet, the ship and its crew could be deadly without ever encountering them in battle.

Radiation Sickness

The shielding surrounding the MX-555's small nuclear engine is damaged, releasing harmful radiation in and around the spacecraft. Any creature that passes within 30-feet of the MX-555, or enters the MX-555, must succeed on a **DC 18 Constitution** saving throw or suffer the effects of radiation sickness.

Symptoms: Increase in severity as the sickness progresses. Weakness, bruising, vomiting, fever, diarrhea, hair loss, open skin sores, sloughing of skin, fatigue.

Impact: Once symptoms begin, the creature suffers from one level exhaustion each day. Resting does not remove the exhaustion.

Once per day, the creature must succeed on a **DC 13 Wisdom** saving throw. On a failed save, the creature suffers the effects of the *confusion* spell for 1 hour.

The creature suffers from radiation sickness until targeted by the *greater restoration spell* or similar magic.

Switch Color	*Type*	*Effect*
White	Button	Turns the interior lights on and off.
Green	Switch	Starts the engines. The spacecraft begins to vibrate, and a low hum is heard throughout the craft.
Grey	Lever	Increases the thrust of the engines. A creature at the rear of the MX-555, and within 30-feet of it, must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or suffer 8d8 points of radiant damage, or half as much on a successful save.
Red	Large button under a transparent cover, which must be broken to access the button.	Initiates the MX-555's self-destruct sequence. Once activated, a voice begins counting down from 100. When the countdown reaches 0, the ship explodes, creating a 150-foot radius sphere of radiant damage. Anything in this sphere must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw. An item suffers 10d10 radiant damage on an unsuccessful saving throw, or half damage on a successful saving throw.
Purple	Lever	Turns on a small display that shows the activity in the prison cells.
Yellow	Dial	Dims the lights in the cockpit.
Blue	Button	Fires the main guns of the ship.
Orange	Switch	Opens and closes the rear access hatch.

Foreign Disease

Being not of this world, the pilot and his prisoner carry foreign pathogens which could cause natives of this world to become sick.

Common Cold: The creature begins to suffer the effects of the common cold 3 days after it comes into contact with the MX-555 or its crew.

Symptoms: runny nose, coughing, sneezing.

Impact: For the next five days, the creature suffers from one level of exhaustion.

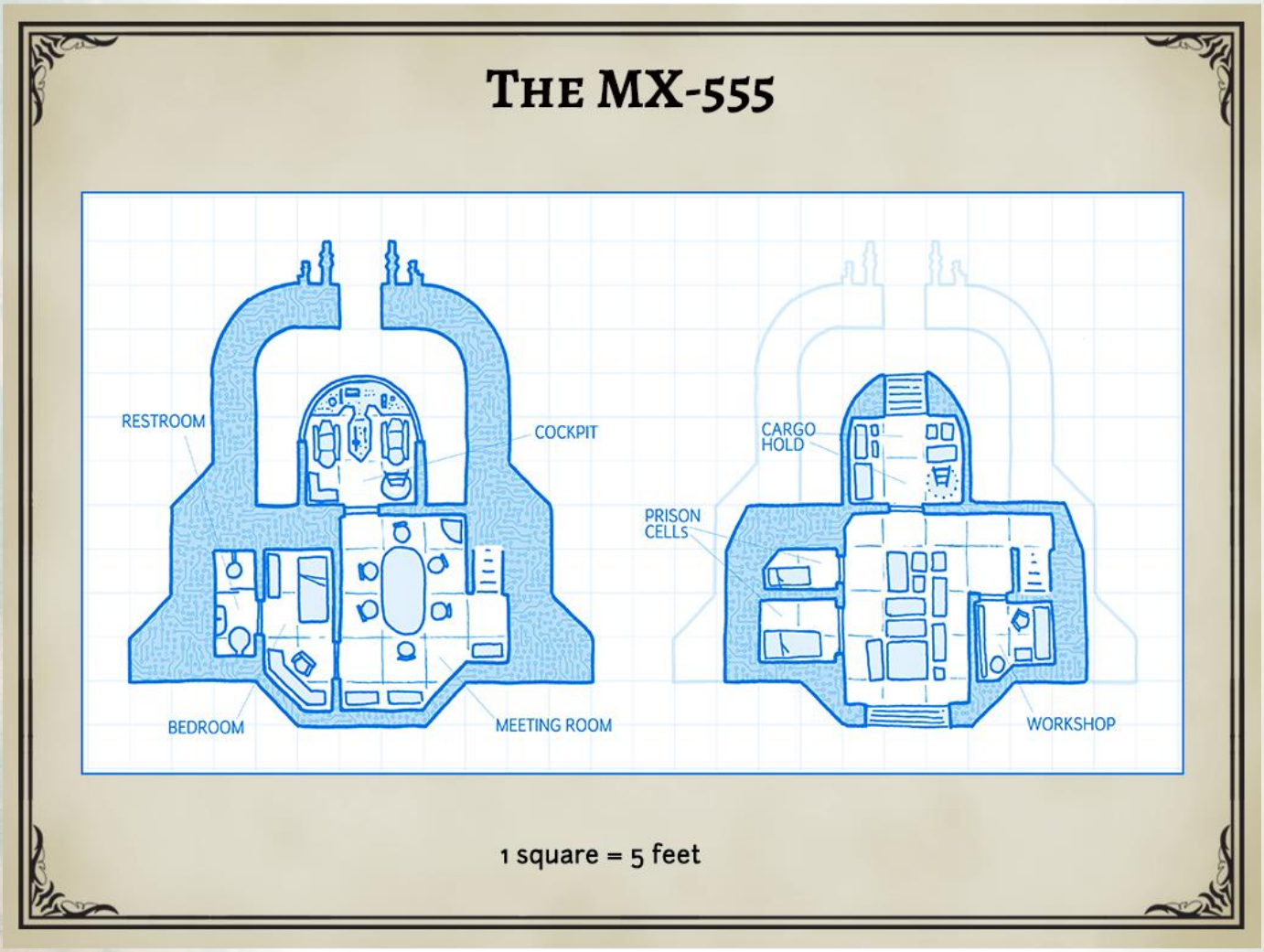
The creature suffers from the common cold until targeted by the *lessor restoration* spell or similar magic.

Influenza: The creature begins to suffer the effects of influenza 5 days after it comes into contact with the MX-555 or its crew.

Symptoms: runny nose, coughing, sneezing, fever.

Impact: For the next five days, the creature suffers from one level of exhaustion.

The creature suffers from influenza until targeted by the *lessor restoration* spell or similar magic.



Liralda Denzmatore

By Casey Bax
Art: Dean Spencer



At one time, Liralda was in service to the Drow High Priestess Sharaun Do-Wadden. Liralda is tracking a rogue who stole the artifact known as "The Spider's Eye".

Background

Liralda spent the early years of her life wandering the Underdark, learning to survive in a trial by fire. The High Priestess Sharaun commanded Liralda to spend 10 years in the Underdark and if she returned, Sharaun would allow her into her service.

Liralda faced many harsh challenges during her years in the Underdark, but she survived. She lived off the environment, learning what plants could be eaten and which used for medicinal purposes and how the creatures of the Underdark hunt and where they live. She became one with her environment.

When her trial finished, Sharaun took Liralda into her inner circle. While in her service, Liralda helped Sharaun ascend to great political heights. Sharaun told Liralda of her quest to summon Demdordrak (a giant drider that is an emissary of Lolth the Spider Queen).

The ritual to summon Demdordrak was not an easy one and it required a great treasure. Sharaun tasked Liralda with retrieving an artifact known as "The Spider's Eye". Although she managed to find the artifact, Liralda was robbed while camping in the Underdark on her way back to Sharaun.

Liralda tracked the rogue responsible for days, finally pursuing them to the surface. Shamed by her failure, Liralda has vowed to not return to the Underdark until "The Spider's Eye" is retrieved.

Current Motives

Liralda is desperate to find "The Spider's Eye" so that she can return to Sharaun and help her complete the ritual.

- Liralda can be used as an NPC as follows:

  - **An employer** – Liralda will gladly hire the players to acquire "The Spider's Eye" for her, though she will be vague about her motives.

  - **A hunter** – perhaps the current owner of "The Spider's Eye" hires the players for protection against Liralda

Long Term Motives

Liralda wants to lead Sharaun's forces, with Demdordrak at the point, against the other High Priestesses of Llolth.

Flaws

Liralda is in an unfamiliar area. She has never been to the surface before. She has no allies, no contacts, and no leads on the whereabouts of "The Spider's Eye".

The Spider's Eye

Wonderous Item, Rare (requires attunement)

The Spider's Eye was forged by a Drow High Priestess long ago. It is said to contain the spirit of Demdordrak, a giant drow drider who is a herald for Llolth.

Demodordrak had fallen in an ancient drow war. The High Priestess had an immaculate fixture forged from obsidian. The fixture is the body of a spider with 8 legs protruding from it. A great red gem, the size of two fists sits in the body of the spider. The contours of the gem resemble that of the eye of a spider.

Once forged, the priestess used her dark arcane powers to summon the essence of Demodordrak and infuse it in the gem.

Now, all these years later, the eye has been found and if the ritual can be completed; by placing the Eye over the heart of a sacrificial vessel and reciting the spell; Demdordrak is reborn.

Upon completion of the ritual, the legs of the obsidian fixture clamp down into the vessel's chest and all eight pierce the heart. The essence of Demdordrak is then imbued into the vessel and Demdordrak is reborn. Over a painful minute, the vessel morphs into a giant drow drider.

Special Actions

Summon Giant Spiders – Once per Long Rest
The artifact allows the holder to summon 1d6 + 2 Giant Spiders.

Spider Sight – Once per Short Rest
The artifact allows the user to see through the eyes of any nearby spider for up to 1 minute.

Web – Once per Short Rest
The artifact allows the user to cast Web once per short rest.

Liralda Denzmatore

Medium humanoid (elf), neutral evil

Armor Class 18 (*chain mail +2*)
Hit Points 162 (25d8 + 50)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	19 (+4)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +8, Con, +6, Wis +6
Skills Deception +6, Intimidation +6, Perception +6, Stealth +8, Survival +6
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages Elvish, Undercommon
Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Fey Ancestry. Liralda has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put her to sleep.

Innate Spellcasting. Liralda's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13). She can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *dancing lights*
1/day each: *darkness, faerie fire, levitate* (self only)

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in the sunlight, Liralda has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Actions

Multiattack. Liralda makes three attacks with her scimitar or throws a net and makes one attack with her scimitar.

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage plus 14 (4d6) poison damage.

Net. *Ranged Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5/15 ft., one target. *Hit:* the target is restrained if it is a Large or smaller creature (see PHB p 148). Liralda carries five nets.

Reactions

Parry. Liralda adds 3 to her AC against one melee attack that would hit her. To do so, she must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

Malaia the Mage

By Ginny Loveday and Stephen Wight
Artist: Vagelio Kaliva

Malaia is known as a bit of an oddity in her village, but people tend to go to her with random requests such as identifying family heirlooms, hoping to find that they've been holding onto a magical artifact, or for help with burning large sections of brush, or other various small tasks made easier with magic.



Background

Malaia grew up in Mulhorand, where tieflings were generally more accepted than in some other societies. She attended the Mage Academy where she met a young boy during her teenage years. Their friendship grew and developed into a blooming romance of passion. A child was conceived from their passion and despite Malaia's young age, she fell in love at first sight and decided to keep the boy, naming him Aldaian.

One fateful night, Malaia left a candle burning within reach of the infant and he knocked it into the straw pallet, setting it ablaze. Not realizing the infant did not share her own natural protection from fire, Malaia was too slow to grab the infant, thinking only to snuff out the flames, despite the danger to the babe.

While the infant's death was an accident, the boy's grandparents quickly cast her as an evil monster, and a second fire came, this one lit by a fearful mob intent on killing the grieving mother. Malaia fled, only able to grab the precious tiny body of her baby as she sought shelter. Hailing passage on a ship, she sailed across the seas.

Malaia quickly became frustrated in her search for a way to restore life to her baby. The temples all requested outrageously high sums of gold for a simple spell. Truly the gods had forsaken her!

She studied feverishly, traveling from town to town in search of another answer. She studied necromancy, she studied ancient magics, and eventually she stumbled upon atome—a lost spell that allowed her to see the very soul itself as it left the body.

Slowly experimenting over the last few years, Malaia learned that animal souls did not carry on, but when a man was convicted of murder and burned at the stake, she finally witnessed a soul on its journey... but what if an innocent soul took a different path?

Current Motives

Malaia is biding her time, waiting for an infant to test her hypothesis. She has been studying planar magic and cosmology in the interim, along with aiding the villagers with small tasks.

Malaia can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **An information giver** – She knows all the minor ails and quibbles of the villagers. They think nothing of speaking around her.
- **A quest giver** – always on the search for new magics to study, Malaia has heard of far-away places to entice adventurers to find new books for her, and treasures for themselves.
- **A spellcaster** – Malaia is willing to assist adventurers with minor spellcasting services and even to practice a small amount of necromancy to raise fallen adventurers, though each of these tears her heart further at the loss she suffered.
- **As a villain** - Children have been reported missing from neighboring villages, and Malaia has been accused of kidnapping them for use in rituals.

Long Term Motives

Malaia is awaiting the birth of the villager Bellota's child. Once the infant reaches the same age as Aldaian she plans to set fire to him, to finally see how his soul travels, so that she might follow it to find Aldaian's soul and return her precious boy to this mortal realm.

Flaws

Malaia has become obsessed with resurrecting her son, and with studying the movement of souls. She sometimes displays too much eagerness at the idea of burning someone alive, pushing for this punishment when anyone commits a crime. This has caused the villagers to become suspicious of her motives for studying magic and for living so isolated from her family.

Malaia the Mage

Medium humanoid (Tiefling), Lawful evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with mage armor)
Hit Points 66 (12d8 + 11)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)

Condition Immunities blinded, deafened, exhaustion, prone
Saving Throws Int +7, Wis +5
Skills Arcana +7, History +7
Damage Resistance necrotic
Senses darkvision 60 feet, passive Perception 11
Languages Common, Abyssal, Infernal, Elvish
Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Hellish Resistance. Malaia has resistance to fire damage.

Infernal Legacy: Malaia knows the *hellish rebuke* spell as a 2nd-level spell (spell save DC 15); she must finish a long rest in order to cast the spell again using this trait. She can also cast the *darkness* spell; she must finish a long rest in order to cast the spell again using this trait. Intelligence is her spellcasting ability for these spells.

Spellcasting. Malaia is a 12th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). Malaia has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch, dancing lights, mage hand, mending, thaumaturgy*
1st level (4 slots): *false life, mage armor, ray of sickness*
2nd level (3 slots): *blindness/deafness, ray of enfeeblement, web*
3rd level (3 slots): *animate dead, bestow curse, vampiric touch*
4th level (3 slots): *blight, dimension door, stoneskin*
5th level (2 slots): *Bigby's hand, cloudkill*
6th level (1 slot): *circle of death*

Grim Harvest. When Malaia kills a creature that is neither a construct nor undead with a spell of 1st level or higher, she regains hit points equal to twice the spell's level, or three times if it is a necromancy spell.

Actions

Withering Touch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 5 (2d4) necrotic damage.

Marisa's Blades

By Tony Petrecca
Artist: Rick Hershey / Fat Goblin Games

Marisa Angelmoor is captain of Marisa's Blades, a ruthless band of mercenaries that ply their trade wherever the gold is good.



Background

Marisa Angelmoor was born and raised in Waterdeep where her father, Anton, was a career member of the City Watch. When Marisa was five her mother, Ioni, died giving birth to Marisa's only sibling, her younger brother Milo. With her father routinely on duty for most hours of the day it fell to Marisa to care for and raise Milo, a challenge that hardened her as the years passed.

While Anton was largely absent during most waking hours of their childhood, he was not neglectful. They had a modest home in the South Ward where they were well fed. Anton provided tutors as he could afford them and focused a great deal of effort to ensure that his children received martial training so that they could defend themselves when in need. Thus, Marisa developed an affinity and skill with blades, as Milo learned to be an impressive marksman.

Where Marisa was a charming, often gregarious child, Milo was ever morose, withdrawn, and prone to bursts of anger. The awkward young man was often a target for neighborhood bullies which, of course, only fueled his anger. The situation came to a head when thirteen-year-old Milo unleashed his anger upon one of his bullies, Navi Dracol, eldest son of a wealthy jeweler. Milo beat the boy to death while several witnesses watched, aghast.

Marisa happened upon the scene at its conclusion and swept her brother away. Hoping to keep her brother free from execution and her father free from disgrace, she rushed the two to their home, grabbed what supplies they could, and fled the city.

In the ten years since, Marisa and her brother learned to fend for themselves, putting their skills at arms to work up and down the Sword Coast. Marisa has been hardened by the experience, while Milo's bloodlust shines in combat.

Marisa, being the wiser of the two, negotiated their terms and began building their reputation as arms for hire. As their reputation grew, so too did their fees, and their ruthlessness. Eventually they met three others of like mind, and Marisa's Blades were born.

Current Motives

Marisa wishes to build a sizeable fortune or die trying. Thus, currently, Marisa tries to keep the Blades employed, while expanding her list of clients. Marisa has yet to be offered a job she's unwilling to take on, with few qualms about the

type of work the Blades do, they tend to stay busy.

Marisa's Blades can be used as NPCs as follows:

- Bodyguards for various clients
- Muscle for shakedowns
- A brute squad to quell a peasant rebellion
- The kidnappers of a noble's daughter
- Assassins

Long Term Motives

Marisa is well aware of the risks involved in her chosen profession, and she misses city life. Eventually, she hopes to earn enough coin, and contacts, to allow her to settle down. She might someday live in Neverwinter and establish herself as a skilled martial tutor.

Flaws

Marisa's greatest weakness has always been her bond with her brother. Though cunning in battle, Milo is cruel, wicked, and sometimes reckless when idle. Marisa has pulled him out of far too many bar brawls lest he go too far ina public setting. Though he might damage her reputation, she remains loyal to a fault.

Marisa's Blades

Having already met Marisa, here is her crew:

Milo Angelmoor

Cunning, shifty and cruel, Milo Angelmoor (**Archer**, VGtM, p 210) is both the bane and boon of Marisa's existence. An impressive marksman, he is a deadly tool in battle. Unfortunately, he's a bigger tool when not in battle. Sarcastic, brooding, and quick to anger, Milo's biting tongue has caused more than a few brawls, and has gotten him thrown out of a good many taverns along the Sword Coast. Fortunately, the other Blades respect his skills and tolerate his shortcomings.

Milo wears a *cloak of displacement* and carries a *short bow +1*



Flynn Roberts

Charming, level-headed, and ever light on his feet, Flynn Roberts (**Swashbuckler**, VGtM, p 217, but substitute the dagger and rapier for a *longbow +1* and *scimitar of speed*) is the most recent addition to the Blades. Born on Mintarn, Flynn's natural agility and skill favored a career in piracy, while his charm favored the ladies. Unfortunately, he once favored the wrong lady and soon found his career as a pirate tossed overboard.



Flynn's tongue quelled a brawl Milo looked to start in a tavern in Daggerford, giving Flynn an opportunity to introduce himself to Marisa. Flynn's charms were unsuccessful, but, while Flynn and Marisa were distracted in conversation, Milo ran his tongue yet again. Flynn impressed Marisa in the ensuing brawl and soon found himself a member of the Blades.

Moll

Massive and intimidating, Moll (**Minotaur**, MM, p 223 wielding a *great ax +1*) was a slave to the brutish Hill Giant chief Gruton. Moll's herd was wiped out by Gruton's clan when Moll was young, and Moll was enslaved for labor and gladiatorial combat. Marisa and Milo met Moll early on in their career when hired to be part of a larger force sent to destroy the hill giant clan. During the raid on the steading they came upon the minotaur, legs and arms in shackles, being beaten by a bullying giant. With the benefit of surprise, they dispatched the giant and then set Moll free. He has been a loyal friend since.



Risen Greymantle

Hailing from Mirabar, Risen Greymantle (**dwarf Conjurer,** VGtM, p 212) joined forces with Marisa as part of the raid on chief Gruton's steading. Impressed with Marisa's blade skills and tactical acumen, Risen made it a point to introduce himself. He's been running with the Blades ever since.

Risen wears a *ring of protection* and carries an *emerald staff.*



Emerald Staff

Staff, very rare (requires attunement by a druid, sorcerer, warlock or wizard)

You have resistance to acid and poison damage while you hold this staff.

This staff has 10 charges. While holding it, you can use an action to expend 1 or more of its charges to cast one of the following spells from it, using your spell save DC and spellcasting ability modifier: *gaseous form* (3 charges), *Melf's acid arrow* (1 charge per spell level, up to 4th. Minimum 2 charges.), *ray of sickness* (1 charge per spell level, up to 4th), *stinking cloud* (3 charges).

The staff regains 1d6 + 4 expended charges daily at dawn. If you expend the last charge, roll a d20. On a 1, the staff dissipates into a sickly green cloud and is destroyed.

Marisa Angelmoor

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

Armor Class 18 (studded leather)
Hit Points 104 (16d8 + 32)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)

Skills Initiative +6 (+11 while in possession of Marisa's Blade), Perception +5, Persuasion +5, Stealth +5
Senses passive Perception 15
Languages Common
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Mercenary's Cunning. While Marisa is wearing light or no armor and wielding no shield her AC includes her Wisdom modifier.

Special Equipment. Marisa possesses *Marisa's Blade*, a *+2 longsword of warning*. While in possession of *Marisa's Blade* she has advantage on initiative. Additionally, Marisa and any of her companions within 30 feet of her cannot be surprised, except when incapacitated by something other than non-magical sleep. The blade automatically awakens her and her companions within range if any are sleeping naturally when combat begins.

Actions

Multiattack. Marisa makes two weapon attacks.

Longsword (Marisa's Blade). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d8+5) slashing damage.

Short bow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

Leadership (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). For 1 minute, Marisa can utter a special command or warning whenever a non-hostile creature that she can see within 30 feet of her makes an attack roll or saving throw. The creature can add a d4 to its roll provided it can hear and understand Marisa. A creature can benefit from only one Leadership die at a time. This effect ends if Marisa is incapacitated.

Reactions

Parry. Marisa adds 3 to her AC against one melee attack that would hit her. To do so, she must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

Marisa's Blade

Weapon (longsword) very rare (requires attunement)

A powerful heirloom passed down from her father, this beautiful longsword with a silver filigreed hilt is Marisa's pride and joy.

Marisa's Blade is a *Longsword of Warning +2.*

Meret Underburrow

By Courtney Hilbig
Artist: Courtney Hilbig

Meret is an artisan at a modest tinker's shop and is known for both her mechanical oddities and bright, curious nature. She is disarmingly bubbly and makes a point to get to know the customers who enter her shop. As a result, she is quite familiar with most people in the neighborhood. Regardless of their station, locals tend to be fond of the small gnome with wild, flaxen hair. However, only a select few of Meret's patrons know she also acts as a contact for the city Thieves' Guild.



Background

Meret grew up in a large family as the middle child with several brothers and sisters. Tinkering was the family business and she learned the trade from her uncle. Although she loved her family, she soon grew irritated with being constantly in their shadows and struck out on her own to make a name for herself.

On her travels, she met a human man named Elnath. They worked together on a few adventuring jobs and he quickly became a friend and mentor to her. They had some moderate success as adventurers and were able to at least keep themselves fed and sheltered. On their last job, they were hired to find a missing courier. The trail led to a series of caves outside the city. Meret and Elnath were cautiously making their way into the caves when they were ambushed by a band of orcs. Surprised, and hopelessly outnumbered, Elnath positioned himself between Meret and the orcs and told her to run. He was captured but Meret was able to escape with her life.

Devastated, Meret returned to the city, vowing to help her friend no matter the cost. She took on odd jobs to raise funds to hire help but was unable to get ahead on her own. Her skill with small machines and mechanisms attracted attention, and without Elnath's guiding influence she found herself allied with the local Thieves' Guild.

The guild held the promise of skilled individuals and access to coin – if only Meret would help them with a few things, first. The jobs started simply: designing traps and mechanisms, then opening complicated locks, then accompanying other Guild members on heists. Eventually, Meret was so well established within the Guild that they acquired a storefront and allowed her to use it as a tinker's shop. For that, she owed another debt. As the jobs escalated, and Meret moved up the ranks, she never hesitated to do what the guild asked of her because she would save Elnath… no matter the cost.

Current Motives

Meret's number one goal is to acquire enough wealth and influence to save Elnath. She feels that she owes him a life debt, and will do everything within her power to repay him.

Meret can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A merchant** – Meret sells tinker's equipment and mechanical items. She also has an eye for sparkly gems, and will pay a fair price for them.

- **An intermediary** for the Thieves' Guild - If the PCs know the right Thieves' Cant pass phrase she will allow them to purchase from an "exclusive" set of wares, as well as access a secret tunnel in the back of the shop that leads to a nearby Thieves' Guild safe house.

- **An information giver** – Meret is a bit of a gossip, and knows all the latest news about the local community. Anything really juicy, however, is reserved for guild members, or those willing to pay for the information.

- **A quest giver** – Although she won't open up about this easily, Meret is willing to accept outside help in saving Elnath. She believes the orcs are keeping him prisoner somewhere in that same cave system. If they accept the quest, the PCs may find that the trail circles back around to the city, and furthermore, that Meret's "friends" in the guild have been keeping secrets from her. The original job was a setup, the guild manipulated Meret so she would make knockboxes and other tools for them. They are still holding Elnath in a secure location in the underbelly of the city.

- **A villain** - If the PCs can't convince her to trust them, however, they may find instead that Meret has recommended them as a mark to her guildmates.

Long Term Motives

Although she's had second thoughts about the adventuring life, Meret would love nothing better than to make a new discovery or invention that will ensure that she will be remembered. She is not certain she will be able to accomplish that as a member of the Thieves' Guild, as so much of their work is done in the shadows, but perhaps being infamous would be just as good as being famous.

Flaws

Meret's curiosity often gets the better of her, which caused a lot of trouble for her as an adventurer. When she saw a button or trigger, she had to know what it did. The knowledge she gained from this made her exceedingly good at her job as a tinkerer but may have also caused injury on more than one occasion.

She has a greedy streak when it comes to gems, as well. She looks for gems that she can use in her tinkering work, or that she knows are useful or valuable to the guild.

Knockbox

Wonderous Item, Uncommon

This single-use, intricately designed metal cube contains a small vial of rust monster saliva. As an action, the knockbox can be placed against a non-magical lock and activated. The mechanism inside attaches the cube to the keyhole, then breaks the vial, dissolving both the insides of the lock and the mechanism itself.

Meret offers these items only to friends of the Thieves' Guild. How she manages to get the rust monster saliva, however, is a carefully guarded secret.

Meret Underburrow

Small humanoid (gnome), true Neutral

Armor Class 15
Hit Points 27 (6d8)
Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10(+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Damage Resistances none
Condition Immunities none
Senses darkvision, passive Perception 15
Languages common, gnomish, dwarvish
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Cunning Action. On each of her turns, Meret can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Sneak Attack. Meret deals an extra 7(2d6) damage once per turn, to one creature she hits with an attack if she has advantage on the attack roll. The attack must use a finesse or a ranged weapon.

She doesn't need advantage on the attack roll if another enemy of the target is within 5 feet of it, that enemy isn't incapacitated, and she doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Actions

Multiattack. Meret can make two melee attacks: one with her shortsword, and one with her dagger.

Shortsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit: 5(1d6+2) piercing damage.

Dagger. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit: 4(1d4+2) piercing damage.

Hand Crossbow. Ranged weapon attack: +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 5(1d6+2) piercing damage.

Merethyl Theren

By Casey Machado
Art: Eric Lofgren

Merethyl Theren is an elven treasure hunter and fighter. Upon first coming into contact with her, her rapidly shifting gaze creates an uneasiness or wariness about her presence. Her face and body are beleaguered with old scars, some still fresh, telling a story of grueling struggles and the neglect of any careful attention to healing.



Background

It is an age where many of the elaborate tombs, dungeons, and reliquaries across the land have withdrawn into memory. However, mere decades earlier, Merethyl thrived as one of a brief, but spectacular, generation of treasure hunters.

Alongside her cohorts, human brothers Danavor and Ulrath, Merethyl, aided by her Brooch of Dungeoneering, fearlessly pursued any tale of hidden treasure. Each triumph nurtured their greed and emboldened more reckless undertakings. Despite her growing wealth, the gratification of conquest became a dangerously addictive compulsion, barely able to satiate her till the next quest.

Knowing Merethyl would never let the party disband till all were dead, the brothers began to express concern. Fearful of their place in the aftermath of her inevitable self-destruction and content to retire rich men, the brothers planned one last mission, one that would liberate them from Merethyl forever.

After two days battling through the most lethal challenges they'd faced, the last of the treasure was in their hands, and the brothers enacted their plan. The final act of betrayal sealed the screaming Merethyl into the trap-filled tomb, leaving her to what could only be a gruesome end.

As the time in the darkness eroded from hours to days, days to weeks, so too did Merethyl's mind. Her betrayal festered within, marinating her mind in thoughts of vengeance. Freed from the encumbrance of sanity, she slowly clawed an escape from the tomb, taking perverse pleasure in each manifested scar which marked the slow, struggling return to the outside world.

Current Motives

Though left mentally unstable from her betrayal, Merethyl still finds momentary solace in the exhilaration of a treasure hunting challenge. This pastime offers the only means of distraction from her goal of revenge.

To this end she can be persuaded to assist a party in treasure retrieval quests; however, despite insistence to the contrary, she has no intention of ever sharing her spoils with others again.

Merethyl abhors the company of cooperative groups and will seek to undermine their trust in each other any way she can. She finds obvious delight in turning friends against each other so they may experience her suffering.

The first step of her revenge is locating her treasonous cohorts. As a result, Merethyl can typically be found in any area with potential exotic items or treasure, hoping to cross paths with Danavor or Ulrath. Unbeknownst to her, they have comfortably retired from the business making her efforts inevitably fruitless.

Long Term Motives

Merethyl's only long-term goal is her vengeful fixation to murder both Danavor and his brother Ulrath brutally. She has no desire or even capacity to consider other long-term courses of action or her existence after this eventuality. Any attempts to forcefully dissuade her will likely result in rapid hostility.

Flaws

Merethyl's greed is her ultimate shortcoming, willing to risk the well-being of herself or others without hesitation in order to experience even small tastes of the victorious seizing of loot. Given the ever-present danger of her usual surroundings, this reckless behavior will most likely lead to her eventual death.

Unsurprisingly, Merethyl is excessively paranoid when it comes to negotiating deals, always insistent that items of value remain in her sight or possession, and that she be present upon the moment of location of a treasure, lest someone potentially sneak some of it for themselves. This paranoia, if identified, can present a savvy party with opportunities for misdirecting her attention.

Brooch of Dungeoneering

Wonderous item, very rare

This brooch has 5 charges. While wearing the brooch, as an action, a creature can expend charges to cast any of the below spells without material components. Speaking the spell's name acts as the command word for the brooch.

Find Traps (1 Charge), *Identify* (2 Charges), *Locate Object* (3 Charges).

Replenishes 1d4 charges each day at dawn.

Merethyl Theren

Medium humanoid (Elf), chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (Half Plate armor)
Hit Points 170 (20d10+60)
Speed 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	15 (+2)	15 (+3)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws: Str +8, Con +7
Skills: Athletics +8, Acrobatics +6, Investigation +4
Senses Darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9
Languages Common, Elvish
Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Indomitable (2/day). Merethyl rerolls a failed saving throw.

Survivor. Merethyl regains 10 hit points at the start of her turn if she has at least 1 hit point but fewer than half her hit point maximum.

***Reckless*.** At the start of her turn, Merethyl can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls during that turn, but attack rolls against her have advantage until the start of her next turn.

Vengeful Strength. Merethyl's weapon attacks score a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20.

Actions

Multiattack. Merethyl makes three attacks with her longsword.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10+4) slashing damage

Reactions

Parry. Merethyl adds 3 to her AC against one melee attack that would hit. To do so she must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

Metathraxicus Shade

By Tony Petrecca
Artist: Jacob Blackmon
Cartography: Dyson Logos

Metathraxicus Shade is a frighteningly powerful kobold hiding on the fringe of society with one single-minded purpose - kill all adventurers! Through his twisted machinations, Metathraxicus can be a long-term antagonist for your PCs, with his agents assaulting and harassing PCs until they finally discover the mastermind. Be warned, though - an assault on his lair is a tier 3 challenge.

Background

"Adventurers. Vile, wicked, wretched, murderous, genocidal savages, the lot of them!"

Hatched in the underdark, Metathraxicus spent his brief youth in the tunnels beneath an abandoned duergar keep on a small island in the Darklake. There, a small kobold tribe tended to the needs of the black dragon Murk, while operating a trading post and inn for travelers upon the Darklake.

Metathraxicus' magical skills revealed themselves early, though his were atypical of a kobold. Severastri, the tribe's chief, was herself a powerful sorcerer, and she nurtured his abilities as she could, however, his talents were more suited to mage craft. Luckily, a dusty library provided several instructional tomes and a spell book. Life was good for the young kobold... until the adventurers arrived.

Assuming they were potential trading partners, Severastri and her clan offered their usual hospitality. The surfacers accepted, purchasing supplies and spending a night in the inn. The next day, after departing, the adventurers returned and inexplicably began attacking the tribe! One by one they slaughtered Metathraxicus' friends and family, driving their assault under the keep where they dared to slay Murk.



Metathraxicus managed to flee, and eventually found his way to the surface world. There, a kobold tribe in Crag Canyon took him in. Life was again good for the now older kobold, until adventurers arrived yet again.

Somehow, surviving another genocidal rampage by homicidal maniacs, Metathraxicus vowed revenge for his brethren. He set out on his own to learn the secrets and motivations of these small groups of hyper-violent folk. Traveling at night, he wandered the lands, building a quiet network of co-conspirators while learning the habits of those who called themselves adventurers.

Eventually he learned that adventurers could frequently be found gathered together in taverns that catered specifically to their type, and so, often using illusions such as *disguise self*, he infiltrated these establishments. There he learned how adventurers plied their trade, seeking rumors of poorly guarded treasures they could seize, or

work hired as assassins paid to slaughter clans of creatures merely resting in their homes. Oh, certainly, some were hired to come to the defense of peaceful human, elf, and dwarf settlements, but the politics were irrelevant, only the lure interested him.

Current Motives

Metathraxicus is single-minded in his pursuit, utilizing his skills and his network of conspirators to waylay adventurers in ambush, or lure them to their dooms. Metathraxicus made quite a few friends while he traveled... not only fellow kobolds. He counts an orc chieftain, hobgoblin warlord, frost giant jarl, the black dragon Zynox, and even the Archmage Accertep, as allies. They all enjoy partaking of his plot.

Using the ***crystal ball*** found in his tower lair, Metathraxicus scrys upon adventurers in the watering holes he visited on his travels. When he learns an adventuring groups' travel plans he casts *sending* to communicate those plans to his allies, so that the adventurer's might be ambushed on the road.

Once a group is chosen, he maintains his scrying, communicating their weaknesses to his allies. Ambush points are identified well ahead of time and adventuring groups are often slain before getting an opportunity to react. One favorite tactic utilized is to attack the group while they sleep, often catching them completely by surprise. Another involves assaulting adventurers when they are recovering from battle's engaged in while adventuring.

Metathraxicus and his allies can also be used as NPCs as follows:

- Infiltrate taverns to poison the food and drink served to adventurers.
- Hire assassins to dispatch troublesome adventurers in town.
- Pit groups of adventurers against each other by feeding rumors of riches to multiple adventuring parties.
- Use agents or disguise to hire groups of adventurers on allegedly easy missions that lead to their doom. The dragon in particular enjoys being fed in this manner.

Long Term Motives

Metathraxicus wants nothing short of the total obliteration of all who would count themselves as adventurers. He hopes one day to acquire enough allies for a major offensive, perhaps a coordinated assault on every wicked inn and tavern that gives shelter to the foul beasts. Until then, he bides his time, happy to see adventurers picked off one by one.

Flaws

Metathraxicus can be a braggart and enjoys gloating. It is not unlike him to prep *teleport* in order to appear before a group of adventurers as they fall. He wants them to know who bested them. He wants to claim responsibility. If ever he is witnessed doing so by a survivor, his secret machinations may be revealed, leading ultimately to his downfall.

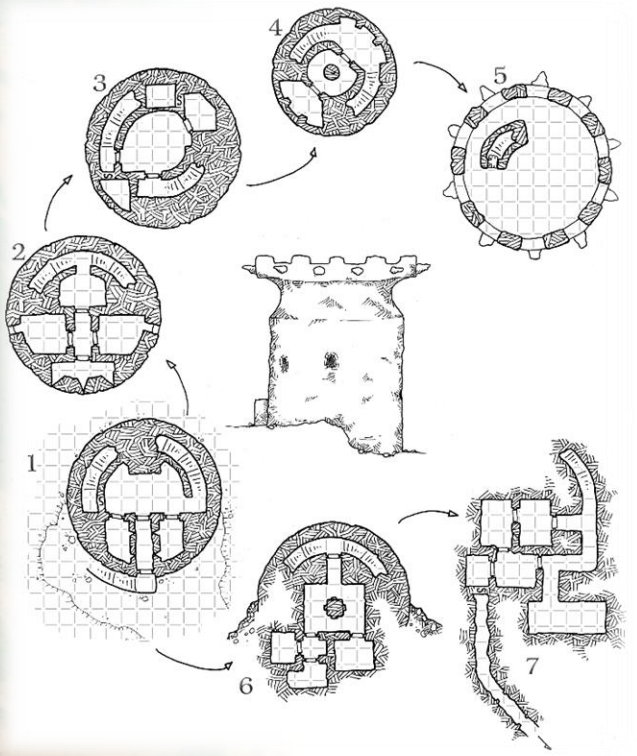
Metathraxicus Shade in Waterdeep

While Metathraxicus's tower lair lies far from the reach of the Waterdhavian guard, his agents frequent the Yawning Portal, where they tempt adventurers to the wilds with rumors of long-lost treasure.

Metathraxicus Shade's Lair

Metathraxicus' well-hidden tower lair is far off the beaten path. Metathraxicus learned of this ancient tower's existence whilst in an inn, spying upon a group of adventurers who were determined to plunder the long, lost tower. Ever opportunistic, Metathraxicus followed the group and attacked them when they emerged, weakened and battle worn. He then seized the tower for himself and from there forges his plots.

Unless otherwise noted, all doors within the tower are locked by the spell *arcane lock,* cast by Metathraxicus, with a password system used to override the locks in areas 1-6. The passwords are different for each floor and his simulacrum and the kobolds who dwell in the tower all know the passwords for areas 1-6. There are no passwords for the arcane locks in area 7. The doors in area 7 will only open for Metathraxicus.



Approaching the Lair

A pair of mated **wyverns** (CR 6, MM, p 303) lair in the upper floors of the tower and fly the skies within five miles of the tower. The pair are allied with Metathraxicus and hasten back to warn the tower's occupants when unwanted guests approach.

Occupants of the Lair

In addition to Metathraxicus and the aforementioned wyverns, the tower is home to 12 **kobold commandos** (see below), who have been loyal to Metathraxicus since his time spent in Crag Canyon. Additionally, he keeps a simulacrum active at all times and a **stone golem** (MM p 170) guards his dungeon lair.

Alerted Kobolds

In the event of infiltration or battle, **kobold commando** occupants of the tower distribute *potions of superior healing* from level 3, then man the external and internal arrow slits of the tower, as noted below, while five kobold commandos man the rooftop parapets which provide three quarters cover. The wyverns take to the sky, ready to attack, while Metathraxicus' simulacrum interrogates, and potentially attacks, intruders from the roof. Should the simulacrum be reduced to half his hit points, he retreats to the dungeon to guard Metathraxicus.

Given the magical nature of the tower's semi-permanent defenses – *arcane locks* and *glyphs of warding* – all tower defenders are instructed to assume lightly armored intruders are spell casters capable of *knock* and *dispel magic*, thus they concentrate fire on potential spell casters first.

Area 1: Entrance Level of the Tower

The two guard stations flanking the entry hall are each guarded by two **kobold commandos**, who fire at intruders in that hall from three quarters cover.

There is a *glyph of warding* on the southern side of the northern door of the entrance hall. A successful **DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation)** check is required to notice the glyph. Any creature that isn't a kobold that passes within five feet of the door without uttering the password ("Zap") triggers the glyph. When triggered, the glyph casts an overchanneled 5th level ***lightning bolt*** southward. Each creature in a 100-foot line south from the door must succeed on a **DC 17 Dexterity** saving throw. A creature takes 60 points of lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful save.

The central chamber of this level is used as a common social room for the kobolds and is surprisingly well furnished. Metathraxicus' share of his schemes keep him well funded. The stairs to the east provide access further up the tower. If not on alert, three **kobold commandos** play cards in this chamber.

The secret door to the west is well hidden - requiring a successful **DC 20 Wisdom (Perception)** check to notice the slight discoloration in the stone work. It is opened by turning a torch sconce mounted on the wall. It is, of course, trapped with a *glyph of warding* as well. A successful **DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation)** check is required to notice the glyph. Any creature that isn't a kobold that opens the secret door triggers the glyph. When triggered, the glyph casts an overchanneled 5th level *magic missile* at the creature opening the door, doing 35 points of force damage to that creature.

The stairs to the west provide access to the basement and dungeon level of the tower.

Area 2: Second Level of the Tower

The northern chamber of this level is utilized as another common area.

There is a *glyph of warding* on the northern side of the northern door. A successful **DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation)** check is required to notice the glyph. Any creature that isn't a kobold that passes within five feet of the door without uttering the password ("Torch") triggers the glyph. When triggered, the glyph casts an overchanneled 5th level *burning hands* northward. Each creature in a 15-foot cone from the door northward must make a **DC 17 Dexterity** saving throw. A creature takes 42 points of fire damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful save.

Three **kobold commandos** are stationed in the southern guard room, using the arrow slits to fire from three quarters cover at any unwanted guests approaching the tower from the south.

The two eastern and western rooms are the living quarters for the **kobold commandos**. If not on alert, one **kobold commando** naps in each room. The bulk of their money and supplies are kept in area 3 above, but an easy search of their bedrolls produces 22 sp and 14 gp.

Area 3: Third Level of the Tower

This level houses Metathraxicus' **simulacrum.** The simulacrum was created six months ago and thus far has not utilized a single spell. The simulacrum wears a *cloak of protection* similar to the real Metathraxicus. Thus, the simulacrum is identical to Metathraxicus except it has 48 hit points and an armor class of 14 (17 with *mage armor*).

The central, northeastern, and secret northern room are utilized as a well-furnished suite for Metathraxicus' simulacrum. His secret room acts as his closet, containing a wardrobe with ample clothing for the simulacrum.

Both secret doors on this level are well hidden - requiring a successful **DC 20 Wisdom (Perception)** check to notice the slight discoloration in the stone work. They are opened by turning a torch sconce mounted on the wall and are, of course, trapped with a *glyph of warding* as well. A successful **DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation)** check is required to notice the glyph. Any creature that isn't a kobold that opens the secret door

triggers the glyph. When triggered, the glyph casts an overchanneled 5th level *magic missile* at the creature opening the door, doing 35 points of force damage to that creature.

Behind the door to the south are stairs leading up to the Wyvern nest.

Treasure: The southwestern secret chamber contains the kobold commando's supplies and wealth. In addition to ample crossbow ammunition, spare weapons, and two crates of dry foodstuffs, there is an unlocked chest containing 600 gp and, if not distributed due to an alert, twelve *potions of superior healing*.

Area 4: The Wyvern's Nest

With the full blessing and cooperation of the kobolds, a mated pair of wyverns use this level of the tower as their nest. The doors on this level are ajar and nearly off their hinges. Scattered about their nesting area are the remains of several victims.

Treasure: Amongst those remains can be found a belt pouch containing 350 platinum, an onyx necklace worth 250 gp, four aquamarines worth 50 gp each, a spell scroll with *dimension door*, and a *periapt of health*.

Area 5: The Tower Roof

As noted above, when alerted, the two **wyverns** (CR 6, MM, p 303) take to the sky, five **kobold commandos** man the battlements, and the simulacrum questions, frightens off, or attacks potential intruders from this rooftop. The battlements provide three quarters cover.

Area 6: The Tower Basement

The northern door of this level is protected by a *glyph of warding.* A successful **DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation)** check is required to notice the glyph. Any creature that isn't a kobold that passes within five feet of the door without uttering the password ("Boom") triggers the glyph. When triggered, the glyph casts an overchanneled 5th level *fireball* centered on the door. Each creature in a 20-foot-radius sphere centered on that point must succeed on a **DC 17 Dexterity** saving throw. A creature takes 60 points of fire damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful save.

The series of rooms to the south are utilized by Metathraxicus as guest rooms.

Area 7. The dungeon - Metathraxicus' Lair

A **stone golem** (CR 10, MM, p 270) guards the landing hall of this floor, slowing, then attacking, any intruders who don't speak the password ("Peace"). Metathraxicus and his simulacrum, if present, utilize hit and run tactics from the western suites to support the golem's assault. If pressed, Metathraxicus retreats and flees, grabbing his spell book and *crystal ball* if he can. If forced to flee he will use *misty step* and *dimension door* to get as much of a head start as possible.

Metathraxicus uses the large southern room in this level as a meeting room when he is entertaining any of his co-conspirators. The suite of four rooms to the west are (clockwise from bottom) his bedroom, his treasure room, his laboratory, and his study/scrying room. His *crystal ball* can be found on a pedestal in the middle of the scrying room, while his impressive spell book sits open at a desk in the same room.

The two eastern doors that provide entrance to his suite are protected by an identical *glyph of warding.* A successful **DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation)** check is required to notice the glyph. Any creature that isn't a kobold that touches the door without uttering the password ("Freeze") triggers the glyph. When triggered, the glyph casts an overchanneled *cone of cold* directed outward from the door. Each creature in a 60-foot cone centered on that point must succeed on a **DC 17 Dexterity** saving throw. A creature takes 64 points of cold damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful save.

The three western doors inside the suite are protected with *glyphs of warding* as well**.** A successful **DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation)** check is required to notice the glyph. Any creature that isn't a kobold that touches these doors triggers the glyph. When triggered, the glyph casts an overchanneled 5th level *magic missile* at the creature opening the door, doing 35 points of force damage to that creature.

Finally, the secret escape door to the south is as well-hidden as the rest**,** requiring a successful **DC 20 Wisdom (Perception)** check to notice the slight discoloration in the stonework. It is opened by turning a torch sconce mounted on the wall. It is, of course, trapped with a *glyph of warding* as well. A successful **DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation)** check is required to notice the glyph. Any creature that isn't a kobold that opens the secret door triggers the glyph. When triggered, the glyph casts an overchanneled 5th level *fireball* centered on the door. Each creature in a 20-foot-radius sphere centered on that point must succeed on a **DC 17 Dexterity** saving throw. A creature takes 60 points of fire damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful save.

An especially cruel DM might add multiple glyphs to this final secret door as Metathraxicus' final gift to any adventurers who dared plunder his lair.

Treasure: Metathraxicus' lab contains 5000 gp worth of various spell components that may or may not be damaged in a spell casting fight. In addition to his invaluable spell book, his study contains an impressive array of arcane tomes worth an additional 5000 gp to the right collectors, assuming the books weren't caught in the crossfire of a fireball.

In his treasure room there are four *arcane locked* iron chests, each protected by a *glyph of warding* identical to one listed above. In total, they contain 6000 gp, 800 pp, and assorted gems and jewelry worth an additional 7500 gp, all representing his mastermind cut of loot taken from slain adventurers. As for looted magic items, like any intelligent being, Metathraxicus uses them.

Staff of the White Dragon

Staff, legendary (Requires attunement)

This staff is decorated in a colored scale motif appropriate to the color dragon it represents. The end of this ornate staff bears the likeness of a White Dragon.

This staff can be wielded as a magic quarterstaff that grants a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with it. While holding this staff you can speak and understand Draconic. While holding this staff your armor class increases by 2 if you are wearing no armor.

The staff has 10 charges for the following properties. It regains 1d6+4 expended charges per day at dawn. If you expend the last charge roll a d20. On a 1 the staff loses its properties and becomes a non-magical quarterstaff.

Dragon's Breath – While holding the staff you can use an action to spend three charges to cause the dragon head to animate, enlarge, and use its breath weapon, emanating from your space. The white dragon head exhales an icy blast in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 19 Constitution saving throw, taking 54 (12d8) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Dragon's Fear – While holding the staff you can use an action to spend three charges to cause the dragon head to animate, enlarge, and roar. Each creature of your choice within 120 feet of you must succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to that dragon head's roar for the next 24 hours.

Dragon's Immunity – While holding the staff you can use a reaction to spend one charge and gain immunity for one round to cold damage.

Dragon's Strike – While holding the staff you can use an action to spend one charge to cause the dragon head to animate, enlarge, and make a bite attack with the following properties:

Melee Weapon Attack: +11 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 17 (2d10+6) piercing damage plus 4 (1d8) cold damage.

The Staff of the Dragon first appeared in Tony Petrecca's *Journey Through the Center of the Underdark 2: The Darklake Strikes Back*

Kobold Commando

Small humanoid (kobold), lawful evil

Armor Class 14 (leather armor)
Hit Points 18 (4d6 + 4)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +5
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Common, Draconic
Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the kobold commando has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Pack Tactics. The kobold commando has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the kobold commando's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Sharp Shot. If the kobold commando does not move on its turn it gains advantage on its crossbow attacks that turn.

Quickload. The kobold commando ignores the loading quality of light crossbows.

Actions

Multiattack. The kobold commando makes two weapon attacks.

Short Sword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8+3) piercing damage.

The Kobold Commando first appeared in Tony Petrecca's *Killer Kobolds!*

Metathraxicus Shade

Small humanoid (kobold), lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (*cloak of protection, ioun stone of agility, staff of the dragon*) (AC 21 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 95 (14d8 + 32)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	18 (+3)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Int +9, Wis +6
Skills Arcana +9, History +6, Perception +6
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages Common, Draconic, Giant, Undercommon
Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, Metathraxicus has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Pack Tactics. Metathraxicus has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of his allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Spellcasting. Metathraxicus is a 14th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). Metathraxicus is an evoker, and has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *dancing lights*, fire bolt*, mage hand, prestidigitation, ray of frost**
1st Level (4 slots): *burning hands*, mage armor, magic missile**
2nd Level (3 slots): *mirror image*, misty step, shatter**
3rd Level (3 slots): *counterspell, fireball*, sending*,*
4th Level (3 slots): *dimension door, ice storm*, stoneskin*
5th Level (2 slots): *Bigby's hand*, cone of cold**
6th Level (1 slot): *chain lightning*, wall of ice**
7th Level (1 slot): *delayed blast fireball*, forcecage**

Overchannel. When Metathraxicus casts a wizard spell of 1st through 5th level that deals damage, he can deal maximum damage with that spell.

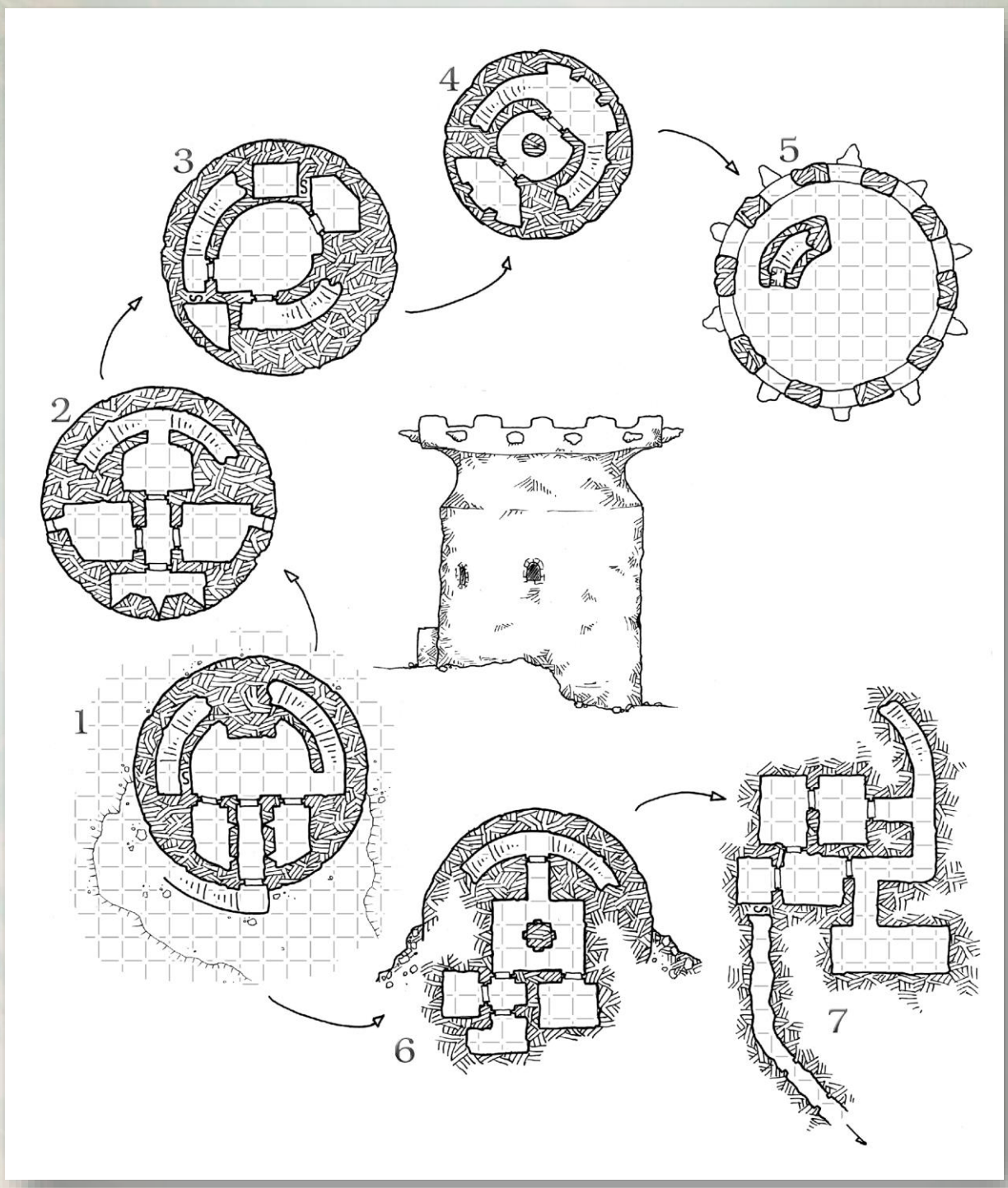
The first time he does so, he suffers no adverse effect. If he uses this feature again before he finishes a long rest, Metathraxicus takes 2d12 necrotic damage for each level of the spell, immediately after he casts it. Each time he uses this feature again before finishing a long rest the necrotic damage per spell level increases by 1d12. This damage ignores resistance and immunity.

Sculpt Spells. When Metathraxicus casts an evocation spell that affects other creatures he can see, he can choose a number of them equal to 1+ the spell level. These creatures automatically succeed on their saving throws against the spell. If a successful save means a chosen creature would take half damage from the spell, it instead takes no damage from it.

Actions

Staff of the White Dragon. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6+1) bludgeoning damage.

Possessions and Magic Items: Metathraxicus wears a *cloak of protection***,** an *ioun stone of agility* and wields a *staff of the white dragon***.** He keeps a *potion of gaseous form***,** a *potion of stone giant strength***,** and two *potions of supreme healing* on him at all times.


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Mizz'raghol

By: Remley Farr
Artist: Daniel Comerci

Mizz'raghol is a desperate lich trapped in a dire situation. His phylactery is missing, but he hasn't ceased to exist—meaning someone is feeding souls into it.

Background

Mizz'raghol remembers little about his mortal life, but his lich years are young by most undead standards. At only 563 years old, Mizz'raghol has recently established a lair in a copper mine which was abandoned by the dwarven workers after they discovered a desecrated mass grave of Torm acolytes. Mizz'raghol quickly moved in and reanimated the corpses for his own schemes.

The zombified acolytes work the copper mines when able, but Mizz'raghol spends most of his time perusing his old books and connecting with the planar universe. He is in a constant state of panic, unusual for a lich, since he has been unable to locate his phylactery.

Mizz'raghol's phylactery is a small pearl attached to a silver chain that he soaked in a pool made from the salty blood of a storm giant prince. His favorite method of feeding it souls was to make his victims wear the necklace and let the artifact leech the spirit from their bodies over a several-week period.

Recently one of Mizz'raghol's victims escaped while still wearing the necklace. All he knows is that the escapee was a human milk maid that he lured into the cave from a passing caravan. Interestingly enough, his phylactery is still being fed souls because anyone who comes across a dead person wearing the expensive-looking necklace ends up looting it. Who wants to bury a silver-chained pearl? Mizz'raghol knows this is why his phylactery is still keeping him alive, and he believes a trail of dead bodies will lead to his lost treasure.



Current Motives

Mizz'raghol desperately wants his phylactery back. He's in such dire need that he's willing to swallow what little pride he has and hire adventurers to find it.

Mizz'raghol can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A spell trader** – he has spell books and tomes full of ancient spells that wizards can copy from—for the right price.
- **A quest giver** – he is willing to give PC's old treasure or even attack an enemy encampment if they can find his phylactery necklace.
- **A resurrection agent** – the lich can navigate the line between life and death, reanimating a dead PC for the right price.

- **An adversary** – Mizz'raghol cannot kill himself, but adventurers with the right weapons can. If he lets himself be slain, he knows he will reform at the site of his phylactery.

Long Term Motives

World dominion, chaotic uprisings, and command over thousands of undead don't entertain Mizz'raghol. Though at an impasse, Mizz'raghol eventually wants to create more liches like himself. He may even offer to show a PC the path to undead immortality if the PC proves worthy.

Flaws

Even though Mizz'raghol is willing to work with others, he is still an undead monster. He finds difficulty in conversing with the living without wondering how their arms and legs would look as a decorative centerpiece, and he perversely tends to trace a finger over people's faces the way a scrapyard dealer examines an old piece of machinery. To Mizz'raghol, every living creature can be either a potential ally, a potential foe, or a potential flower pot.

Mizz'raghol

Medium undead, neutral evil

Armor Class 18 *(natural armor)*
Hit Points 135 (18d8 + 54)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	20 (+5)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Con +10, Int +12, Wis +9
Skills Arcana +18, History +12, Insight +9, Perception +9
Damage Resistances cold, lightning, necrotic
Damage Immunities poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks.
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned
Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 19
Languages Aquan, Common, Draconic, Druidic, Elvish, Infernal
Challenge 21 (33,000 XP)

All of Mizz'raghol's other abilities are that of the **Lich** (MM, p 202)

Rhaghulit the Visionary

By: Troy E. Taylor
Artist: Daniel Comerci

Rhaghulit, a tortle, shares his kind's appreciation for the wonderment of the natural world. As a spiritual leader, he advocates the tortle way of living in settlements for only a short time before moving on, so as not to despoil the surrounding wilderness. He feels he must now impose this lifestyle on others.



Background

Rhaghulit once tolerated the beliefs and cultures of others, especially city-dwellers. At one time, he was a tortle who could find something to marvel at in even the most crowded marketplace, a flower in bloom, or a fluttering butterfly.

Yet, his discontent grew.

In the cities of his homeland, Rhaghulit saw that the people of the civilized races no longer sought to accommodate themselves to the natural world. The people built their foundations ever firmer and deeper. Their towers scaled higher and their ramshackled homes sprawled out beyond the walls. The people who lived in the cities, now further removed from nature's guiding, even-handed justice, became corrupt, oppressive, and abusive to one another.

Finally, Rhaghulit could take no more. He used his druidic magic to transform into a triceratops and trampled all in his path. In that shape, he then unleashed destructive spells of fire and ice. When the demolition was complete, Rhaghulit was banished from tortle society, and his fellow tortles rejected him.

Current Motives

Rhaghulit journeyed to the Sword Coast. He heard that Neverwinter, Waterdeep, and Baldur's Gate were the grandest cities in all of Faerun. To him, however, that simply meant they were the most in need of reclamation. He began to preach about the toll the cities were taking, not just upon their natural surroundings, but upon the souls of those who reside within. He gathered followers.

He is training the most militant of his followers into a strike team capable of carrying out his mission. He now commands **thugs** (CR ½, MM, p 350) and **assassins** (CR 8, MM, p 343), as well as **martial arts adepts** (CR 3, VGtM, p 216). He plans on using this "Cadre of Purity" to undermine what he calls the "cracked pillars of civilization."

His method is the same each time. While he preaches and gathers followers in the marketplaces, he trains his growing ranks to use infiltration, deception, intimidation, and even assassination, to achieve their aims. When Rhaghulit senses the time is right, he will direct the Cadre of Purity to take take over each of the following, in turn:

- A powerful thieves guild or criminal organization.
- A religious leader or church identified for ignoring the tenants of decency and charity.

- A merchant family that reaped its rewards by taking from the natural world and not replenishing it.
- A respected civic leader or judge whose ascendency included taking bribes and making shady deals.

Rhaghulit makes sure to collect the ill-gotten gains from each strike to fund the subsequent step in the operation. Once the "four pillars" are toppled, Rhaghulit intends to unleash his full powers in a public display meant to astonish all who witness it. He hopes it will frighten the populous sufficiently into fleeing and seeking a simpler life elsewhere.

Depending on when Rhaghulit is encountered, he can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A spiritual leader** who can provide assistance to those sympathetic to his cause.
- **A charismatic** person whose crowds of followers are viewed with suspicion by the establishment.
- **A teacher** who can instruct stealthy combatants, such as monks or rogues.
- An **adversary** whose megalomania threatens the innocent as well as the powerful.

Long Term Motives

Once Rhaghulit has wrought destruction upon the great cities of the Sword Coast he envisions leading an army of followers and true believers in a quest to take down the cities of the inner sea or the kingdom of Cormyr.

He also anticipates creating teams of followers who will teach the displaced city-dwellers how to live in small, temporary settlements. He expects the people in these settlements to be content with their lot and respect the natural world. He hopes that when his plans reach this stage, other tortles will join his cause and help with the instruction.

Flaws

Rhaghulit is no longer sane. He does not recognize that his methods are no less destructive than the corruption he opposes. (It also explains why there are so few druids are in his ranks).

Rhaghulit in Waterdeep

Rhaghulit might be found in the City of Splendors posing as an agent of the Emerald Enclave, having himself infiltrated the order to twist it to his own ends. From such a position he could direct his Cadre of Purity, and potentially the PCs, towards the disruption of targets in need of purification.

Rhaghulit the Visionary

Medium humanoid (tortle), lawful evil

Armor Class 17 *(natural), (21 with shell defense)*
Hit Points 132 (24d8 + 24)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	20 (+5)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Int +4, Wis +9
Skills Animal Handling +8, Nature +5, Survival +9
Senses passive Perception 19
Languages Aquan, Common, Druidic
Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Spellcasting. The tortle is an 18th level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following druid spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *druidcraft, guidance, produce flame, thorn whip*
1st level (4 slots): *animal friendship, cure wounds, speak with animals, thunderwave*
2nd level (3 slots): *flaming sphere, hold person, spike growth*
3rd level (3 slots): *darkvision, hold person, sleet storm*
4th level (3 slots): *dominate bast, ice storm, locate creature, wall of fire*
5th level (3 slots): *commune with nature, insect plague, mass cure wounds*
6th level (1 slot): *heal, move earth, wall of thorns*
7th level (1 slot): *fire storm*
8th level (1 slot): *control weather*
9th level (1 slot): *storm of vengeance*

Actions

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 2) slashing damage.

Quarterstaff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage, or 6 (1d8+2) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands.

Shell Defense. The tortle withdraws into its shell. Until it emerges, it gains +4 bonus to AC and has advantage on Strength and Constitution saving throws. While in its shell, the tortle is prone, its speed is 0 and can't increase, it has disadvantage on Dexterity saving throws, it can't take actions, and the only action it can take is a bonus action to emerge.

Triceratops shape (2/day). The tortle magically polymorphs into this huge beast and can remain in this form for up to 9 hours. The tortle can choose whether its equipment falls to the ground, melds with its new form, or is worn by the new form. The tortle reverts to its true form if it dies or falls unconscious. The tortle can revert to its true form using a bonus action on its turn.

While in its new form, the tortle retains its game statistics and ability to speak, but its AC, movement modes, Strength and Dexterity are replaced by those of the new form, and it gains any special senses, proficiencies, traits, actions, and reactions (except class features, legendary actions, and lair actions) that the new form has but that it lacks. It can cast its spells with verbal or somatic components in its new form.
The new form's attacks count as magical for the purpose of overcoming resistances and immunity to nonmagical attacks.

Rhizoidon

By Dan Beal
Artist: Gary Dupuis / Purple Duck Games

After the Great Scorch, the Kenku who resided in the forests in the outskirts of Ethvale had to think quickly. Their homes atop the trees had been decimated, and many of their Eastern Wingless brethren had perished. With nowhere else to turn, they had to request aid of the Tenganu Tribe— a band of Kenku who practiced magic, which many Kenku outside of the Tenganu considered to be dark and dangerous.

Background

The Tenganu were amenable to helping and asserted they could regrow the affected area quickly. They kept their methods secret from the outsiders, but within a matter of days things returned to normal. The Kenku of the Ethvale Forest returned to the forests to rebuild their homes but soon realized the Tenganu had left something behind.

The disappearances started the first night as Kenku were seemingly swallowed by the forest itself. Each morning more members of the tribe were missing, occasionally leaving some trace of where they last stood. The few hunters brave enough to solve this mystery quickly found themselves outmatched as they fell prey to a hulking mass of the forest come to life.

The beckoning of Rhizoidon was the Tenganu's solution to the ruined forest. They knew full well the strength it would return the woods and what cost it would exact in the process. Plant life flourishes around Rhizoidon anywhere it moves, but the growth drains energy from the fiend that must be replenished by trapping and poisoning prey in order to feed.

Scholars speculate Rhizoidon was originally spawned from the self-preservation of the forest itself or possibly created by Fey spirits in an effort



to bring forth a guardian of the wild. Whatever the case, while Rhizoidon loves the forest, its methods are downright savage plants are threatened.

Furthermore, Rhizoidon abhors civilization and would rather see it smothered by growth, killing all those that dared build upon the natural earth to begin with. Now, unleashed upon the land, Rhizoidon is likely to see all those that walk upon stone, rather than dirt, as foes that must be crushed with extreme prejudice.

Current Motives

Despite the obvious hatred of civilization, Rhizoidon isn't dim and sees the value in purposes beyond wanton destruction.

Rhizoidon can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A guardian of the forest** - Claiming a section of forest as its territory to which all are trespassers.

- **Hired muscle** - Working as an agent of a Fey king to see that a new Lord's kingdom does not complete construction.

- **A refugee** - Forced from its home by some greater power (or possibly fiend) Rhizoidon lashes out at all that surrounds it while simultaneously trying to escape that which it fears.

- **A monster** - Seeking to retire to some quiet stretch of forest, Rhizoidon is mistaken for a monster on a rampage.

Long Term Motives

Rhizoidon would simply prefer that the world was overgrown and green completely. By this measure it is never truly content unless the world it witnesses represents that dream. Every day that it is surrounded by signs of industry drives it one step closer to madness.

Flaws

By this same token, seeing the destruction of plant life, especially that which it itself created, will blind Rhizoidon with fury. An act as simple as stepping on a flower or passing through a bush can incur this wrath. Rhizoidon loses itself in these moments and can be easily distracted through continuous destruction.

Rhizoidon

Large monstrosity, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 145 (18d12 + 16)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	8 (-1)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)

Saves Str +6, Con +6
Skills Athletics +6, Nature +4
Condition Immunities Poisoned
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages Abyssal, Common
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Entangle. The Rhizoidon can cast the *entangle* spell twice per day (save DC 15).

Long-limbed. The Rhizoidon has exceptionally long, branch-like limbs, increasing its reach to 10 ft.

Rhizome Touch. A creature touched by the Rhizoidon must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or become restrained as roots begin to grow on and around its feet, restricting movement. The creature must repeat the save at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a successful save and the creature is immune to this feature for 24 hours.

If a creature fails four consecutive saves it becomes paralyzed. A *lessor restoration* spell or similar magic can undo this effect.

Wild Growth. Whenever the Rhizoidon moves across unworked ground, or makes a Stomp Earth attack while on unworked ground, grass and flowers sprout up. If the Rhizoidon spends 8 hours in one spot, that area becomes a 10-foot radius forest, the roots of the trees breaking any stone or brickwork within the radius and creating difficult terrain.

Actions

Multiattack. The Rhizoidon makes two melee attacks, one melee attack and one stomp earth attack, or one poisonous mist attack.

Root Canal. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Stomp Earth. *Area of Effect.* The Rhizoidon stomps its large, twisted, root-like foot onto the ground. All creatures within a 10-foot radius of the Rhizoidon must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. Failure results in the creature being knocked prone. In addition to being knocked prone, any creatures already affected by the Rhizome Touch are unable to stand until the effects of the Rhizome Touch end.

Poisonous Mist. The Rhizoidon opens its cavernous mouth and exhales a poisonous mist in a 20-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 3d12 poison damage on a failed save, or no damage on a successful one.

Sekavoc the Scavenger

By Chris Bissette
Artist: Lawrence van der merwe

In the City of Brass, Sekavoc was a debt collector. Tasked by his masters to gather not the monies they were owed, but instead, the body and soul of those who owed them. He was also tasked with hunting runaway slaves and returning them to their rightful owners.

Sekavoc has improved his lot in the world, these days. His new task is to travel the Material Plane in search of prime candidates for servitude in the City of Brass, snatching up powerful figures and delivering them as slaves to their new owners on the Elemental Plane of Fire.



Background

Sekavoc was human, once. What he is now is a question without answer. It is known that he is several centuries old, at least, and that he has been in the servitude of the efreet for most of that time.

It is believed that Sekavoc originally hailed from Baldur's Gate, where he made a living cutting purses at the docks and, later, as a thief-taker hunting down fugitives.

How and why Sekavoc came to be enslaved in the City of Brass is not widely known. In his position as a thief-taker he was tasked with tracking down and subduing a barbarian named Thorak, who had slain a member of the Grand Duke's family in a bar-room brawl in Baldur's Gate. When Sekavoc tracked Thorak down he found the barbarian with a group of powerful friends, one of whom banished Sekavoc to the Plane of Fire in the ensuing confrontation.

Sekavoc has never spoken of how he survived on the Plane of Fire. What is known is that he somehow found his way to the City of Brass, his skin scorched, and his bones twisted and broken.

He was quickly enslaved by an efreet named Najib Al-Bariqi and put to work in the diamond mines. How his particular set of skills came to the attention of the efreet is unknown, but it was not long before he was pulled from the mines and put to work in his current position.

That Sekavoc has lived for so much longer than any normal human is attributed to being part of the same mystery surrounding his ability to survive alone in the Plane of Fire.

Current Motives

Sekavoc has come to the Material Plane hunting for potential new toys for the efreet. He has no specific target; instead, he is tasked with identifying particularly powerful, talented, or noteworthy individuals and delivering them to his masters.

Sekavoc can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **An enemy** - Sekavoc may have decided that the group (or a specific member of the group) looks like a prime candidate for a one-way trip the City of Brass.

- **An employer** – though he is powerful in his own right, Sekavoc is not stupid. He survives because he protects himself. If there are guards and other obstacles between him and his target, Sekavoc is not above outsourcing some of the grunt work to clear a path for himself.

- **A source of information** – Sekavoc gathers a huge amount of information as he seeks out his targets. He and his masters have little to no interest in the politics of the Material Plane, and he has no reason to keep this information to himself - especially if there is a price attached to it.

Long Term Motives

Sekavoc's long term motive is simply survival. He knows that he will never be free of the efreet, and he has come to terms with that. If he were to attempt escape he would certainly then have to contend with his masters sending somebody just like himself after him.

If unmolested, Sekavoc will continue to seek out and capture powerful slaves for the efreet. He does occasionally return to the City of Brass - presumably on the whim of his masters - but he never stays for long. There is always hunting to be done.

Flaws

Sekavoc is single-minded and, after centuries of operating unhindered, supremely confident of his own abilities. Though he will happily employ lesser beings to help remove obstacles between him and his prey, he will always take on the main prize himself. If he comes across, say, a likely-looking group of adventurers who would be perfect for his masters, he may well decide that he is adept enough to take them all on at once.

Mask of the Master

Wondrous Item, very rare (requires attunement)

This wide, flat mask is made of an opalescent white material and studded with dull green stones.
You can only attune to this item while another creature who you are touching is wearing it.

While attuned to this item, as an action, you can see and hear as though you were the creature wearing the mask. Additionally, you can communicate with them telepathically. These abilities have an indefinite duration and have no range, even functioning across planes of existence.

A creature wearing this item while another creature is attuned to it cannot remove the mask without first succeeding on a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw.

Sekavoc

Medium humanoid (human), Chaotic neutral

Armor Class 13 (16 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Wis +5, Cha +7
Skills Arcana +4, Deception +7, Investigation +4, Persuasion +7, Survival +5
Damage Resistance slashing damage from nonmagical attacks not made with silver weapons
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Common, Abyssal, Infernal
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. Sekavoc's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma. He can innately cast the following spells (spell save DC 15), requiring no material components.

At will: *blur*, *false life*, *levitate* (self only), *mage armor (*self only), *silent image*
1/day each: *feeblemind*, *force cage*, *plane shift*

Spellcasting. Sekavoc is a 17th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). He regains his expended spell slots when he finishes a short or long rest. He knows the following warlock spells.

Cantrips (at will): *eldritch blast, fire bolt, friends, mage hand, minor illusion, prestidigitation, shocking grasp*
1st-5th (4 5th-level slots): *banishment, burning hands, counterspell, flame strike, hellish rebuke, hold person, magic circle, scrying, stinking cloud, wall of fire*

Dark One's Own Luck (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). When Sekavoc makes an ability check or saving throw, he can add a d10 to the roll. He can do this after the roll is made but before any of the roll's effects occur.

Actions

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) slashing damage plus 10 (3d6) fire damage.

Shoshanna Opaldawn

By Hannah Carlan
Artist: Dean Spencer

Known throughout the realms for her tragic story, Shoshanna Opaldawn walks the lands at night on her holy crusade. Unfailingly polite and self-conscious about her size and appearance, Shoshanna frequently leaves small gifts for the children of the villages she stays in. Small flower crowns, straw dolls, and even crude paintings are left in public spaces as she serves penance for her condition. Her silky, gray skin is barely indistinguishable from her armor, albeit her skin is dirtier than the armor she carefully maintains.

Many who knew the girl remember her fondly. Those who know the warrior with cold skin and a distant gaze would swear she could never have been a girl. For some with her affliction, humanity is a lost art. For Shoshanna, humanity is her most delicate asset.

Background

The daughter of a lord, Shoshanna was a gifted fighter in her house and her village. She excelled at almost any sport she tried, and it was in the midst of one of these fights that her path was revealed to her. One evening in the middle of combat, the hand of Selune touched Shoshanna, and it was in that moment that the stones of her path were unturned.

Selune gifted the young girl with a preternatural understanding of the night, the darkness, and the ethereal. Shoshanna knew from a young age that she had been chosen to live in the dark. Unlike other children in her village that feared the sounds of the night, Shoshanna explored every shadowed corner and obscured landscape. Shoshanna gained a reputation as a skilled swordsman and fighter, but her mission was greater than her proficiency with weapons. She embarked on a journey to spread the word of her goddess.



One fateful evening, Shoshanna was returning home after a long journey to visit the Moon Gardeners north of Eberron when a man approached her on the path. He seemed old and frail, and when Shoshanna kneeled to help him, he revealed himself to be neither aged or an invalid. While he did attack her, the unnamed man was quickly slain by Shoshanna. The effect of his bite and the blood she inhaled as he aspirated before her transferred enough of his disease to her.

Shoshanna, a holy fighter, evolved into a holy warrior. Instead of being gifted a proclivity for the darkness, Shoshanna was now chained to the night. Her holy mission changed, and eventually she found herself with a new purpose. She would hunt more like the man who caused her affliction. With continued blessings from her goddess, Shoshanna became a Dhampyr, the unholiest of the holy fighters. Selune has not chosen to remove Shoshanna's affliction and has continued to aid her.

Current Motives

Shoshanna's mission is to find and eradicate vampires in service to her goddess and to avenge the curse placed on her.

Shoshanna can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A Guide** – Shoshanna knows most lands and areas surrounding most towns extensively including the history of land ownership.
- **A Mercenary** – skilled with martial weapons, Shoshanna does not object to mercenary work if there is a sufficient righteous angle.
- **An Informant** – Shoshanna has spent years working and operating in the darkness. She has seen secrets and criminality at work. She knows how many of the crime syndicates work and operate.
- **A Progenitor** – Shoshanna can provide quests to other travelers by proxy of the various people she has worked for. She can put different people in contact and **EVEN** accompany them for a small fee.

Long Term Motives

Shoshanna wants to appease her goddess in hopes that Selune will cure her vampirism and restore her humanity. All of her actions are intended to do her goddess honor and are an expression of gratitude for not abandoning her.

Flaws

Aside from a quick temper, Shoshanna has an innate hatred and distrust of anything undead or sympathetic to the undead. She will have difficulty communicating effectively and aligning with party members that challenge these traits.

Shoshanna Opaldawn

Medium humanoid (human), Chaotic Good

Armor Class 16
Hit Points 68 (6d10+18)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15(+2)	16 (+2)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)	12(+1)	9 (-1)

Damage Resistances none
Condition Immunities Disease
Senses darkvision, passive Perception 10
Languages common, undercommon, elfish, Halfling,
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Channel Divinity. Once per long rest, Shoshanna can utilize Channel Divinity to increase the effects from certain actions.

Divine Sense. Shoshanna can use an action to detect good and evil and will be able to identify a celestial, fiend, or undead within 60 ft that isn't entirely behind cover.

Lay on Hands. Shoshanna has a pool of 30 hit points that she can utilize to give hit points to others per long rest.

Great Weapon Fighting. Shoshanna can reroll 1 or 2 damage when wielding either single or two-handed weapons.

Grappling. Advantage on attacks against a creature Shoshanna is grappling.

Actions

Extra attack. Shoshanna can make two attacks per round.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d6 + 2) slashing damage.

Battleaxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Silence

By Anthony J. Turco
Art: provided by Wizards of the Coast

Silence is a warforged, but you couldn't tell by looking at her. Created as a prototype, her body of living composite materials can shift, allowing her to appear as anyone. Silence was trained to be a deadly assassin, and was used by her creator to eliminate rivals, until she failed to kill one last target…

Background

During the Last War, House Cannith was experiencing unprecedented prosperity. Coin was flowing into the Dragonmarked House's coffers as nations on all sides of the war bought weapons from them.

The nation of Cyre, the Jewel of Galifar, was their best customer. Unlike other nations that could rely on superiority in arcane warfare, manpower, or intelligence assets, Cyre relied on its mint. With more gold than any other nation, Cyre purchased more warforged than its enemies, and many a Cannith artificer was commissioned by Cyran generals and nobles to create warforged that could perform specific functions.

Baron Sevrin d'Cannith was one such artificer, commissioned by Cyre's spymaster to create a line of warforged capable of completing the blackest of operations. These warforged should be expendable, but exceedingly skilled. Early attempts at creating such clandestine agents revolved around trimming down the bulky frame of standard warforged and providing them with regimen of stealth training. Sevrin was the first to make the breakthrough in morphic body construction.

His first successful prototype was birthed from a *creation forge* like all other warforged, but she was unique. Her fibrous, wood-like body writhed



with her thoughts, rippling to mimic the textures and features of those around her. With time, she was able to control these reflexive changes, and could even mimic the appearance and texture of human skin. She was a brilliant masterpiece. Her only flaw was her complete lack of a voice. Thus, Sevrin named her Silence.

Sevrin d'Cannith saw the potential of his work. With an absolutely loyal agent like her, he had a hidden blade with which to silence all rivals to his ambition... he just needed to hide her existence.

So, he ordered Silence to kill all other artificers on the project, and Cyre's spymaster as well.

Sevrin flourished in his trade, as Silence helped him fulfill his selfish ambition with her blades, that is, until her last mission. Sevrin ordered the death of Baron Merrix d'Cannith

Traveling to Sharn, Silence infiltrated Merrix's estate and stalked her way to his private chambers. When she entered, she found Merrix there, waiting for her. With a simple wave of his finger, he caused Silence to black out.

When she returned to consciousness, she found herself in her natural form. She was seated and unbound, but unable to move. Merrix sat across from her. He called her a marvel, a masterpiece, and told her that Sevrin didn't deserve her., then, he offered her an alternative.

Current Motives

Silence currently works for Merrix d'Cannith. Though she performs many of the same kinds of missions as she did for Sevrin, she is allowed a life of her own when Merrix doesn't have a specific mission for her. He has set her up with an identity. Silence lives in Sharn and she has joined the Deathsgate Adventuring guild.

Silence can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A rival** – while out on a quest with the Deathsgate Adventuring guild, Silence and her party of cutthroats find themselves after the same mcguffin that the PCs seek for themselves.
- **An enforcer** – If the PCs run afoul of House Cannith, or Merrix d'Cannith personally, they may find themselves stalked and attacked by Silence.
- **A client** – Silence has begun to doubt Merrix's sincerity. Someone has outed her secret identity as a warforged and the small life she has built for herself is in shambles. Worse, she thinks Sevrin might be behind it. With no allies to turn to, she approaches the PCs as a mysterious woman, and silently begs for their aid.

Long Term Motives

While she is enjoying her newfound independence, Silence still feels beholden to Merrix d'Cannith. For the foreseeable future she intends to act as his knife in the dark.

Flaws

For all of her deadly skill and ruthless efficiency, Silence is a bit naïve and far too trusting. She was only created seven years ago, so in some ways she has not yet matured.

Infiltration Mask

Wonderous Item, Rare (requires attunement by a warforged)

This silvered mask looks like a warforged faceplate, but without any eyeholes. When you attune to an infiltration mask, it attaches to your faceplate, concealing your ghulra, eyes, and mouth with a featureless mask. Despite covering your eyes, you can see as normal.

While an infiltration mask is attached, you can use your action to polymorph into any Medium or smaller humanoid or back into your true form. Your statistics, other than your size, are the same in each form. Likewise, any equipment you are carrying or wearing does not change.

Silence

Medium humanoid (warforged), lawful evil

Armor Class 17
Hit Points 112 (15d8 + 45)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (–1)	21 (+5)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +8, Wis +5
Skills Acrobatics +8, Deception +9, Stealth +8
Damage Resistances poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages understands Common but can't speak
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Assassinate. Silence has advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn in combat yet. In addition, any hit she scores against a creature that is surprised is a critical hit.

Cunning Action. On each of her turns, Silence can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Infiltration Unit. Silence can use her action to polymorph into any Medium or smaller humanoid or back into her true form. Her statistics, other than her size, are the same in each form.

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). Silence deals an extra 17 (5d6) damage when she hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally that isn't incapacitated, and she doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Actions

Multiattack. Silence can make four attacks with her daggers, any of which can be ranged or melee.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d4+5) piercing damage.

Reactions

Uncanny Dodge. Silence takes half damage from an attack she can see that hits her.

The Silent Symphony

By Alex Clippinger
Art: Matt Morrow / Purple Duck Games

This small, secretive group is comprised of the finest talents the arts have to offer. Made up of nobles raised with a maximum of cultural appreciation and a minimum of social empathy, the Silent Symphony believes the common folk should be wiped from the face of the world, dreaming of a 'perfect' society where the only population is the cultured and educated noble houses, sustained by the conveniences of magic.

Background

The Silent Symphony was the brainchild of its leader, an intelligent half-orc woman named Vanadur Salieri. Vanadur was on the rise from a young age, destined to become the next great composer of the world.

When her father died attempting to help the lower classes he often neglected his daughter for, Vanadur vowed that her talents would be quieted until only worthy ears could hear them. She vanished from the public eye entirely and began recruiting like-minded individuals who shared her zealous new vision of a world free from the "common rabble." Like her, the members were up-and-coming masters of the arts. Like her, they vanished from the limelight until they could one day accomplish their goal of a perfect society—a society of nobility.

Group Goals

The Silent Symphony's long-term goal is to create a world where the only living, intelligent humanoids are the educated and talented noble class. As unsustainable and insane as this utopia may sound to outsiders, the group's members believe that the power of magic—spells, constructs, items, and so on—would allow this society to provide for itself without 'common people.' Many of the Silent Symphony's inner sanctums and most closely guarded vaults are staffed with deadly magical constructs, which the Symphony finds to be more effective than living guards.

The group has a few main areas of interest in pursuit of its ultimate goal. They fund and pursue thinkers, researchers, and academics to perfect magical and mechanical means of creating their self-sustained utopia. This often includes spells to provide raw food and other materials, as well as perfecting constructs that can serve as servants and soldiers in the absence of other humanoids. They also promote strife between common folk and the nobility, encouraging, and even orchestrating, crime or conflict. They already believe that common people are pests to rid themselves of, and encourage problems that will make it easier to convince their fellow elites to embrace their twisted vision of paradise.

All members of the Silent Symphony are **Bards** (VGtM, p 211)

The Composer

Born to nobleman Anton Salieri, Vanadur was raised by teachers and artisans more than her



own flesh and blood. Anton was a philanthropist, insisting that his talents and riches existed for the betterment of all people. Sadly, he didn't take the time to teach these values to his daughter, who grew to hate the charity that kept him from her side. She dedicated herself to the study of music, believing it would win her father back from his pointless pursuit. She became known as a child prodigy, writing her first symphony at ten. In time, she believed, her father would give her the love she'd been denied.

When Anton Salieri was stabbed to death while attempting to feed the poor, and his body looted by those he'd come to help, Vanadur's young psyche was shattered. The girl's distaste for the common folk blossomed into a burning hatred. Almost overnight she vanished from the public eye, taking her staggering inheritance and remarkable mind out of sight. Taking on the moniker "The Composer," she began formulating plans on how to destroy the people who had taken her father from her. She recruited Avicus Marvane, an elven actor, to be her second-in-command. From there, the two of them recruited the three other core members of the Silent Symphony.

The Actor

The elf Avicus Marvane has spent decades studying theater, fancying himself both actor and



playwright. The depths of his obsession, the untold weeks spent living as other characters, have taken their toll on Avicus' mind. He is unable to see other creatures as anything but characters in a grand play—a play in which he must surely be the star. When he met Vanadur Salieri, he knew he'd finally found the plot he was looking for. Avicus is the *de facto* second-in-command of the

Silent Symphony and the time he spent helping to recruit the other members and assist in the organization's schemes is just his means of scripting the perfect ensemble cast, directing the perfect scenes. When the curtain falls, Avicus Marvane plans to take his bow in front of the entire world.

The Singer

There is no tragic tale of loss or suffering in the history of opera singer Lynette Torpisal; she was



simply raised in hate. Her parents brought her up inoculated from the suffering of peasantry, raised to believe that people outside the social sphere of nobility were something less than humanoid. Though carrying all the charms and grace befitting her station, Lynette's lip still curls at the sight of everyday people living out their dim, meaningless little lives. Her notable distaste caught the eye of Vanadur and Avicus, who made her their first recruit into the Silent Symphony's ranks.

The Musician

Though he was also raised in isolation from broader society, Reginald Pascal's hatred for



commonfolk is not as sharply defined as the other members of the Silent Symphony. Recognized for his talent and resources, Reginald was recruited by his lover, Lynette. As the group's plans accelerate, however, Reginald has begun to feel the first pangs of regret. Still, his breathtaking talent as a pianist and a duelist make him right at home among the Silent Symphony's ranks… for now.

The Dancer and Cicero

Solana Adiphora spent almost a century studying and perfecting dance as she knew it—until an



assault by common street criminals left her legs broken. The imposingly statuesque elven beauty was broken and crippled, her ability to walk, much less dance, in question. She spent years rehabilitating herself, seeking out a reclusive lost tribe who were legendary for their perfect balance and form. She spent another two decades studying under their tutelage, becoming a member of their people and using their teachings to regain her poise. She never forgot the attack that nearly destroyed her life, however, and her cold, measured demeanor brings an almost clinical view to the ranks of the Silent Symphony.

Solana is served by a man named Cicero. Small, withered, and ancient, Cicero is a visual opposite of the beautiful elf he doggedly serves. No one is certain how the two met, or why Cicero is so unflinchingly subservient to Solana. Cicero is shrewd and insightful, often acting as a middleman between the Silent Symphony and their seedier contacts in the criminal world. For the few do-gooders who ever come close to learning of the Silent Symphony's existence, Cicero is often the window through which they catch a glimpse of the larger conspiracy behind.

The Silent Symphony in Waterdeep

Waterdeep is the perfect backdrop for a secret society of nobles and their sinister machinations. The individual members of the Silent Symphony are most likely to be found living in the North Ward or Sea Ward, the more expensive parts of the city. During the day, they might be found practicing or performing their craft in either one of these districts, shopping in the Trades Ward, or wooing other powerful figures in the Castle Ward. The Silent Symphony's members are unlikely to be found in the Southern Ward, as they see the concentration of 'low' folk there unacceptable. The Silent Symphony have knowledge of, and contacts with, all of the major factions in the city—though these factions believe they are just in communication with an assortment of nobles and nothing more

Masks of the Silent

Art: Rick Hershey / Fat Goblin Games

When the five key members of the Silent Symphony all meet, expediency and secrecy are key. To facilitate this, The Composer created five masks, which are carried by their assigned members and worn during the meetings. Anyone attuned to a mask and who is wearing it is connected to other wearers as though by a *telepathic bond* spell, capable of communicating mentally across any distance. Additionally, an attuned wearer can speak the command phrase "silence until salvation" followed by the name of another attuned mask-wearer. This will create a small mental noise in that wearer's mind, as if by the *alarm* spell, notifying them that one or more of the other members wishes to communicate. Finally, the masks prevent the wearer's thoughts from being detected or read by spells and other effects.



Mask of the Actor

Wonderous Item, Rare

The mask of Avicus Marvane. This mask is made from the death mask of a great actor and playwright; small bust figures on the crown depict the creator's most famous characters. Avicus wears it in honor of one of his greatest inspirations.

While wearing the mask, the wearer can impose disadvantage on a creature's saving throw against being charmed twice per day, the wearer can also gain advantage on a Charisma (Performance) or Charisma (Persuasion) check three times a day. Additionally, the wearer can cast dominate person once (DC 16), requiring concentration to maintain.

Expended uses of these features are regained when the wearer completes a long rest.



Mask of the Dancer

Wonderous Item, Rare

Solana Adiphora wears this imposing wooden mask. The mask is a centuries-old artifact from a clan of acrobats and performers, whose lost teachings of balance and form are a coveted holy grail of dancers everywhere.

This mask's wearer can grant themselves advantage on a Dexterity saving throw twice per day, and can grant themselves advantage on a Dexterity (Acrobatics) or Charisma (Performance, dance only) check three times per day. Additionally, once per day, when the wearer succeeds on a Dexterity saving throw against an effect that deals half damage on a successful save, the wearer can choose to take no damage instead.

Expended uses of these features are regained when the wearer completes a long rest.



Mask of the Singer

Wonderous Item, Rare

This mask was the stage prop used in Lynette Torpisal's debut performance on the stage, a tragedy called The Dominion of Owls.

The wearer of the mask can cast the spells shatter (as a 2nd-level spell) and silence once each, and dissonant whispers (as a 1st-level spell) twice, regaining expended uses when they finish a long rest.



Mask of the Musician

Wonderous Item, Rare (requires attunement)

Reginald Pascal's mask is a personal token, an otherwise unremarkable (if expensive) piece that he was wearing the night he met Lynette at a high-society masquerade and fell in love with her. Ever the aching romantic, he insisted it be his mask of choice when she brought him into the fold of the Silent Symphony.

An attuned wearer can grant themselves advantage on up to three Charisma (Performance) checks per day while playing a musical instrument, and are considered proficient in all commonly known instruments.

When a creature wearing this mask takes thunder damage, they can use their reaction to gain resistance to thunder damage until the start of their next turn.

The use of these features is regained when the wearer finishes a long rest.



Mask of the Composer

Wonderous Item, Rare

Some might find it strange that The Composer would wear the mask of a fool—but the Composer would be the first to tell you that she is a fool, indeed. She spent years of her life attempting to educate and uplift the common people, trying to bring them to what she considered her level of intelligence and refinement. She wears the mask of a jester to remind herself never to foolishly think better of the common people ever again. Behind the jester's round-faced smile is the cold gaze of madness. It is its own joke that the mask itself has no additional power.

Snuggles

By Jeff C. Stevens
Artist: Rick Hershey / Fat Goblin Games

Snuggles runs a small-time criminal organization that is known by very few. The canine uses his superior intellect to lead a group of stray dogs, instructing them to infiltrate residences and return with valuables.

Background

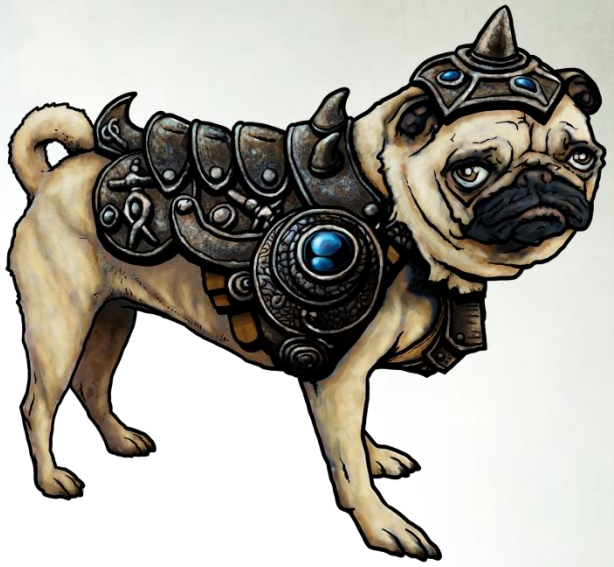
Snuggles was not always Snuggles. He used to be Saravol Tempta, a young and charismatic elvish merchant. Saravol enjoyed the company of women, and he did so without thought of how his 'love them and leave them' attitude affected his many loves.

Saravol's choice in women backfired one day. After flirting with a silk merchant for many weeks, Saravol and the young lady went out and ended the night joyfully. The next morning, Saravol merely waved his hand at the woman, dismissing her.

Unbeknownst to Saravol, the young woman, Alieta Bajourn, was in truth a mystical creature in disguise. Saravol doesn't know exactly what she was, only that she had the ability to change him into a pug – cursed to live like the dog he was for the rest of his days.

Saravol, now a pug, was quickly shooed from the room he had been keeping at a local inn. His wares were easily stolen, and he had no place to live. After a few days on the streets, a young girl took pity on him, picked him up, and took Saravol to her home. She bathed him, fed him, and pampered him, even giving him a collar from an old pet she once had – whose name happened to be Snuggles.

Saravol stayed with the girl for several weeks, until the girl started ignoring him. The newness of



having a pet had worn off and she began to give him less and less attention.

Hurt, Saravol slipped away from the young girl and returned to his life on the streets. There, he met other stray dogs, found he could communicate with them, and then started his criminal organization.

Current Motives

Snuggles currently leads a group of stray canines. Together, they infiltrate residences with their 'puppy-dog' eyes and then steal a few precious items from the home. They also coordinate hit-and-run schemes – tripping up a pedestrian so it drops its handbag, playing dead in the streets, mock-fighting in the streets – all of which are used as diversions while others of the pack steal and loot from the unaware bystanders.
Snuggles can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **An information giver** – If spoken to via *Speak with Animals*, Snuggles can share knowledge that he has gathered. He can still read elvish and Common but cannot speak – unless commanded 😊.

- **A quest giver** – Snuggles has collected an assortment of maps, one of which could be given to the PCs if they are nice to him

and his gang. He could also do this as a diversion, allowing his canine friends the opportunity to pilfer from the adventurers.

- **A villain** – Snuggles' canine cohorts could steal from the adventurers, or they could become such a nuisance in the city that the adventurers are hired to hunt down the corrupt canines.

Long Term Motives

Snuggles wants to return to his life as Saravol; that was his original intent when he started the canine gang. Now, having amassed such a fortune from the thieving acts of his companions, Snuggles can stand being a canine for a while longer, until he has gathered enough wealth to live as a rich man for the rest of his life.

If the curse is lifted, Snuggles reverts back to Saravol, who is very unhappy that his scheme has been foiled early.

Flaws

Snuggles' greed could be his downfall. The more his canines steal, the more they become noticed. Eventually, someone may connect the dots.

Snuggles in Waterdeep

Snuggles and his pack would fit right in prowling the streets of Waterdeep. The Dog House could be placed in the Dock Ward, the Southern Ward, or the Field Ward with ease, but if I were the DM, the North Ward is where the dogs would find their home. Specifically, in the vicinity of Trollskull Alley, there's a perfect little home on the north side of Saerdoun street, right across the street from The Tiger's Eye.

Given such placement, Snuggles and his pack could be well known by the residents of the Alley. Wise dogs know not to poop where they sleep, thus Snuggles would be unlikely to prey upon the residents of the Alley, but if the PCs reopen the tavern, departing drunks might be fair game. Furthermore, it's certainly possible, even likely, that the proprietor of The Tiger's Eye, Vincent Trench, would know the truth about Snuggles, smirking to himself as he sees the pack ply their trade on passers-by.

PCs that discovered the truth about the pack could choose to shut the operation down, or, if puppy kicking isn't their thing, find themselves with a useful new ally.

The Dog House

Snuggles' lair, which he calls The Dog House, is a small, abandoned house that is too rundown for anyone to want it. The main door and windows are boarded and nailed shut. Snuggles and his canine crew enter The Dog House via two small, secret entrances they have created on the north and east sides of the house.

When any dog notices an intruder, it yelps and barks to alert the other canines in the house. Those on the top floor do not join a fight on the 1st floor. Snuggles has instructed them to protect him.

Muddy paw prints of various sizes can be seen on the floors and stairs of the house. A successful **DC 10 Wisdom (Animal Handing)** check reveals the prints are from canines.

The secret entrances and holes in the 2nd level doors are 3-feet-wide and 3-feet-tall.

Area A: The Main Foyer

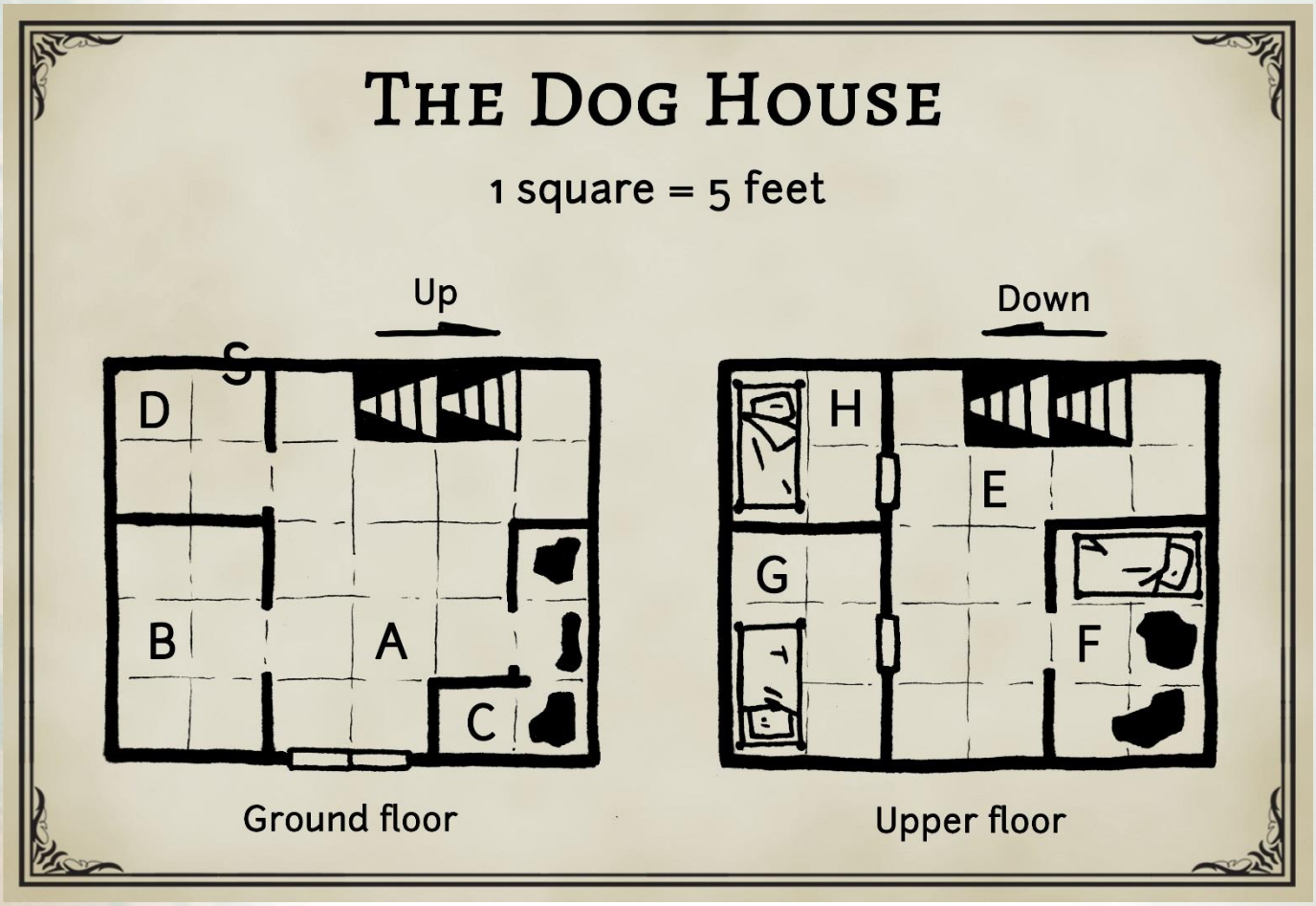
The floor is covered in dirt and garbage, much of which is leftover bones and rotting vegetables the pooches didn't eat. 2 gp and 3 cp can easily be seen scattered on the floor.

Area B: The Kitchen

The room is bare, save for a small table and two overturned chairs. A jar of edible pickled beets can be found in a cupboard along the wall.

Area C: The Water-closet

This was once a water-closet which worked via the city sewer pipes under the house. Now, the original facility is destroyed. Snuggles, wanting some matters cleaned up, had the canines dig and



chew at the floor until they opened this area to the sewage system below. He now insists if a pooch must relieve itself inside, it must do it in this room.

The ceiling of this room, and the room above it, is damaged with several holes, allowing the rain waters to drench this room and flush any material on the floor into the city sewer. It's been a while since the last rain, so the floor is littered with piles of excrement.

Area D: Secret Entrance

One of the secret entrances is in this room. Two small canines and one large canine use this room as a sleeping area. If the house is accessed by the secret entrance in this room, the canines attack while the adventurer attempts to climb through the entrance.

3 sp and 2 ep can be found on the floor.

Area E: Upstairs Foyer

The upstairs foyer is much tidier than the first-floor foyer. Snuggles commands the upstairs be kept as clean as possible. He is human after all.

If the house has been alerted to intruders, the canines from Area D are in the foyer.

Area F: Bedroom

A large hole in the ceiling allows rainwater to flow into the room on the first floor. The bed is usually occupied by 2 large canines and 1d4 + 1 small canine.

If the canines from the 1st floor alerted the house, these dogs wait to attack, allowing those in the foyer to attack first. They join the fight after two rounds of combat.

Area G: Snuggles' Room

The door to the room is closed and locked. Snuggles and the other canines have created a small hole at the bottom of the door which they use to access the room. Picking the lock requires a successful **DC 10 Dexterity** check using thieves' tools. The door may be forced open with a successful **DC 10 Strength (Athletics)** check.

This is Snuggles' room, and it happens to be the cleanest room in the house. Somehow, Snuggles has managed to procure purple satin sheets and large pillows to sleep on.

A small table sits in the northwest corner of the room. Inside the top drawer are several scrolls (a few magical) and maps.

Snuggles isn't a fighter, that's why he trained the other canines. If the adventurers search the house, they find Snuggles hiding under the bed.

Snuggles hoards his treasure under the bed. Along with large amounts of coin and jewelry (350 gp total), there is also a *dagger +1*, two *+1 arrows or crossbow bolts*, and a *potion of healing*.

Area H: Bedroom

The door to the room is closed and locked. Snuggles and the other canines have created a small hole at the bottom of the door which they use to access the room. Picking the lock requires a successful **DC 10 Dexterity** check using thieves' tools. The door may be forced open with a successful **DC 10 Strength (Athletics)** check.

Three small canines and three large canines use this room as their sleeping area. If the canines from the 1st floor alerted the house, these dogs are in the 2nd level foyer (E) and ready to attack any trespasser.

Snuggles

Small beast, Chaotic good

Armor Class 15 *(+1 studded leather armor*)
Hit Points 9 (3d6)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)

Skills Perception +3, Deception +3, Performance +3
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages —
Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. Snuggles has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Pack Tactics. Snuggles has advantage on attack rolls against a creature if at least one of the large canine's allies is within 5 feet of it and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +1 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 (1d4 – 1) piercing damage.

Small Canine

Small beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 3 (1d6)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

Skills Perception +3, Deception +3, Performance +3
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages —
Challenge 0 (10 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The small canine has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Pack Tactics. The small canine has advantage on attack rolls against a creature if at least one of the large canine's allies is within 5 feet of it and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +1 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 (1d4 – 1) piercing damage.

Large canine

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 5 (1d8+1)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

Skills Perception +3, Deception +3, Performance +3, Sleight of Hand +5
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages —
Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Keen Hearing and Smell. The large canine has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Pack Tactics. The large canine has advantage on attack rolls against a creature if at least one of the large canine's allies is within 5 feet of it and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 11 Strength savings throw or be knocked prone.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +1 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 (1d4 – 1) piercing damage.

Tenoch

By: Chris Karelis
Artist: Dean Spencer

Tenoch had always been sickly since the day he was born. He never had the chance to meet his mother, since she died during his birth. Being one of the chief's sons, Tenoch was made to feel ashamed by his father, Baraka, for his lack of strength. Baraka always showed signs that he preferred his other children and would rarely pay attention to Tenoch. When he did, it would be just to mention his sickly state and lack of prowess. The fact that he had to consume medicinal herbs on a daily basis only made things worse.



Background

When Tenoch came of age he was made to take place in the ritualistic duels of his tribe, to please their gods. Though the duels are never fatal, Tenoch would leave every duel defeated, bleeding, and bruised. Finally, he could not take any more shame and abandoned the tribe, moving deep into the forest.

Weeks later, he was at the brink of death because he was unable to find the healing herbs he needed in order to keep his condition stable. So when he found a temple deep in the forest, he thought he was hallucinating.

The temple was old. Vines had entered through cracks on the walls, destroying them in the process, the only thing completely intact was the altar. Tenoch started hearing a whisper coming from the altar, bidding him to move closer. As he reached it, he saw a sword made from bones and teeth lying on the altar, intact and without even a speck of dust staining it. The sword spoke to Tenoch. It promised everything he hadn't had in his entire life - health, strength, and fearlessness. The cost was trivial, just a drop of blood every now and then.

When Tenoch returned to the tribe, the people hardly recognized him. He was taller, muscular, and his eyes were full of bloodlust. He requested to take part in the ritual combat once more. Minutes after combat began, only Tenoch stood. The motionless bodies of the other warriors that took part in the ritual, including his father and brothers, were lying bloodied on the ground.

Tenoch left the village the same day. Not a single being was alive when he did. A voice whispered into his head, asking where the nearest village was, and Tenoch immediately started moving towards its direction.

Current Motives

Tenoch is possessed by an entity found inside his sword. It feeds on blood that seeps through the teeth of the blade. Animal blood hardly satisfies it

anymore. It makes Tenoch move from village to village, posing as a hunter, trying to blend into the group. Once he has gained enough trust, he starts killing his prey, either by making it look like an accident or by creating situations where he can demand combat to the death, in order to uphold his honor. He flees the village if needed, but the best-case scenario is to leave the village completely uninhabited before he leaves.

Tenoch can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A guide** - Tenoch is a skilled tracker and can be hired as a guide. Whether Tenoch attempts to dispose of his customers in order to feed his sword, only the sword knows.

- **A quest giver** - As a hunter, he can ask the adventurers to hunt down a possibly dangerous beast for the community he's currently staying with. This can improve his standing among the community but also give him the chance to feed his blade, if he decides to go along with the party.

- **An honor seeker** - Tenoch can create a situation where he can challenge one of the adventurers to a duel in order to uphold his honor.

- **A victim** - It may be rare, but Tenoch can take control of his body just for a few moments and ask the players for help. This can be combined with any of the above.

Long Term Motives

Tenoch isn't completely lost. He tries to fight the entity, but it has become too strong to defeat it alone. He waits for the right opportunity to regain control of his body. This wasn't what he was promised, and he never wanted to cause harm to anyone. He only wanted to be recognized as an equal by the other members of the tribe.

The entity's goal is to reunite with its initial owner. It can sense where its owner lies waiting but it's too far away to exactly pinpoint its location. Feeding in blood gives it strength to keep control over its host, but also energy to bring its owner back to life when it finds it once more.

Flaws

The sword is sentient but not perfect. When it needs to feed badly it can get sloppy and leave clues or witnesses.

If disarmed, Tenoch desperately tries to get his sword back, with little regard to his surroundings.

Tenoch may also mention memories vividly of other wielders of the sword that have seeped to him through it. These memories can be about something that happened hundreds of years ago, when he wasn't even born.

When the sword hasn't been fed for some time it can get aggressive, affecting the mood of Tenoch significantly, making him easily irritated.

Rapture

Weapon (greatsword), artifact (requires attunement by a creature of non-good alignment)

Hidden at a temple deep inside a forest, Rapture lies there waiting for a suitable host.

Rapture is a magic, sentient longsword that grants a +2 to attack and damage rolls. On a critical hit it deals an extra 1d6 piercing damage.

The sword feeds on blood by dipping its teeth in it. The more it consumes the more powerful it becomes, and the stronger its grip over its wielder becomes. Eventually, it can completely possess the wielder, making them a true host of its spirit.

After the sword has dealt the killing blow to three separate victims, it tries to take control of its wielder. After every long rest, its wielder must make a DC 10 Charisma saving throw. On a successful save, nothing happens. On a failed save, the wielder is dominated by the sword, as if by the *dominate monster* spell, and the sword demands to be fed blood. The DC for the saving throw increases by 1, up to a maximum of 15, for every time it slays a new creature.

Domination. Once dominated, the sword commands its wielder telepathically. Depending on the situation, it may allow the domination to remain hidden by issuing commands when it feels it has the greatest chance to continue the bond. Or, it may issue a command for the weilder to attack its fellow adventurers.

Sentience. Rapture is a sentient, chaotic evil weapon with an Intelligence of 16, a Wisdom of 17, and a Charisma of 19. It has hearing and darkvision out to a range of 120 feet.

The weapon can speak, read, and understand Common, and can communicate with its wielder telepathically.

Personality. The sword's purpose is to reunite with its original owner. It lures possible hosts with the promises of enough power to make their dreams come true. At first it poses as a kind entity who wants to help. As it feeds on blood, however, it regains its power and its real personality rises to the surface. As it starts taking control over its host, it becomes more and more demanding and vicious.

Symbiosis. Once attuned to the sword, you are unwilling to part with it. You are granted +1 to Strength and advantage on Constitution saving throws. The only way to get rid of the sword is by destroying it, having it willingly leave its host, or by being targeted by the *remove curse* spell.

Destroying the Sword. The only way to destroy the sword is by destroying its original owner when they are currently wielding it. If the owner is destroyed, the sword turns to dust. Rumors have it that the original owner is buried in a tomb.

When Rapture is brought within 1 mile of the remains of its original owner, the remains animate, creating a **Revenant** (CR 5, MM, p 259) whose single purpose is to reunite with the sword.

Tenoch

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic eivl

Armor Class 17 (splint)
Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

Skills Athletics +4, Stealth +4, Survival +3, Perception +3
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages Common, Elvish
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Actions

Multiattack. Tenoch makes two greatsword attacks.

Greatsword (Rapture) *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Tu'chuli the Voiceless

By Christopher Walz
Artist: Gary Dupuis / Purple Duck Games

Tu'chuli is an exiled celestial found wandering jungles and tropical archipelagos. He steals the voices of bards, politicians, and other wordsmiths in an attempt to sate his desire to find his own voice.

Background

Tu'chuli was a servant of Ubtao, a primordial turned deity known as The Creator of Chult and The Deceiver. Tu'chuli, a beautiful multicolored bird, was the distant god's voice to the Chultan people, often carrying messages to and from the god and his faithful on the jungle island. The shamans and druids who dealt with Tu'chuli often exclaimed that he was a consummate trickster, forcing priests to chase him through the jungles while creating illusionary tricks.

Tu'chuli, who removed himself from greater cosmic struggles, however, was deceived by a cult of Sseth, a yuan-ti god and eternal enemy of Ubtao. The messenger was captured and subjected to vile torture at the hands of the emotionless yuan-ti. Eventually, the messenger whispered Ubtao's secrets, earning his freedom - or so he thought.

Upon returning, the god was infuriated by the betrayal. Ubtao tore out Tu'chuli's exquisite voice and threw it deep below the earth, imprisoning it in a maze of earth and fire. The god cast out Tu'chuli, exiling him forever to the Prime Material Plane, devoid of his most prized possession.

Sages dispute how Tu'chuli learned to steal voices. Some say he flew deep into the Abyss and made a deal with a Demon Lord, others say he trained with a powerful kenku sorcerer in Kara-Tur. Tu'chuli, however, has returned to Chult to search for his own voice in defiance of his former master.



Placing Tu'Chuli

The backstory presented here assumes you are using the Forgotten Realms setting, but you can easily change details like the god Tu'chuli served and the lands in which he is found to fit any world. If you are using *Tomb of Annihilation*, he makes a great encounter for either Port Nyanzaru or the jungles!

Current Motives

Tu'chuli is currently tracking down information on where Ubtao hid his voice and searching for allies to help him secure it. He has allied with Herophilos, an evil **cloud giant** (CR 9; MM, p 154), and is using his dilapidated cloud-borne estate as a lair (see below).

Tu'chuli can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **An informant** - Tu'chuli knows much about Ubtao, the inhabitants of Mezro, and the spiritual workings of Chult. He can be convinced to give up valuable information for help in his quest.

- **A villain** - Tu'chuli might steal a famous actor's voice just before opening night or send a shaman on a chase through the jungles, leading to their death. The characters, of course, must investigate!

- **A quest giver** - Tu'chuli is looking for allies to help him hunt down his voice. Hearing of the characters' deeds, he approaches them. If they need persuading, Tu'chuli uses his enchantment magic or even ransoms their voices.

- **A guide** - Tu'chuli has perfect recollection of the jungles. He can guide the characters wherever they wish to go, if they are willing to help him.

Long Term Motives

Tu'chuli's long term goal is to reclaim his voice from Ubtao's maze and hinder the god's obscure plans in Chult. He might disrupt Chultan rituals or send charmed and dominated minions against The Creator of Chult's worshippers. Tu'chuli knows he is not a stout combatant and relies on allies more than his own abilities. He is likely to leave his own followers - including the characters! - to die if it furthers his goals.

Flaws

Tu'chuli has two major exploitable flaws: his obsession over finding his voice and profound vanity. He will go to any lengths to obtain more information about his voice or secrets he can use against Ubtao or his followers, including endangering himself. He is also incredibly vain in regard to both his appearance and abilities as a trickster. If he is made to look like a fool, Tu'chuli becomes flustered and angry, fleeing to brood in his own malice.

Tu'chuli's Lair

Tu'chuli has allied with Herophilos, a down-and-out cloud giant who resides in his ruined manor high above Chult. The cloud giant was a minor lord in the Ordning before the Spellplague, which caused many of the Chultan cloud giant cities to fall from the sky. Devoid of serf labor, his estate has fallen to decay.

Herophilos' estate floats 4,000 feet above ground - reaching the lair might be an entire adventure in itself! The cloud is enchanted with cloud giant magic, solidifying it while retaining its ability to float above ground. Natural winds lower than galeforce are unable to move the cloud, but Herophilos can direct it using *control weather*.

Upon the estate's completion, Herophilos commissioned a cloud giant wizard to summon and bind an **air elemental** (CR 5; MM, p 124) as a guardian. The elemental patrols around the cloud at all times and will attack intruders on sight. It cannot travel more than 200 feet from the cloud at any time.

The entire estate is built with giants, particularly cloud giants, in mind. The walls are 40 feet tall and furniture is so large that it requires Small or Medium characters to take an action and succeed on a **DC 10 Strength (Athletics)** check to climb. Interior doors require a **DC 12 Strength** check to open due to their huge size. Simply moving through the estate should be difficult for the characters.

Area 1

The outer walls are made from 2-foot thick marble (AC 17, 40 HP per 10-foot by 10-foot section). They are 40 feet tall. The single gate along the northern wall depicts two large gilded lions. The gold paint has chipped away, revealing a much cheaper bronze underneath. A character who inspects the gate and succeeds on a **DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation)** check realizes they are poorly maintained and will fall if pushed open.

The gate is unlocked but requires a successful **DC 15 Strength** check to open. If the gate is pushed open and falls, it alerts the creatures in Area 2.

Area 2

The courtyard once contained beautiful marble, jade, and obsidian statues, but has fallen to ruin. 5 **lions** (CR 1; MM, p 331) prowl the courtyard at all times. They attack anyone not accompanied by Tu'chuli or Herophilos.

Area 3

The reinforced wood doors (AC 15, 30 HP) to the estate are locked. Herophilos carries the giant-sized key on him at all times. The lock can be opened with a successful **DC 15 Dexterity** check using thieves' tools, but the check is made with disadvantage unless the creature attempting the check is Large or larger. They can be forced open with a successful **DC 18 Strength** check, causing enough noise to alert any creature inside the estate house.

In the middle of the foyer is a large statue of Herophilos, thick with dust and grime. Rubies and sapphires still glint on the statue's fingers. Beautiful giant-sized paintings depicting floating cities hang lopsided on the walls. If a character succeeds on a **DC 16 Dexterity** check using thieves' tools, they can remove a ruby worth 150 gp and a sapphire worth 100 gp from the statue. The paintings could be invaluable to the right collector, but are 20-feet wide and 10-feet tall, making them difficult to move without magical assistance.

Area 4

Both of the western rooms were parlors used to entertain visitors. They contain moldy giant-sized furniture and long-forgotten plates and goblets.

Area 5

This room is completely enclosed in what was once beautiful stained-glass windows. Now, the glass is thick with grime, causing the windows to cast eerie shadows throughout the sunroom. If the characters spend 10 minutes searching the room and succeed on a **DC 15 Investigation (Intelligence)** check, they find a *wind fan* tucked into a giant-sized discarded cloak.

Area 6

A hill giant slave used to operate this kitchen for Herophilos. Large casks of wine in the cellar below have turned to vinegar, filling the area with a caustic smell.

Area 7

The dining room is dominated by a huge oaken table lined with 8 equally large chairs. The seat of each chair is 15 feet above the ground and the tabletop 5 feet above the chairs. One of the dinner plates on the table is actually a *shield +1*. Herophilos took this from an ill-fated giant hunter years ago and has been unable to resize it to his body. He finds humor in eating from the dead knight's shield.

Area 8

This large hall was used to host poetry readings and other performances meant to impress visitors. If the characters spend 10 minutes searching the dust addled room and succeed on a **DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation)** check, they find a huge scroll of poetry written in Giant. A portion of the scroll is actually a *spell scroll of enthrall*. The scroll is 12 feet long and weighs 50 pounds.

Area 9

These rooms are Tu'chuli's domain. They were once guest bedrooms, but the exiled celestial has had the furniture removed, clearing the way for his hoard of gem-like eggs (see *Steal Voice* in Tu'chuli's stat block, below) and other treasures. He allows several Chultan plants to grow wild throughout the rooms, reminding him of the land he loves.

If the characters spend 10 minutes searching the rooms, they find: a small chest containing 72

pp, 328 gp, and 452 sp, a spell component pouch containing a diamond worth 300 gp and a *pearl of power*, and 2d10 gem-like eggs. Each egg is worth 25 gp to a collector or a fortune to the poor soul whose voice it contains.

Area 10

Tu'chuli nests on the western balcony where he watches for intruders and obsessively cares for his treasures. If he senses the characters and believe they plan to harm him or steal his treasure, he attempts to summon Herophilos (*see area 10*) for assistance. Tu'chuli tries to trick the characters into chasing him around the floating estate using his illusions. His favorite tactic is to make the solid cloud appear to extend beyond its reach and laugh as his enemies plummet to their death.

Area 11

Herophilos (**cloud giant**; CR 9; MM, p 154) is found in these rooms. The northern room is a den with a balcony exit overlooking the estate's grounds. The middle room is a library containing a small collection of giant-sized books. The southern room is the giant's bedroom and personal chambers.

Unless he senses the characters or hears the sounds of combat, Herophilos stays here. If attacked, he will try to kill the largest, most heavily armed character first as a sign of his power. Afterwards, he tries to make the characters surrender, hoping to win slaves to serve him in his forgotten estate.

Herophilos wields a *mace of terror*, which resizes to a Small or Medium creature upon attunement. Use the same damage for the cloud giant's morningstar attack, but add the *mace of terror* action to his stat block:

Mace of Terror

Weapon (mace), very rare (requires attunement)

This magic weapon has 3 charges. While holding it, you can use an action and expend 1 charge to release a wave of terror. Each creature of your choice in a 30-foot radius extending from you must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened of you for 1 minute. While it is Frightened in this way, a creature must spend its turns trying to move as far away from you as it can, and it can't willingly move to a space within 30 feet of you. It also can't take reactions. For its action, it can use only the Dash action or try to escape from an effect that prevents it from moving. If it has nowhere it can move, the creature can use the Dodge action. At the end of each of its turns, a creature can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success.

The mace regains 1d3 expended charges daily at dawn.

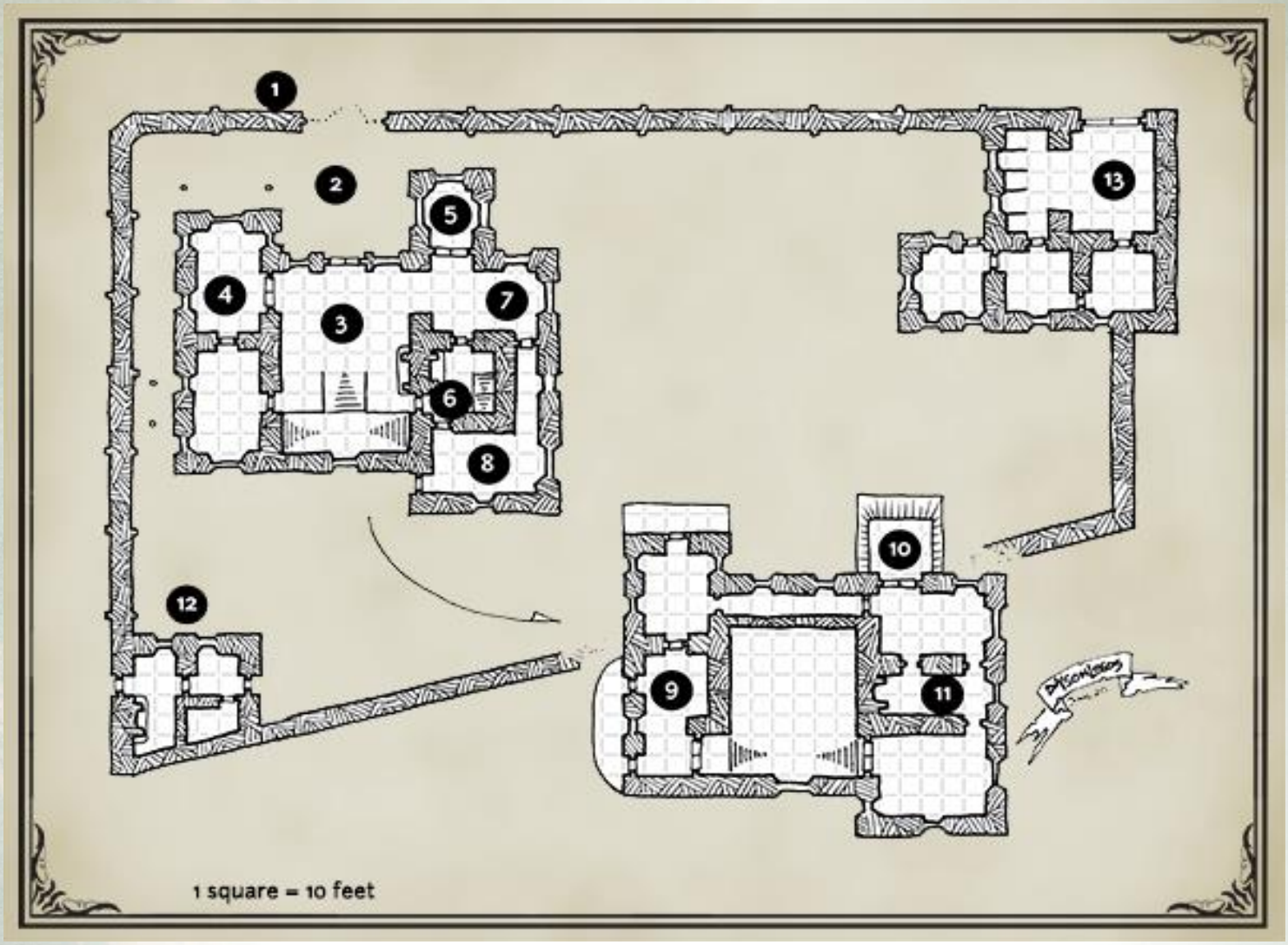
Herophilos also wears 3 giant-sized golden rings, each worth 100 gp. They are 2 feet in diameter and weigh 10 pounds each. He also wears a gem-studded silver necklace worth 450 gp. It is 6 feet long and weighs 40 pounds.

Area 12

This small outbuilding was once the groundskeeper and cook's house. They were both hill giants who served Herophilos in hopes of earning favor in the Ordning. They have long since died. The building is in terrible disrepair and stinks of hill giant filth.

Area 13

This was once a carriage house of sorts where visiting cloud giants would allow their prized flying beasts and servants to stay while Herophilos entertained. The large double doors leading into the carriage house are locked and require a **DC 15 Dexterity** check using thieves' tools, but the check is made with disadvantage unless the creature attempting the check is Large or larger. They can be forced open with a successful **DC 18 Strength** check.


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Dragonbone
1 square = 10 feet

Tu'chuli the Voiceless

Tiny celestial, neutral evil

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 58 (13d8)
Speed 10 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
4 (-3)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Wis +5, Cha +7
Skills Arcana +5, Deception +11, Insight +5, Investigation +5, Perception +5, Performance +11, Persuasion +11, Stealth +7
Damage Resistance radiant; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15
Languages All (when using a voice), telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Keen Sight. Tu'chuli has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Innate Spellcasting. Tu'chuli's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). Tu'chuli can innately cast the following spells, requiring only verbal components.

At will: *detect magic, friends, locate object, silent image, vicious mockery,*
3/day each: *charm person, invisibility* (self only)*, major image, phantasmal force, sending*
1/day each: *confusion, dominate person, hallucinatory terrain, mass suggestion, mirror image, phantasmal killer*
1/week: *maze*

Magic Resistance. Tu'chuli has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Voiceless. Tu'chuli is mute unless he has stolen a voice (see Steal Voice, below). He cannot cast spells with verbal components or speak command words without a voice.

Actions

Beak. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage and the target must make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or fall unconscious until the end of their next turn. The target wakes up if it takes damage or if another creature takes an action to shake it awake.

Steal Voice (Recharge 5-6). Tu'chuli can steal the voice from a creature within 60 feet of him. The target must make a DC 16 Charisma saving throw or become mute. A mute target cannot speak, cast spells with verbal components, or use items that require a command word. Tu'chuli can use the stolen voice for 24 hours, losing his Voiceless trait (see above).

At the end of the 24 hours, Tu'chuli produces a gem-like egg that contains the voice. Tu'chuli cannot use the voice again, but its original owner can reclaim their voice by spending an action while touching the gem. The gem cracks and turns to ash if the voice is reclaimed.

Steal Voice Variant

Tu'chuli's ability to steal voices and hoard them indefinitely can change the course of your campaign. A bard, wizard, or a host of other characters without a voice are severely crippled. If you want to reduce the impact of Tu'chuli's signature ability, add a duration of 1d4 x 24 hours to Steal Voice, after which the voice returns to the original owner. In this variant ability, Tu'chuli still produces a gem-like egg, as a memento of the voice he stole.

Ulrike the Booyahg Booyahg Booyahg

By Travis Legge
Artist: Daniel Comerci

Ulrike the Booyahg Booyahg Booyahg considers himself to be a true player in the underworld at the precipice of constructing a formidable syndicate of thieves and henchmen. A wild magic sorcerer who deserted his tribe during a raid on a halfling farmstead, Ulrike is a man seeking to reinvent himself through crime and mischief. He is also a man on the run, for if his former tribe ever catches up with him, they will make him pay for abandoning them on the field of battle.



Background

Ulrike was born 10 years ago to a tribe of goblins who wander the coastal region raiding settlements and terrorizing travelers. Ulrike was born to parents of the pariah caste. His father, Krekurd, was tasked with the maintenance and creation of latrines. His mother, Crul, was in charge of the feeding and care of the tribe's beasts. One day while aiding his father in rerouting a latrine which had been mistakenly dug too close to the tribe's drinking water, young Ulrike slipped and fell into the muck. Crying and screaming as the oozy refuse got into his eyes and nose, Ulrike began thrashing. Sparkles of light danced in the air around him and he suddenly became totally clean. His father's cries of, "booyahg" called the rest of the tribe over. When the goblin boss saw what had happened, he invited the young sorcerer to join the hunters for meals and training.

Ulrike was not a particularly adept combatant, but years of avoiding bullying from bigger goblins had taught him to be quick and sneaky. The boss saw potential for Ulrike to act as a flanker, sneaking in behind enemies and frightening them with his "powerful" displays of magic. When Ulrike voiced concerns about facing enemies by himself the boss assured him that the targets of their raids would be too frightened to fight back.

The first raid Ulrike attended, he did as he was told. As the goblins attacked a halfling farm, Ulrike snuck up behind the halflings. He then sprung up out of hiding, screaming "booyahg booyahg booyahg!" One of the halfling farmers promptly spun around and shot Ulrike in the arm with a crossbow. Ulrike screamed and ran away. While the other goblins fought the halflings, Ulrike ran into the house to hide and nurse his wound. While inside he found a purse with 25 gold in it, which he stole. He then grabbed a bandage and wrapped his arm as he ran away from the property.

Now, as a deserter, Ulrike is seeking a new life among the criminal elements of the city. He knows just enough to get himself and his hirelings into big trouble. Ulrike could potentially be a powerful enemy or ally, but for the moment he is little more than a nuisance.

Current Motives

Ulrike is presently testing the region's security and mercenary stock. He is looking for a place that is easy to pillage but plentiful in wealth. It has not occurred to Ulrike that such a place would have already been pillaged, but many things escape the goblin's attention.

In order to find the most skilled henchmen, Ulrike has taken to hiring local mercenaries (typically commoners and bandits who are down on their luck) to use as his own "elite squad" of accomplices. Once he has hired three or four such underlings, Ulrike sets about a caper of some sort. He prefers to rob stationary targets such as businesses and homes, as the road is far less predictable with travelers and adventurers milling about.

Ulrike can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **An employer.** Ulrike might hire the adventurers to "liberate a valuable treasure" from a "dangerous location." Only when they arrive at the target does the party realize that they have been hired to help with a simple robbery. Will they stay the course, or turn on their employer?

- **Comic relief.** Though Ulrike can certainly be played as a serious, even tragic antagonist, there is fertile ground for comedy with the goblin sorcerer. He can be introduced to lighten the campaign amid otherwise dark material.

- **Long-term nemesis.** Ulrike may appear in a campaign as an ongoing source of mischief and mayhem. His penchant for abandoning his subordinates in times of danger and trouble means that he is likely to escape when the players foil his plots, only to return later with a new scheme.

- **Informant.** Ulrike's cowardice can become an asset to an adventuring party. If they can threaten him in a credible way they can get almost anything out of him. With Ulrike's desire to become involved in the criminal underworld he may have access to useful information that the party can extract from him through coercion or bribery.

Long Term Motives

Ulrike hopes to one day amass enough wealth to purchase a plot of land and a noble title. He has no idea whatsoever how to go about such a purchase, what sort of nation or city (if any) would allow a goblin to even own land, let alone a title, or any other practical aspect of this goal. He heard a drunken human with "very shiny armor" speak of making such a purchase once and thought that it sounded like a brilliant idea.

Flaws

Ulrike, for all his bluster, is a coward. His cowardice cost him his position with his tribe and has foiled his every scheme since striking out on his own. On a number of occasions Ulrike has actually had the upper hand in an attempted plot but was scared off by an adventurer or guard with a steely gaze and a particularly frightening threat. If Ulrike thinks there is even a chance that he might come to any real harm he will abandon his current scheme, as well as his fellow schemers.

Ulrike

Small humanoid (goblin), lawful evil

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)

Skills Deception +5, Insight +4, Intimidation +5, Stealth +6
Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Common, Goblin
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Spellcasting. Ulrike is a 5th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks.) He has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): blade ward, light, mage hand, prestidigitation, true strike, resistance, thorn whip
1st level (4 slots): chromatic orb, magic missile, shield
2nd level (3 slots): misty step, spider climb
3rd level (2 slots): counterspell

Sorcery Points. Ulrike has 5 sorcery points, which he may use to create a spell slot (PHB) or with the below Metamagic options:

Empowered Spell. When Ulrike rolls damage for a spell, he can spend 1 sorcery point to reroll up to +2 of the dice. He must use the new rolls and he can use this option even if he has already used another Metamagic option.

Heightened Spell. When Ulrike casts a spell that forces a creature to make a saving throw, he can spend 3 sorcery points to give one target of the spell disadvantage on its first saving throw made against the spell.

Fury of the Small. Once per short rest, Ulrike can deal 5 extra damage to a creature with a size larger than his.

Nimble Escape. Ulrike can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of his turns.

Tides of Chaos. Once per long rest, Ulrike can gain advantage on one attack roll, ability check, or saving throw. Before he regains use of this feature, the DM can have him roll on the Wild Magic Surge table after he casts a 1st level or higher spell. He then regains the use of this feature.

Wild Magic Surge. Once per turn, if Ulrike casts a spell of 1st level or higher, roll a d20. If the result is a 1, roll on the Wild Magic Surge table to create a magical effect.

Actions

Multiattack. Ulrike makes two melee attacks with his daggers.

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Reactions

War Caster. Ulrike can use his reaction to make an opportunity attack to cast a spell that has a casting time of 1 action against a hostile creature leaving his reach.

Velen "Viper" Raddlemark

By: Micah Watt
Artist: Dean Spencer

"I have traversed the wildest jungles, the highest peaks and the darkest caves. There's nowhere a man can go that I haven't been.

There are treasures in the deep places, if you know where to look. I know where to look. I have a proposition for you if you think you are tough enough to keep up…"



Background

Velen is a hardened survivalist, spelunker and adventurer that delves ancient tombs for both the challenge and the wealth, and lives by the creed "survival of the fittest."

He was raised in Baldur's Gate, the son of a moderately successful merchant. His childhood was average by any standards, and while his family lived a modest life, the home was filled with warmth. That was not enough for Velen. It was too *average*, too mundane. Secretly in his heart the child burned to stand out, to throw off mediocrity. He saw his father's affable nature and his mother's contentment as weakness. It ate at him constantly, that they could be so…apathetic.

As he matured, he sought out ways to test himself. Lifting more and working longer than the other hands around the warehouse. He provoked fights with neighborhood children, then local youth gangs, then finally street thugs. He found himself arrested as much as lauded for his efforts. His worried parents sought to turn his interest to becoming a watchman or joining the militia, but that was too *pedestrian* for the driven youth.

He began ranging the nearby woods, climbing and spelunking in local caves. He crafted spear and traps, hunting, at first, smaller beasts like wolverine and badgers, then advancing to wolves and larger prey. An ill-fated encounter with a bear left him near death, with only the intervention of a passing group of adventurers saving his life. Far from grateful, he was incensed that his opportunity to prevail, even over death itself, was taken from him. As well as planting the seed of contempt for 'adventurers', it was the catalyst for his final step into self sufficiency. After his recovery he ventured forth into the wilderness, seeking greater challenges to rise to, defying the world to defeat him.

Velen can be a valuable ally and companion, but is arrogant, selfish, and not afraid to sacrifice companions that are – in his estimation - too weak to save themselves.

Velen is no arch villain with a tragic history or ambitions for dominance – save dominance over any and all challenges the savage world has to offer.

Current Motives

Velen has spent many years as an explorer, traveler, and survivalist. He loathes the word 'adventurer' seeing it as title too many pretenders apply to themselves. He sees it as his responsibility to weed the weak from the ranks, to expose the posers. He intentionally seeks out opportunities to guide or join groups, then leads them through the harshest of trials, allowing the weak to die out and those with promise to achieve their potential.

When he chooses to do so, Velen presents himself as quite charming, with a friendly demeanor and a ready smile. It is only once he and his companions are away from civilization that his driven nature and callous indifference begin to show.

Velen can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A Guide**– when the party seeks to traverse wild or unknown lands Velen can be hired as a guide.
- **An Employer** – Velen has acquired a treasure map, rumor, or scrap of lore leading to a potential treasure in a harsh or dangerous environment. He seeks allies to share the burden of the adventure (really, he seeks dupes, fools, and body shields to lead to their deaths - or their potential greatness).
- **A Rival** – Adventurers may find Velen in competition with them for a treasure, or to find or reach a place, item, or individual. He will only be encountered where the route or task presents a genuine life-threatening challenge.

Long Term Motives

Until recently Velen had few future goals beyond continuing to seek greater and greater challenges for himself. However, following a treasure map he discovered, he was ambushed by a cunning troll. The exchange was vicious, ending with Velen falling from a cliff into a river. Both Velen and the troll were sorely wounded. When Velen returned, the troll had moved on, leaving no discernible trail. Velen suspects there is more to the beast than a chance meeting, and is determined to seek out the creature and exact revenge.

Flaws

Velen is arrogant and underestimates his targets on occasion. He expects weakness, and thus is susceptible to ploys where his companions or opponents feign weakness (he has disadvantage to perceive these deceptions).

Velen respects strength, resilience and resourcefulness. He may come to grudgingly respect any adventurers who can meet his exacting standards.

Velen in Waterdeep

Given Velen's love of deadly challenges, if he were to visit Waterdeep he would be drawn to the Yawning Portal with an eye toward exploring the Dungeons of the Mad Mage. PCs might encounter him in Durnan's tavern, challenging others to survival games within the dungeon. Or, they might encounter him within the Undermountain itself, daring the party to show their mettle running some deadly gauntlet therein.

Velen "Viper" Raddlemark

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

Armor Class 17 (chain shirt, shield)
Hit Points 133 (14d10+56)
Speed 30 ft. (not impeded by natural *difficult terrain*)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +8, Dex +7
Skills Athletics +8, Deception +7, Nature +7, Perception +6, Stealth +7, Survival +6
Senses passive Perception 16
Languages Common, Goblin, Giant.
Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Favored Enemy. Velen has Advantage on Wisdom (survival) checks to track Humans, Goblins, Beasts and Giants. He also has advantage on Intelligence checks to recall information.

Relentless Endurance. When Velen is reduced to 0 hit points he drops to 1 hit point instead. He can only use this ability once per long rest.

Vanish. Velen can take the hide action as a bonus action on his turn and can't be tracked by non-magical means.

Slay the Weak. Velen deals an additional 1d8 damage to any creature he hits that is below its hit point maximum. He can deal this damage only once per turn.

Spellcasting. Velen is a 14th level ranger spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 15, +6 to hit)
1st level (4 slots): goodberry, hunter's mark, longstrider
2nd level (3 slots): darkvision, pass without trace
3rd level (3 slots): nondetection, water breathing
4th level (1 slot): freedom of movement

Actions

Multiattack. *Velen makes three melee attacks: 2 with his longsword and 1 with his dagger, or two ranged attacks with his longbow*

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft. one target. Hit: 9 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage**.**

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. Hit 5 (1d4+3) slashing damage and 2 (1d4) fire damage.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage**.**

Reactions

Uncanny Dodge. Velen halves the damage that he takes from an attack that hits him. Velen must be able to see the attacker.

Treasure. Velen carries "Cinder" a magical dagger that glows red hot when drawn and deals an additional 1d4 fire damage on a hit.

Tactics. Velen uses his spells to enhance his own abilities, to hide, to travel, and and use the terrain to lure and hunt prey on his terms.

When testing adventurers, he seeks to find a dangerous environment (water, quicksand, narrow cliff ledges) to weaken, separate, and individually pick off the members of the group.

Vestian Cicatrix

By Garin Jones
Artist: Claudio Casini

The Vestian Cicatrix is an elite hunter with razor sharp focus and unsurpassed will. Targets rarely escape the Cicatrix without some scar in which to remember it by.



Background

Seeking to flee a war-torn nation, some 500 meek Vestian people followed a powerful wizard that could tear a hole in the fabric of space. Skipping between planes, they sought a new land where peace could be an option, but the road was unpaved and proved perilous. Stepping into a wasteland that burned under a malevolent sun, the Vestians were set upon by native beasts and in a flash a quarter of their number were slain, including the wizard. Without his power they had no means of leaving this horrible place and were forced to survive by increasingly desperate means.

Once farmers, they were forced to become hunters in a world of predators each more vicious than the last. Nothing was easy prey and the Vestians quickly learned, through more losses, the penalties of misjudging their targets. Despite these threats, the far greater enemy of this new home proved to be the sun itself.

Even a few minutes out in the day would have severe impact on the Vestian's creamy skin. After a few generations their pale complexion turned smokey. If it wasn't for the hardy denizens of the land, including vegetation that could live without water for months, the people would have died off completely. Instead they were able to adapt.

Their skin became hard and purple, scar tissue that still supported blood flow and could even turn away the teeth and claws of the beasts that hounded them each day. This came along with a hardening of the people too, shaping the Vestians into resolute killers led by their chieftain, known as the Cicatrix.

When travelers from the material plane found these wastes, they were met with the same ferocity that the Vestians were some many centuries ago. Only this time, the attack was coordinated by these purple humanoids, seeing the soft alien flesh of the newcomers as a viable target.

The travelers proved too much for the Vestians, but just barely. Rather than destroying them entirely, they saw opportunity in these unique people and, through parlay with the current Cicatrix, they convinced the Vestians to return with them back to their world. While some of the

Vestians sought to return to a peaceful existence, with mixed success, the hunters found plenty of new prey in the new world.

Each generation, one hunter is bestowed the name Cicatrix to represent their strength both inside and out. The Cicatrix will spend their life taking on the fiercest challenges, be they personal accomplishment or a hunt in which they were employed. The Cicatrix still uses stone daggers created back in that horrid plane that shaped the Vestians, and always knows the best place to stick them.

Current Motives

The Vestian Cicatrix moves through their life pursuing one singular focus at a time much in the way they would pursue prey. While the outcome isn't always violent, they never waver in their determination in order to accomplish it.

The Vestian Cicatrix can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **An assassin.** One hired to kill one or more members of the party.
- **A stranger.** Perhaps met in the wild, while pursuing some creature native to that area. This can be a hostile encounter depending on whether or not the Cicatrix believes the party to be after their prey.
- **A prisoner.** Captured by an elite group of guards while trying to assassinate someone of notoriety. With the proper coaxing the Cicatrix could be swayed to give details on who hired them.
- **An injured Cicatrix.** This incarnation of the Cicatrix failed a hunt and wishes to inform the next in line that it is their turn to take up the mantle. Having a Cicatrix owe you gratitude can prove valuable.

Long Term Motives

Each generational Cicatrix establishes an ultimate hunt in their life when they take up the mantle. This target is normally a creature of great power beyond their own, in order to push themselves past their limits. So, while a party may encounter a Cicatrix hunting down just an owlbear, they are looking far beyond that hunt to possibly the green dragon that resides in those woods.

Flaws

The generations spent in the wasted plane left marks on the Vestians that can never be shed. They remain sheltered in their beliefs and understandings of the world. They will learn only the necessary information to complete their tasks and can be considered naive by most standards. By this measure, they could be easy to deceive. Their other flaw goes hand in hand as if they do uncover deceit, their rage will practically blind them to all other paths but revenge.

Vestian Cicatrix

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 124 (10d10 + 18)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	8 (-1)	15 (+2)	8 (-1)

Saves Con +5, Dex +6
Skills Perception +4, Stealth +6, Survival +4
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages Common, Vestian
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Hunter's Imprint. After observing a creature for 1 minute, The Vestian Cicatrix knows where it is within 1 mile and has advantage on all Wisdom (Survival) checks to track it beyond 1 mile.

Otherworldly Stamina. The Vestian Cicatrix can go days without food, water, or rest and doesn't incur a level of exhaustion until it finishes its fifth consecutive day without rest.

New in Town. The Vestian Cicatrix has disadvantage on skill checks and saving throws related to local customs and laws.

Wounding Critical. The Vestian Cicatrix is a skilled fighter and knows how to wound its prey. On a critical hit, the target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or suffer one level of exhaustion, causing disadvantage on ability checks. A creature cannot suffer exhaustion again in this manner until it completes a long rest.

Actions

Multiattack. Vestian Cicatrix makes three attacks with its stone dagger.

Stone Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

Voolya

By: Beatriz Dias
Art: Dean Spencer

"The weak are meat, and the strong do eat."

A ruthless fighter, Voolya respects strength and strength alone. To gain that respect she will do anything to win a fight. There is no trick, no backstabbing, no lie dirty enough for her. Victory is all that matters, and the weak must subject themselves to the winner. Voolya is the leader of the Shifting Sands gang, a group of bandits that prowls the desert in search of victims to rob and force into slavery.



Background

She was born without a name, marked as just another slave of a desert merchant. However, she was unlike other slaves, she didn't cower, but she didn't plan escape either. Flonos may be a brutal master, but he was stronger than her, and because of that, she obeyed, but not for long. The slave trained hard, harder than anyone else around her, those who conformed into their life or just wanted to run away from it were disgraces to the girl's eyes. This slave girl was not running away, and she would not conform.

One day, just like any other, Flonos was ordering the slaves to carry out some stock. The slave girl was handed some weapons, and then everything changed. She grabbed a small knife and threw it directly at Flonos' throat, then she grabbed a curved sword, stood up on a crate and proclaimed:

"From now on my name is Voolya, and I'm the leader of this caravan! Anyone who thinks they're better can come and fight me, everyone else... kneel."

And so they did, she killed a lot of the fat, lazy guards that Flonos had hired, but most of them ran away, not willing to fight someone so deadly.

A lot of the slaves ran away as well. Some of them stayed, mostly because they were scared. Later, this was how Voolya claimed she was born, covered in blood and surrounded by people kneeling to her. She liked that feeling.

Soon, the trading caravan shifted its focus to a full on bandit gang. Voolya didn't buy anything, she demanded it, because she was strong, stronger than any of the wimpy merchants that dared to approach her group.

Current Motives

Voolya is roaming the desert with her group of followers, looking for other caravans or gangs to crush into submission.

Voolya can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A villain** hunting down the party
- **A temporary ally** in order to hunt down someone else in the desert (Voolya will still demand the party's loyalty)
- **A hired sword** to fight someone else without involving the party.

Long Term Motives

Ultimately, Voolya wants everyone she meets to bow down before her, or die trying. She sees no value in a long life, in the end, she will die when facing someone stronger than her. She'll never run away, and definitely won't die to old-age.

Flaws

She has zero concerns with other people's feelings. Voolya does not have a clear distinction on who are her slaves, or who are her followers. To the warrior, they're all just people who are weaker than her. Due to her all-in personality, Voolya will never back down from a challenge, just don't expect her to play fair.

Voolya

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

Armor Class 16 (leather armor)
Hit Points 150 (24d8 + 45)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (–1)	21 (+5)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Str +5, Dex +7, Con +6
Skills Acrobatics +8, Intimidation +6, Persuassion +6, Survival +5
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Common
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Brave. Voolya has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

Brute. A melee weapon deals one extra die of its damage when Voolya hits with it (included in the attack).

Actions

Multiattack. Voolya makes two weapon attacks.

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Poisoned Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack*: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft. and range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage. On a hit the target must succeed a **DC 15 Constitution** saving throw or be *poisoned* for 1 hour.

Reactions

Parry. Voolya adds 5 to her AC against one melee attack that would hit her. To do so, she must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

Legendary Actions

Voolya can take 2 legendary actions, she takes only one legendary action at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. She regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

Deadly Leap. She leaps 15 ft. in any direction she desires without triggering opportunity attacks. While in the air she can make one Weapon Attack.

Bloody Cyclone (Costs 2 actions). Voolya swirls around with her scimitar, making a scimitar attack on all creatures within 5ft. of her.

Yelkas Sarvalor, the Archdruid

By Robert P. Davis
Artist: Hopsy

Yelkas leads a Circle of Druids deep within the Cloak Wood, which lies south of Baldur's Gate and north of the great library of Candlekeep. Adventurers who travel through the area, whether on the Coast Way between Baldur's Gate and Beregost or through the Wood itself, will be noted by Yelkas and his avian spies.

Druid and Ranger adventurers who are not a threat to Yelkas, his sovereignty, or his Wood can find aid from Yelkas if they know how to ask.



Background

Yelkas is the son of relatively wealthy traders in Baldur's Gate. They lived a bright, lively life of society. His parents, Malaric and Mentha Sarvalor, maintained a small estate in the Garden District of the Upper City, where they threw lavish parties.

Mentha was gentle with her other children, but with Yelkas she was hard, piling expectation upon expectation on the young man's shoulders. A fisher's daughter born on the coast among nets, Mentha had built her business from a single, leaky coasting galley creeping up and down the coast between Waterdeep and Baldur's Gate, to a fleet of two dozen three-masted carracks, plying the waves from Lantan to Luskan, as well as dozens of overland wagons in caravans that traveled as far afield as the Sea of Fallen Stars. She was bitterly disappointed in her firstborn.

Malaric was a pretty, pleasant socialite sold to the highest bidder by his nearly-destitute yet noble family when Mentha came on the scene with her newly-minted yet considerable fortune. Lacking a head for business, Malaric remained content throwing parties, learning the latest dances, and keeping up with which actors were all the rage.

Yelkas was meant to be the scion of his family, taking over the lucrative shipping business. Yelkas, however, wanted desperately to be an adventurer. He loved to listen to the tales of the adventurers Mentha hired to protect her shipments. He especially prized stories of deep, mysterious woods and forests, with wild elves and great bears and other wondrous creatures. He would closely question adventurers who plied their trade deep in the woods, and kept journals and souvenir books of creatures, magical monsters, and fey wanderers described to him by his adventuring friends.

Malaric indulged this behavior, having in his youth wandered all the way to Amphail in the company of other sheltered, rich youths. Invariably this roused the fires of anger in

Mentha. Many were the times a teenage Yelkas overheard his mother berating and belittling his beloved father for filling the young man's head with such nonsense.

When Bhaal rose again, few predicted the devastation the resurgent god and his followers would inflict on the city. Yelkas was on an "adventure" – really just a camping trip in the eaves of the Cloak Wood, protected by veteran adventurers in his mother's employ – when the murders started. Yelkas and his friends and guards returned to find the Sarvalor estate a pile of smoldering ashes, his parents nowhere to be found, the servants fled or dead, burned in the fire. His friends fled also, to discover the fate of their own homes. Yelkas, shaken, went to the offices of Sarvalor Shipping, where he lived for a time under the eye of a gnarled, well-traveled Ranger named Medyr, who acted as the head of the company until such time as the matters of the estate and business could be settled.

Medyr, in Yelkas's name and accompanied by the lad, questioned the officers of the Flaming Fists as well as the Council of Four, only to be bureaucratically shuffled back and forth from office to office.

After several years of grief, and more and more trips to his beloved Cloak Wood, each of which lasted longer than the previous, Yelkas called a board meeting of his ship captains and caravan masters. He offered them lucrative terms to buy the operations they had been managing in the company's name, or to form a syndicate to buy the company. After a few days of negotiation, the captains and masters agreed to reorganize the company with Medyr as their administrator.

Yelkas found himself freed of his city obligations, with a fat account at the Sword Coast Trader's Bank, and no family duties. He took to the adventuring life with a band of his mother's former employees, and traveled far.

After many years and many harrowing adventures, he returned to Baldur's Gate. Medyr, now quite elderly, had retired from trade and was living in a sensible house in the Merchant Quarter, the old man had news for Yelkas. After years of inquiry, he discovered that Mentha had been murdered, her body consigned to the deep, and that Malaric was last seen being dragged into an extraplanar portal which, when it closed and exploded, caused the fire which destroyed the house.

Yelkas, now a Druid of considerable power, led an expedition into the Cloak Wood to establish a base of operations. Having done so, he has attracted a group of lesser Druids to his Circle.

Current Motives

The sages of nearby Candlekeep have written that the Cloak Wood once contained portals to several other parts of the cosmos. By 1479 DR, these portals were believed to be defunct.

However, Yelkas' Circle of Druids continues to search for any portals which may yet be found. They have indeed discovered that portals still exist in the Wood. The portals spontaneously open and close, responding to no pattern they can recognize; they appear to be naturally-occurring phenomena.

The Cloak Wood is a thickly overgrown, ancient forest, full of elm, breech, felsul, and hiexel trees. The forest has a rugged landscape with many stream-cut ravines shaded by tall specimens of beech, elm, and white pine.

Unlike the cliffs to the north leading to Baldur's Gate, the Cloak Wood's shoreline allows a ship to anchor a cable offshore and send a dinghy to shore for water and supplies.

In past years, only desperate mariners dared the wood's population of arachnids, stirges, hangman trees, fey, and other uncommon creatures. But since Yelkas's arrival, the Cloak

Wood has become tamer. That, and Yelkas' sympathy for mariners, means the great bay to the south of the Cloak Wood has become a haven for trading and fishing vessels to lay by and replenish their stores.

Yelkas can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **An information giver** – Very little happens in or around the Cloak Wood without his knowledge. Those who travel through the area, whether through the Wood itself, on the Coast Way between Baldur's Gate and Beregost, or on a ship laying up in the bay, will be noted by Yelkas, his servants, or his avian spies.

- **A quest giver** – Yelkas is always seeking extraplanar portals, and adventurers looking for work can always be sent into the Cloak Wood in search of portals. Specifically, he will be most grateful to those who can identify how to predict a portal's opening location and duration. In addition, he has found Zarad's Clock Tower, deeply hidden in a part of the Wood particularly favored by loathsome spiders, ettercaps, and other monsters. Surely the lair of such a powerful wizard as Zarad Duskmarrow must have an extraplanar portal.

- **An ally** – Adventurers who are friendly to Yelkas can seek aid from him if they know to ask. Balduran taverns and inns frequented by adventurers reveal stories about Rangers and Druids sending birds to seek Yelkas in times of dire need, causing druids slinging spells to show up in moments. Yelkas will seek recompense for these efforts.

- **An adversary** – Yelkas' loathing for the Council of Four and the Flaming Fists means any enterprise of theirs risks attack if they venture in range of the Cloak Wood, including the Coast Way.

Long Term Motives

Yelkas's long-term goal is to find his father. He has been unable to do so with his own magic, so he seeks existing portals and brave souls to explore for them and master their secrets, once found.

Flaws

Yelkas has become obsessed with finding his father. He blames the Council of Four for incompetence leading to his mother's death, and in particular seeks revenge on Dillard Portyr, who was Grand Duke when the Bhaal affair occurred, as well as the Flaming Fist mercenary company. Any character who is a Balduran noble, or has overt ties to the Flaming Fists or the city administration, will immediately, on entering the Cloak Wood, be captured and taken to Yelkas' grove for questioning.

Yelkas Sarvalor

Medium humanoid (human), lawful neutral

Armor Class 16 (hide armor, shield)
Hit Points 132 (24d8+24)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (-0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)	11 (-0)

Saving Throws Int +5, Wis +9
Skills Medicine +9, Nature +5, Perception +9
Languages Druidic, common, elvish
Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Spellcasting. The archdruid is an 18th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following druid spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *druidcraft, mending, poison spray, produce flame*
1st level (4 slots): *cure wounds, entangle, faerie fire, speak with animals*
2nd level (3 slots): *animal messenger, beast sense, hold person*
3rd level (3 slots): *conjure animals, meld into stone, water breathing*
4th level (3 slots): *dominate beast, locate creature, stoneskin, wall of fire*
5th level (3 slots): *commune with nature, mass cure wounds, tree stride*
6th level (1 slot): *heal, heroes' feast, sunbeam*
7th level (1 slot): *fire storm*
8th level (1 slot): *animal shapes*
9th level (1 slot): *foresight*

Actions

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack*: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6+2) slashing damage.

Change Shape (2/Day). Yelkas magically polymorphs into a beast or elemental with a challenge rating of 6 or less, and can remain in this form for up to 9 hours. Yelkas can choose whether his equipment falls to the ground, melds with his new form, or is worn by the new form. Yelkas reverts to his true form if he dies or falls unconscious. Yelkas can revert to his true form using a bonus action on his turn.

While in a new form, Yelkas retains his game statistics and ability to speak, but his AC, movement modes, Strength, and Dexterity are replaced by those of the new form, and he gains any special senses, proficiencies, traits, actions, and reactions (except class features, legendary actions, and lair actions) that the new form has but that he lacks. He can cast his spells with verbal or somatic components in his new form. The new form's attacks count as magical for the purpose of overcoming resistances and immunity to non-magical attacks.

Magic Items

Adventurers who are given a quest by Yelkas are often given a special magic item crafted by druids in his Circle: an Onyx Spider.

Figurine of wondrous power (Onyx Spider)

Wondrous item (rare)

This lustrous black statuette is carved in the likeness of a giant spider. It is small enough to fit in a pocket. If you use an action to speak the command word and throw the figurine to a point on the ground within 60 feet of you, the figurine becomes a living giant spider. If the space where the spider would appear is occupied by other creatures or objects, or if there isn't enough space for the spider, the figurine doesn't become a spider.

The spider is friendly to you and your companions. It understands your languages and obeys your spoken commands. If you issue no commands, the spider defends itself but takes no other actions. The spider exists for 12 hours and can be ridden as a mount. At the end of the duration, the spider reverts to its figurine form. It reverts to a figurine early if it drops to 0 hit points or if you use an action to speak the command word again while touching it. When the spider becomes a figurine again, it can't be used again until 2 days have passed. In addition, an Onyx Spider can only be used within the boundaries of the Cloak Wood.

Zerakkis

By Alex Clippinger
Artist: Sveteslov Petrov
Cartography: Mobral Rox

"I have a weakness for all the pleasures of the flesh; touch, smell...and taste."

"Bargain with me, and your children's children will frolic in the palaces our deal will bring you. Strike me, and those children will weep at the horrors I will inflict upon them. Why battle when you can bargain?"



Background

Zerakkis is a Rakshasa, a fiend with the appearance of a human-tiger hybrid. A devil of the Nine Hells in mortal form, Rakshasa are notoriously difficult to kill. All but the strongest magical spells are useless against them, and even when a Rakshasa's mortal form is destroyed, the spirit remains. The devil returns to its home in the Nine Hells, slowly regathering its strength to reform its body on the Material Plane and return months, even years, later. Only slaying the Rakshasa's mortal form, and then pursuing it to slay it again in the Nine Hells, will destroy it permanently.

Zerakkis is no stranger to this dance. He has been slain a small handful of times before, and the vengeance wrought on the adventurers who dared to kill him was so savage and complete, those who know of the fiend often warn against tangling with him. Even when the adventurer was found to be long dead when the devil returned, Zerakkis made a point of pursuing what he calls "the ugly business" of slaughtering their remaining friends, family, and associates.

With each return to the Material Plane, Zerakkis has applied greater scrutiny and skill to building an empire of illegal enterprises. He often acts as a fence (or purchaser) of priceless stolen art, illicit substances, and items of a cursed or magical nature. As a devil in a physical shell, Zerakkis is also embroiled in the most sinful of criminal enterprises: murder-for-hire, slavery, and dark magic.

Current Motives

In whatever metropolitan hub you elect to place this tiger-faced fiend, Zerakkis has been active in the area for at least a few years. When he sets up shop in an area, his immediate goals involve hiring, subverting, or replacing other criminal elements in the entire region. Once his lair is established, the Rakshasa makes a point of building wealth and fostering a formidable mercenary force. From there, he begins negotiating with thieves' guilds and independent criminal elements.

Zerakkis can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **As an employer, hiring the PCs**—in a disguised form or through an intermediary, including corrupt city guards—to battle criminal factions in the

city whom he is attempting to weaken or control.

- **As an information broker** - Zerakkis' expansive connections and his long, semi-immortal life span have allowed him a wealth of knowledge on numerous subjects from the historical, to the current, to the mysterious arcane.

- **As a merchant** - The Rakshasa is always looking to collect the most remarkable and powerful artifacts for his own collection, and he is happy to pay for information on their whereabouts or hire the players to collect such an item. Zerakkis is unlikely to keep what he would call 'mundane' magic objects in his personal collection, though he can greatly improve the odds of finding another seller in whatever city he currently calls home.

- **As a counter-villain** - Though his motives are never good, Zerakkis might be happy to help (or hire) the players to foil the plot of some other evil faction if he sees a chance to profit. He may see it as less expensive to hire the players to retrieve a valuable artifact, for example, if he knows another evil group will pay more to acquire it.

Long Term Motives

Zerakkis constantly seeks to increase his influence, but he can't be everywhere at once. While he can oversee a vast network with ease, he wants to establish lieutenants and other subordinates who can serve loyally on the decades-long timeline of his various plans and goals. To this end, Zerakkis might offer a devil's pact to highly proven and trusted allies, granting them extended life or near-immortality… so long as they remain loyal.

If the Rakshasa has an archdevil or other superior giving him orders, their identity is unknown. If they exist, they seem happy to allow the fiend to remain fairly autonomous. However, whether on orders or by personal preference, the Rakshasa has little interest in seeing a world-ending apocalyptic event occur. Maybe the fiend wants to milk the world for fallen souls for as long as possible or maybe, as Zerakkis himself would say with a smile, it would just be bad for business.

Flaws

Zerakkis is anonymous when necessary, but one of his greatest weaknesses is his arrogance. He enjoys hiding in plain sight and being a worst-kept secret in the criminal underworld. When he moves to a new city or seeks to regain power after being resurrected from the Nine Hells his purchases of signature pleasures can form a recognizable pattern.

As a Rakshasa, Zerakkis' desire to get revenge on those who have killed him or thwarted his plans is overmastering. This can leave him too focused on his prey, and his arrogance often leads him to draw out revenge more slowly and painfully than is advisable.

Zerakkis in Waterdeep

The wily Rakshasa might set up shop in any one of Waterdeep's populated wards, though the Sea Ward, Trades Ward, and Southern Wards in particular might offer the right mix of location and daily bustle to disguise the comings and goings of his criminal contacts. Zerakkis likely works alongside the Xanathar Guild and the Zhentarim, and has a working relationship with many of the city's guilds as needed. However, Zerakkis is rarely satisfied until he has absorbed other criminal elements into his own organization, and is just as likely to provide resources and intel against rival crime lords.

Zerakkis

Medium fiend, lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 110 (13d8 + 52)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	17 (+3)	18 (+4)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	20 (+5)

Skills Deception +10, Insight +8, Persuasion +10
Damage Vulnerabilities piercing from magic weapons wielded by good creatures
Damage Immunities bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non-magical attacks
Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 13
Languages Common, Infernal
Challenge 13 (10,000 XP)

Limited Magic Immunity. Zerakkis can't be afflicted or detected by spells of 6th level or lower unless it wishes to be. It has advantage on saving throws against all other spells and magical effects.

Innate Spellcasting. Zerakkis' innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell Save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). He can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: detect thoughts, disguise self, mage hand, minor illusion
3/day: charm person, detect magic, invisibility, major image, suggestion
1/day: dominate person, fly, plane shift, true seeing

Actions

Multiattack. *Zerakkis makes two claw attacks.*

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d46 + 2) slashing damage, and the target is cursed if it is a creature. The magical curse takes effect whenever the target takes a short or long rest, filling the target's thoughts with horrible images and dreams. The cursed target gains no benefit from finishing a short or long rest. The curse lasts until it is lifted by a *remove curse* spell or similar magic.

Lair Actions:

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), Zerakkis takes a lair action to create one of the following effects; Zerakkis can't use the same lair action two rounds in a row:

- Smoke billows from the hookahs throughout the room, creating 15-foot diameter clouds around each one. Zerakkis is invisible while inside these smoke clouds; all other creatures inside the cloud are lightly obscured. Other creatures who are hostile to Zerakkis and who start their turn inside a cloud, or enters one, must succeed on a **DC 17 Constitution** saving throw or become poisoned by the heady fumes. A creature poisoned in this way has disadvantage on melee and spell attacks, as well as ability checks, until the end of its turn.
- The hookahs spit burning coals, making a ranged spell attack against each creature hostile to Zerakkis within 15 feet of a hookah. The spell attack has a +5 to hit and deals 4d6 fire damage on hit.
- Two hookahs of Zerakkis' choice lash out with their hoses, which grow up to a length of 30 feet and attempt to entangle a creature within reach. Each creature must make a **DC 15 Dexterity** saving throw or become restrained until the next lair action takes effect.

Zerakkis' Lair

The Rakshasa crime lord does not settle for a crumbling ruin or a damp bandit cave. He prefers a lavish lounge in the heart of a major city, allowing him to enjoy the best comforts and remain close to his enterprises. Bribes, blackmail, intimidation, and other forms of underhanded political control make his lair the worst-kept secret and most politically-protected building in the city, second only to a palace. In his home, the Rakshasa can hold meetings or bask in even the darkest of his pleasures, all in his true tiger-human form and without fear of reprisal.

The building is a complex of meeting rooms, offices, and private residences. Zerakkis has taken care to balance the needs of his 'business' with the pleasures he indulges in. More private rooms are located away from the entertaining and living spaces, stocked and built for torture, dark rituals, or the housing of slaves.

The main part of Zerakkis' lair is an open, sprawling room of benches, chairs, and soft cushions. Groupings of seats surround low tables, all of them populated with exquisite glass hookahs. Though they're part of the lair's magical defenses, their main purpose is to serve for the fiend's enjoyment. The hookahs are enchanted to reform, if broken, and fill the room with the haze of heady shisha smoke. At the far end of the room is a bar, stocked with the finest spirits the Rakshasa has managed to buy, smuggle, or steal. Beside it is a stone ledge, a kind of half-stage, which is also stocked with seating cushions and a woven tapestry backdrop. Though he seats himself anywhere he wishes in the room at large, the Rakshasa can usually be found on the platform if he is hosting or expecting visitors.

Entrance

Two staircases opposite one another become corridors leading to the establishment's front desk; an eight-foot-long counter of dark wood staffed by an establishment employee (usually a **commoner**). Across from the desk is a pair of heavy, dark curtains that separate this room from the lounge (area 1). These curtains are tied back during business hours to give a clear view of the lounge area and to allow the scent of hookah smoke to waft into the entrance hall and street beyond.

Guards

The entrance curtain is flanked by a pair of **thugs** who act as bouncers. During business hours, these bouncers might be nothing more than hired muscle; at night, they are knowingly loyal to Zerakkis.

Curtain

The pair of heavy curtains across the entrance to the lounge are actually **rugs of smothering**, which animate only when given a command word. Zerakkis and the floor manager know the command word for the curtains, but won't use them during business hours unless absolutely critical; the animated curtains only recognize Zerakkis and his direct criminal underlings and could randomly attack a customer instead of a threatening adventurer.

Area 1. Hookah Lounge

This massive room is the business front that Zerakkis shows the public. The lounge's dark floor tiles are gleaming, polished onyx and reflect the flickering, low flames of the room's *continual flame* sconces. The individual flaming sconces can be given commands by any of the staff to change the color of the flames or subdue them until the sconce gives off only dim light.

Tables and hookahs

Small, round tables throughout the lounge are seated with padded wooden chairs, or crescent-shaped booths along the walls. Each of the tables has a hookah atop it, which Zerakkis can activate as part of his lair actions (see his stat block for further).

Private booths

The left-hand wall from the entrance has three recessed alcoves, each with their own table, booth seating, and pair of chairs. A heavy curtain can be drawn across the entrance, muffling the sound from the rest of the lounge and giving the customers there added privacy.

Stage

A short stage stands at the far end of the lounge area from the entrance. During business hours, musicians (either **commoners** or **bards**) play music for lounge customers. These musicians are outside hires and have no loyalty to Zerakkis' organization. When the lounge is closed or Zerakkis is expecting a confrontation, Zerakkis enjoys lounging on cushions on the stage and enjoying a hookah with a mixture of his own concoction.

Secret Passageways

There is a secret door behind the stage, which can be spotted with a **DC 20 Wisdom (Perception)** check. The door opens onto the private employee passageway that leads to the storeroom and bar door. A secret crawlway opens up above one of the booth seats; it can be spotted with a **DC 18 Wisdom (Perception)** check. A Medium or smaller creature can squeeze through the opening, which drops down into a full-sized corridor that leads to area 5.

Bar

The bar has a waist-high barrier door to allow staff access to the larger lounge floor. Behind the bar are a set of double swing doors that leads to the employee hallway.

Employee Area

Another pair of curtains blocks a threshold with the words "EMPLOYEES ONLY" marked above it in Common. Through this curtain, an employee hallway leads to a locked door (see area 7) and further back to the storerooms and double-doors to the bar. Straight ahead through the curtain from the lounge is a locked door to Zerakkis' quarters (see area 2).

Area 2. Private Quarters

The double doors from the employee area to this area are kept locked at all times. Both Zerakkis and the lounge manager have keys to this door; otherwise, it can be picked with a **DC 21 Dexterity** check using thieves' tools.

In stark opposition to the dark onyx floor tiles and moody lighting of the lounge area, Zerakkis's quarters are brightly lit and are made of floor-to-ceiling white marble. When Zerakkis indulges himself with a kill in his private quarters, he finds the contrast of blood on white marble entrancing. Entering from the double doors, there is a curtained doorway to the right that leads to Zerakkis's office (area 4) and a corridor with steps leading up to Zerakkis's bedroom (area 3).

Area 3. Bedroom

The bedroom contains a luxurious king-sized bed, complete with silk sheets. Curtained alcoves are intended as hanging closets but only one is stocked with clothing—Zerakkis often uses his *disguise self* spell to change the appearance of this clothing. A pair of hookahs on the floor can benefit from Zerakkis's lair actions (see his stat block for further).

Secret Door

A marble secret door in the marble wall acts as a one-way exit from the bedroom to the outside; it can be spotted with a **DC 22 Wisdom (Perception)** check. A **DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation)** check reveals the barely perceptible Infernal letter hidden in the veins of the marble block; touching it causes the door to ripple and become immaterial, permitting passage. Any non-fiend that passes through the doorway must make a DC **17 Constitution** saving throw or take 4d10 force damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Area 4. Office

Zerakkis conducts formal business in his office from behind a large mahogany desk. All of the walls apart from the one opposite the entrance are lined with bookshelves, which are stocked with tomes the rakshasa has collected over his innumerable years.

The Painting

The wall opposite the entrance is dominated by a massive painting entitled *Asmodean Downfall*. The piece depicts Asmodeus, lord of the Nine Hells, being cast out into shadow. Behind him, shining gods point at him with stern expressions, shunning him. At first glance the painting seems to celebrate evil being cast out, though an observant examiner might note the shadowed smirk on Asmodeus's face and a scroll clutched in his hand, representing the Pact Primeval. The painting and its gilded frame weigh over two hundred pounds and are worth 8,000 gold pieces.

Area 5. Hookah Storeroom

The shelves in this room have a few extra hookahs in case the lounge needs a spare; most of the space is stocked with glass jars full of various flavored shisha. The jars are labelled and designed to seal airtight.

Area 6. Liquor Storeroom

The shelves here are stocked with supplies for the bar, including tiny casks of craft ale.

Area 7. Dungeon Entrance

The door to this area from the employee hall is made of iron and locked. Zerakkis and a few trusted underlings carry keys to the door, which can also be picked using a **DC 18 Dexterity** check using thieves' tools. The entire dungeon area is dimly lit and cavern-like, having been carved from the stone beneath the building.

Cambion guard. The first chamber-room is empty but guarded by one of two **cambions** (CR5, MM, p 36), which uses its *alter self* spell to disguise itself as a common hired soldier. The other cambion is this one's twin; one of the twins is always staffed at this location while the other is sleeping or on an errand for Zerakkis. Whichever twin is on duty carries keys to the cells (see area 9)

Area 8. Antipathy Trap

This seemingly empty room is affected by an *antipathy* spell that targets humanoids (**DC 17 Wisdom** save to resist). Trusted humanoid servants of Zerakkis are made immune to the effect.

Area 9. Cells

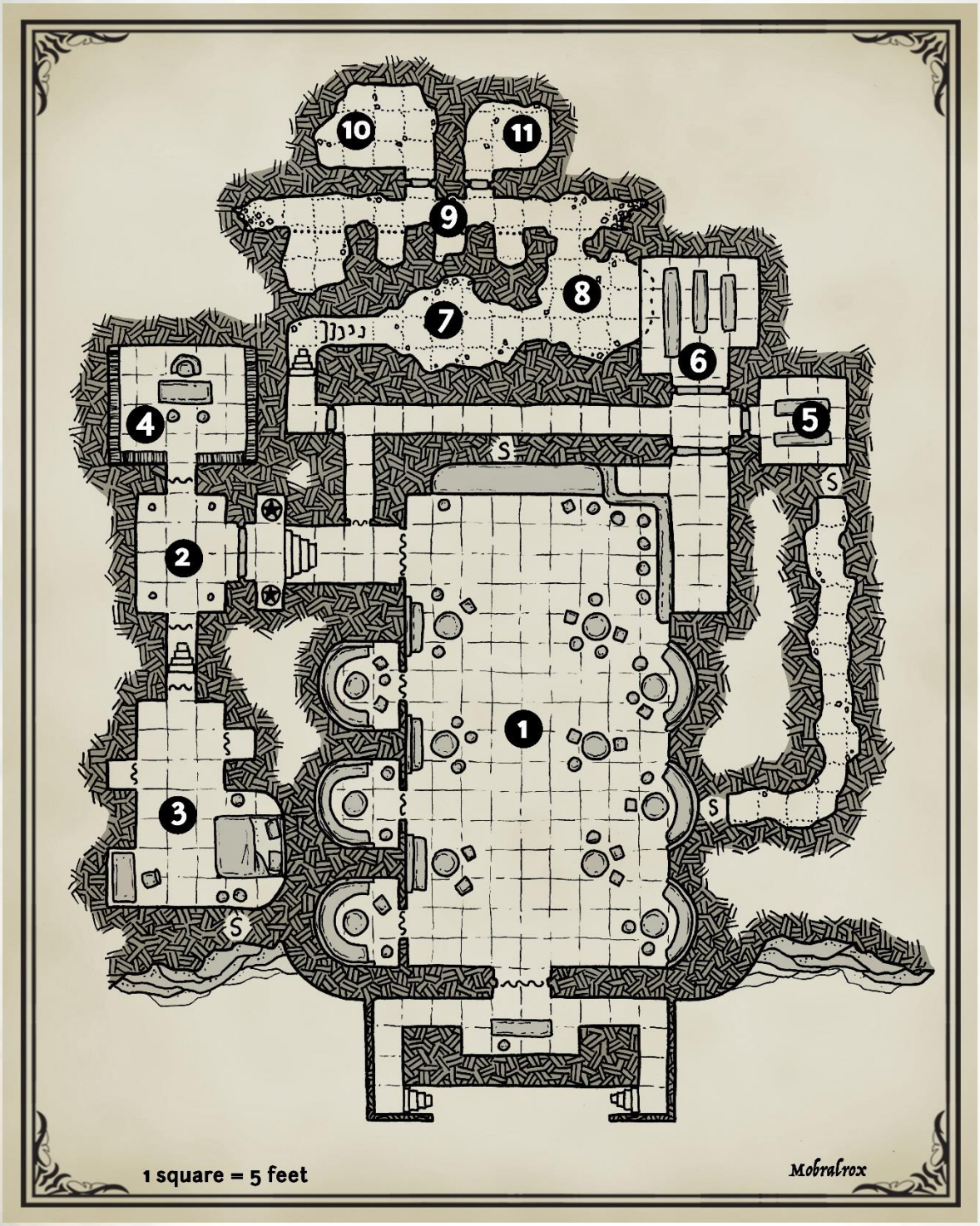
Steel-barred walls have been installed at the mouth of four alcoves and serve as cells for humanoid prisoners. Three of the four cells aren't even big enough for one Medium-sized creature to lie down in, and captives here are often shackled upright to the wall. The last cell in the line is larger and can easily fit four Medium-sized creatures. The doors to the cells can be picked with a **DC 20 Dexterity** check using thieves' tools.

Area 10. Summoning Chamber

This room has a shelf stocked with numerous supplies: candles, vials, chalk, and incense among them. It's used to summon devils from the Nine Hells or to communicate with the same; Zerakkis parleys with various Archdevils or their vassals using this room and is happy to sacrifice human chattel from the cells to do so.

Area 11. Interrogation Chamber

There are very few interrogation implements in this barren room; Zerakkis prefers to restrain victims and use his magical and manipulative powers to extract the information he wants. He often uses *detect thoughts* or *charm person* spells to force information out of a victim or toy with their emotions; he's also gone so far as to allow prisoners believe they have a chance to escape, only to drop out of a magical disguise or appear from an *invisibility* spell and crush those hopes into dust.


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1 square = 5 feet
Mobralrox

Other *Savage Encounters* supplements!



