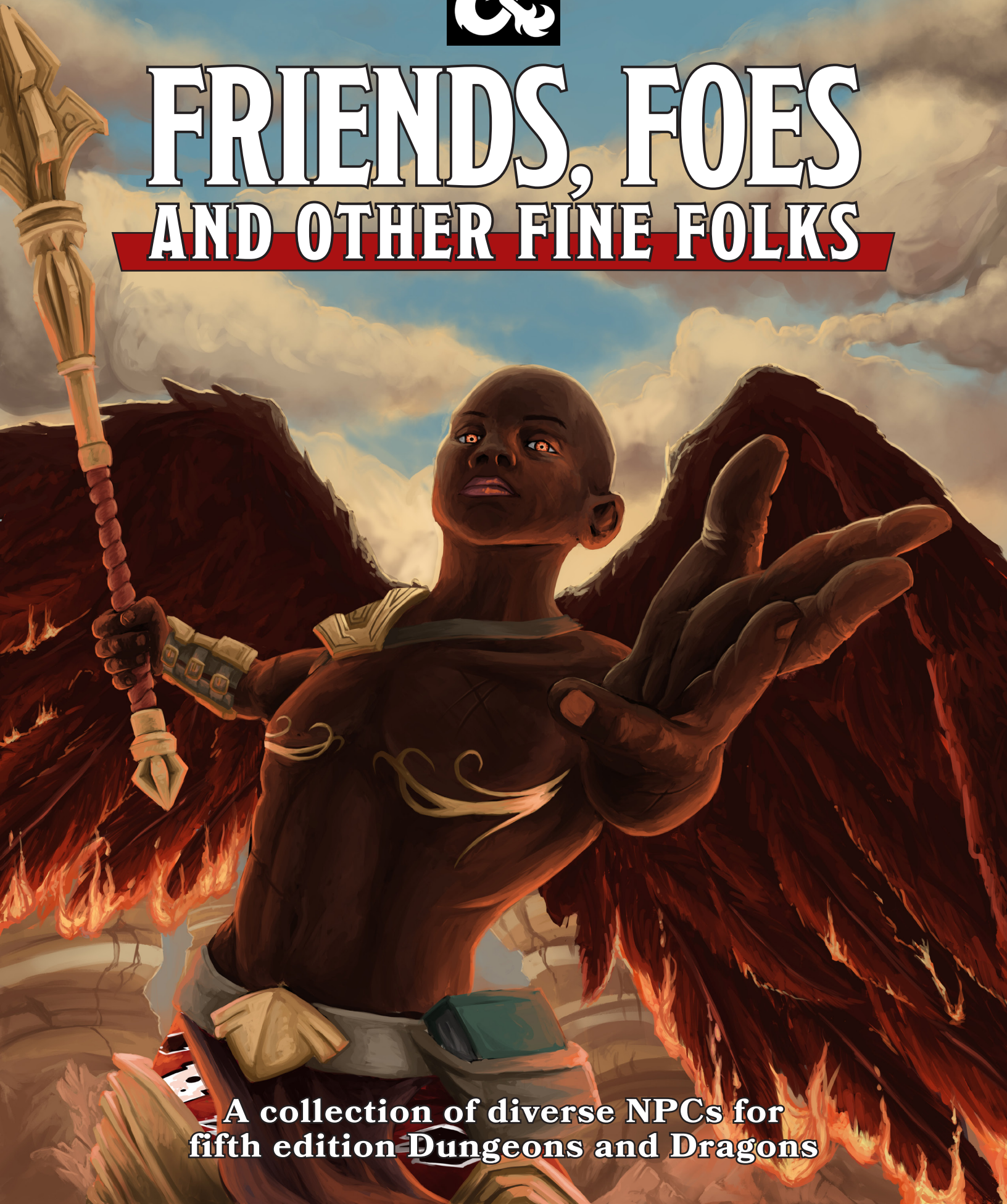




FRIENDS, FOES AND OTHER FINE FOLKS



A collection of diverse NPCs for
fifth edition **Dungeons and Dragons**

FRIENDS, FOES AND OTHER FINE FOLKS



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This project was truly a labor of love, with copious amounts of time volunteered from many people. My most heartfelt thanks to everyone involved.

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Wherever possible in the making of this book we consulted sensitivity readers as part of the creative process. Additionally, many of our writers for this project drew on their own experiences or parts of their identities to inform their characters. The following people performed sensitivity readings for characters that were not their own creations:

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ON THE COVER

David Markiwsky illustrates San'ge, paladin of conquest, offering a hand in friendship. Will you take it?

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FOREWORD

Growing up, I spent my whole childhood searching for someone like me. In every television show I watched and every book I read, I was looking for someone to identify with. Someone who looked like me; acted like me; or felt the same emotions I did. Unfortunately, not many anxiety filled, gay bookworms made it into popular media. Now that I'm older, I understand that this story isn't mine alone. Many of us spent our childhood looking for someone like us to look up to, or someone enough like us to show us that we aren't alone in the universe.

That is where this book began. With the wish to create a place where people who spent their childhood (and their adulthood) looking for someone like them could find that someone within these pages and in their Dungeons and Dragons game.

Thousands of people play Dungeons and Dragons every day. You could compare a hundred games and a thousand characters and not one of them would be the same. It can be a way to explore your own personality, empathize with others, deal with grief, or explore aspects of yourself. It can be a support mechanism, an outlet for emotions, a therapeutic exercise or an exercise in compassion. D&D is something different for every player and every player has their own unique story, but they all start the same - with a group of people willing to open their minds and their hearts and make room at their table for one more person. Now, we hope that you will open your hearts and make room at your table for our characters, with the hopes that someone will see part of themselves reflected in them.

David Markiwsky
Project Lead and Managing Editor

INTRODUCTION

This book contains 58 non-player characters (NPCs) for fifth edition Dungeons and Dragons.

The NPCs represent the broad diversity of the players who play the game, as well as the writers and artists who brought them to life. Some characters are modified from player characters or NPCs from home games; others draw on the real life experiences of the writers; and others still are just fun, quirky characters that we hope you will come to love as much as we have.

Each character comes with a quick summary, read-aloud description of the character, traits and personality, background and some information informing how they might interact with adventurers who come into contact with them in game. Characters are grouped by profession or traits, however, a fully alphabetized index can be found at the back of this book.



BRENN

Brenn is a shy Firbolg who writes poetry to help cope with his depression. Riddled with social anxiety, he is frequently found in the company of animals rather than humanoid creatures.

An inordinately tall Firbolg man stands off to the side, leaning his slender frame on a large knotted walking stick and avoiding the gaze of everyone nearby. He is dark-skinned with soft eyes, a mass of hair, and inordinately large floppy ears. Every feature of his face seems slightly too large, yet the whole manages to radiate kindness. He could practically disappear into the shadows, were it not for the large collection of small mammals scampering at his feet. A weathered journal and quill hang from his side.

Brenn has few close friends and is wary of reaching out to them when he is in need, but will always overextend himself to help when those he loves are struggling. When Brenn is comfortable with someone, he is personable, sweet, and even funny. He tends to see the best in everyone except himself, and always assumes that people are well-intentioned and kind. On days when he leaves his home, he spends his time where he can be around other people and observe their behavior, such as taverns or in busy marketplaces, always surrounded by the menagerie of small animals that follow him wherever he goes.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Brenn is a friendly, animal-loving Firbolg who is incredibly shy. He lives with chronic depression, and occasionally has days where he is unable to eat or leave his home. During these times, caring for his animal companions is often the only reason he feels capable of getting out of bed. Brenn weighs his words carefully before speaking, because he frequently doubts that others would find worth in what he has to say and doesn't want to waste their time. Consequently, he will never be the first to initiate contact with someone he doesn't know.

Despite his insecurities, Brenn is happiest when he is around others, leaving him frequently feeling isolated and lonely. His animal companions alleviate his loneliness to an extent, but can't take the place of humanoid conversation. Brenn is pansexual, but due to his difficulties approaching others, his romances tend to be unrequited, leaving him feeling increasingly lonely. Brenn excels at pining from afar, but becomes tongue-tied and stumbles over his words when speaking with someone he is interested in. He copes with isolation by writing extensive poetry and always has his journal at hand.



BACKGROUND

Firbolg society emphasizes cooperation and strength in battle, and Brenn was frequently seen as a combat liability in his youth due to his frequent bouts of depression. Additionally, Brenn struggled to see a reason for most combat, preferring to calmly talk problems out to prevent anyone getting harmed. Eventually, he was branded a coward and was left at home with the children and elderly during battles. In adulthood, he became an avowed pacifist and will avoid fighting still. He was seen as a further disappointment to his clan when it was discovered that he was not particularly skilled at druidcraft, though he was highly attuned to other aspects of nature, particularly speaking with animals. When his clan leaders attempted to coerce him into using his skill with animals to conscript forest creatures to join them in battle, he left the tribe in shame.

Brenn wandered alone for months before he was befriended by a friendly forest-gnome druid named Rowan, who approached him in fox shape before eventually revealing her true form. She introduced him to her druid circle, her wife Pippa, a halfling bard, and life outside of Firbolg society. From Pippa, Brenn developed a passion for poetry, and some of his poems became beloved crowd-pleasing songs performed by Pippa and her crew. Brenn eventually left Rowan and Pippa's home and found his own modest cottage in a nearby town, though he frequently visits the druid and bard for seasonal festivals.

INTERACTIONS

Due to his massive height and strength, Brenn could be handy in a fight, but he will avoid fighting except as a last resort. If he is forced to fight for any reason except for the immediate defense of someone at risk, he becomes devastated and sinks into a dark depression. When depressed, Brenn is unable to eat, accounting for his surprisingly slender build.

Brenn cares little for material goods and owns few possessions. He will freely give what little he has to those in need or any who ask, with the notable exception of his journal, which never leaves his side. He does not consider himself the owner or steward of his animal companions, merely someone that they choose to spend their time with.

Brenn will not approach anyone without being first approached. He will initially be shy and hesitant in conversations, though once he feels comfortable, he

will become more amiable and make subtle jokes. If Brenn is experiencing a bout of depression, he does not leave home and struggles to converse with anyone.

Having been raised to feel that he was a nuisance, Brenn is always keen to avoid overstaying his welcome. He will leave events without saying goodbye and hope that no one notices he has left. This rarely goes as planned, as he is generally the largest person around and his absence is nearly always noticed immediately.

What Brenn wants most is acceptance and love, but he struggles to accept and love himself. He rarely realizes when he is being flirted with. Anyone wishing to romance Brenn will need to be somewhat blunt about their sincerity because he is more likely to think that he is being made fun of than propositioned.

CREDITS

Written by Jessica Marcrum.

Art by Jennifer Peig and David Markiwsky.

BRENN

Large humanoid (Firbolg), Lawful Good

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 30 (4d10 + 8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	10 (0)

Skills Animal Handling +6, Perception +6, Nature +4

Condition Immunities Sleep, Advantage on Charm

Languages Common, Elvish, Giant, Gnomish

Spellcasting. Brenn's innate spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 14). Brenn can innately cast the following spells:

1/short rest: *detect magic*, *disguise self* (can make Brenn appear as a medium sized creature)

Speech of Beasts. Brenn can communicate with beasts and has advantage on all Charisma checks to influence them.

Fey Ancestry. Brenn has advantage on saving throws against being charmed and cannot be put to sleep by magical means.

Powerful Build. Brenn can wield 2 handed weapons with one hand and retains the strength of a Large creature when disguised.

ACTIONS

Walking Stick. Melee Weapon Attack (Greatclub) +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 14 (2d10 +3) bludgeoning damage.

BONUS ACTION

Hidden Step. As a bonus action, Brenn can magically turn invisible until the start of his next turn or until he attacks, makes a damage roll, or forces someone to make a saving throw. He will need to rest (short or long) before using this again.



IONE TRUTHEYES

A vivacious 58 year old human bisexual woman, Ione is an accomplished artist with a reputation for being able to see into a person's true nature. Some suspect that this is due to more than just artistic talent.

Before you is a striking full-figured human woman in her late 50s. Her hair is a shimmering silver, and splashed with a variety of colors of paint; you're uncertain whether this is intentional or a byproduct of her work, but either way, she wears it to beautiful effect. It bobs above her shoulders as she moves gracefully about in flowing pants, simple top, and a long sleeveless robe. The clothes are simple but elegant and well made, richly-hued against black underneath. She carries an elaborately carved walking stick, though she seems not to need it.

On her left hand she wears an exquisite ring of apparent elvish design, set with a large white opal.

However, what you notice most are her deep violet eyes.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Effortlessly charming, Ione somehow makes anyone she speaks to feel like the most important person in the world. Others open up to her; she tends to reveal little, keeping the focus on the other person instead. Most of the time, this is borne of a sincere interest. However, astute observers notice that sometimes Ione deflects away from topics she'd rather not discuss - including her real name. A woman with a few secrets, she's adept at keeping those of others.

"Life is to be lived!" she often says. Ione finds beauty and art in everything, and encourages the people in her life to do the same. This is a woman who savors life, and at this stage in her life refuses to be limited by what others think she should or shouldn't be. Ione easily attracts paramours of all genders, and is rarely without a lover in her life. In keeping with her



rather private nature, she prefers to keep most of her relationships casual - despite caring deeply for each person she's with. She has a remarkable ability to remain friends with past, and recurrent, lovers.

Ione is a paradox - simultaneously vivacious and quietly observant. To some degree, everyone is a subject to be studied, whether or not they are sitting for her in her studio. She enjoys and even loves many people, but is selective about whom she trusts.

BACKGROUND

From a young age, Lone was a talented artist. Her ability to observe, empathize with, and understand her subjects, along with her innate sense of color, allowed her to begin earning some coin from her work. Inspired to learn more, she made her way from the modest town of her birth to the city, where she hoped to enroll in academy or find a wealthy patron. Along the way, she was set upon by thieves - and rescued by the most beautiful moon elf she had ever seen. Thus began the most important relationship of Lone's life.

The opal ring upon Lone's finger was a gift to her from this mentor, her lover - whose guidance made Lone into the wizard that she is today. When Lone scrys, that stone is the focus she uses.

Sadly, the curse of the diviner is something that Lone learned too well: Though she can see, she cannot always make others believe, or nor can she always save those she loves. To have the gift of discernment, but the inability to act upon it, is a cruel fate. Looking upon that precious opal ring brings bittersweet memories.

She enjoys her life because she knows it may be gone tomorrow. Publicly, she earns a living through her art; privately, she keeps discreet watch for dangers to those she loves, and for worthy adventurers to aid.

INTERACTIONS

Lone pays close attention anytime visitors arrive in town, especially if they appear to be the adventuring type. She usually gives adventurers the benefit of the doubt upon first meeting, unless greeted with hostility. Though a woman of affluence and influence, she refuses to lord her position over others and has neither patience nor respect for those who do. A quick way to earn her disfavor is to be rude, dismissive, or cruel to others. Adventurers who pique her interest had best hope they are doing so for the right reasons.

If threatened or attacked, Lone first attempts to defend herself with her staff or by non-violent magical means. If pressed, however, she uses eyebite or prismatic spray.

For those whom she believes to be deserving, she may be persuaded to offer her services as a diviner. She does not advertise these talents, but rumors of them

are whispered through the realm. Coin only works to hire her as an artist; if asked about divination, she pretends to not know what her client is talking about unless located somewhere in which private conversation may take place. Additionally, she must believe that either the petitioner or the cause is good.

In the case of the truly exceptional adventurer who has demonstrated their worth or for whom the cause is sufficiently just, Lone may discreetly approach them to offer aid - for example, in the form of a warning, omen, or message.

Though she regards herself as retired from her own adventuring days, she may, in the most extraordinary of circumstances, be persuaded to travel with a party for a particular mission.

Lone's Hair Color. Each new day that the party interacts with Lone, roll 3 times on the following table to determine which paint colors are on her hair:

1d6	Color
1	Azure
2	Green
3	Orange
4	Red
5	Yellow
6	Indigo



IONE TRUTHEYES

Medium humanoid (Human), Chaotic Good

Armor Class 12 (15 with mage armor)

Hit Points 63

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (–1)	14 (+2)	9 (–1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Int +9, Wis +6

Skills Arcana +9, History +9

Senses Passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Draconic, Elvish, Gnomish

Spellcasting. Ione Trutheyes is a 15–th level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). Ione has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

1st level (4 slots): *color spray*, *detect magic*, **identify*, **mage armor*

2nd level (3 slots): *detect thoughts*, **locate object*, *see invisibility**

3rd level (3 slots): *clairvoyance**, *glyph of warding*, *tongues*

4th level (3 slots): *arcane eye*, **hallucinatory terrain*, *locate creature**

5th level (2 slots): *Rary's telepathic bond**, *scrying**

6th level (1 slot): *eyebite*, *true seeing**

7th level (1 slots): *prismatic spray*

8th level (1 slots): *telepathy*

*Divination spell of 1st level or higher

Portent (Recharges after Ione Casts a Divination Spell of 1st Level or Higher). When Ione or a creature she can see makes an attack roll, a saving throw, or an ability check, Ione can roll a d20 and choose to use this roll in place of the attack roll, saving throw, or ability check.

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.

CREDITS

Written by Lynne M. Meyer.

Art by Fernando Salvaterra.



LÉI, ZHÌYÍ 雷志怡

Zhìyí is a nonbinary bard, with a kind heart and a brave soul, travelling the lands, bringing their zither music to everyone. Though they have many admirers, the demisexual and demiromantic Zhìyí has little interest in anyone.

The nonbinary human bard smiles jovially as you approach. They continue to pluck away at their instrument, a horizontal board covered in strings, using amber picks attached to the bottom of their chainmail covered fingers. Indeed, this bard is clad in chainmail and cloth, with short black hair, and black eyes to match.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Zhìyí is talkative and friendly, especially when asked about their music. Thoughtful and considerate, they hate feeling like they are leaving anyone out of a conversation, and will do their best to include everyone.

Zhìyí does not fit the flirtatious bard stereotype and will never flirt or even show interest in anyone they have just met. Not only do they regard this as invasive behaviour, but they are demisexual and demiromantic. This means that Zhìyí does not experience attraction unless they have formed a strong emotional bond with someone.

Though Zhìyí is comfortable being alone, they greatly enjoy having company. Zhìyí will quickly become a loyal ally to any adventurers they travel with, as long as they don't engage in evil or criminal acts, and show kindness and respect to those around them. They are selfless, especially in battle where they try their best to defend others with their shield. It is worth noting that Zhìyí learned how to fight specifically so they could protect others.



BACKGROUND

Zhìyí was born in a land across the sea. However, when they were very young, their family immigrated to another land. Though they grew up participating in the customs their family brought with them from their homeland, they were also exposed to the culture of this new land. In time, they shifted towards the customs of the new land, and mostly replaced their old customs with them.

Shortly after they became of age, Zhìyí's family decided to move back to their ancestral home, where Zhìyí realised just how disconnected they had become

from their heritage. At the same time, it was clear they didn't belong there anymore. Wanting to become more in touch with their culture, Zhìyí bought a Gǔzhēng: a type of zither unique to their cultural heritage, before returning to the land they had spent so many years of their life in.

Zhìyí spent many years teaching themselves how to play the Gǔzhēng. To keep a roof above their head, they did physically intensive jobs, including working as a labourer at the docks, and as a bricklayer. Once they were confident enough with their skills, they began to play in the local tavern. Unfamiliar with the Gǔzhēng, many patrons of the Swift Cormorant were drawn to Zhìyí's performances. However, Zhìyí quickly grew bored of playing in the same tavern, picked up their Gǔzhēng and left the village.

Following an incident with a bandit, where Zhìyí was able to knock out the bandit, they realised that their strength wouldn't always be enough. Furthermore, other people might not be so lucky as they were, and Zhìyí wanted to be able to protect them. Using the money they got from their Gǔzhēng playing, Zhìyí invested in a sword, and some armour. Now, better equipped to deal with dangers, Zhìyí began traveling across the lands, playing music, and honing their fighting skills along the way.

INTERACTIONS

When encountered in taverns, Zhìyí is likely to be playing their Gǔzhēng. They love playing traditional songs, but they will happily take requests, including more typical tavern songs.

When approached, if they aren't playing the Gǔzhēng, they will immediately give a greeting and introduce themselves warmly. If multiple people are approaching Zhìyí, they will try and address everyone, instead of focusing on one person.

Believing that there is safety in numbers, Zhìyí will offer to accompany anyone going in the same direction as they are. If they encounter travellers untrained in combat, they will insist on accompanying them, even if it takes them out of their way.

Zhìyí will become visibly uncomfortable if anyone attempts to flirt with them in a very forward manner, attempting to excuse themselves if possible. However, if someone is subtly flirting with them, they might not even notice.

LÉI ZHÌYÍ (雷志怡)

Medium humanoid (Human), Lawful Good

Armor Class 18 (chainmail and shield)

Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Con +4, Cha +6

Skills Athletics +6, Insight +3, Performance +6

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common

Brave. Zhìyí has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

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

Song of Rest. Zhìyí can perform a song while taking a short rest. Any ally who hears the song regains an extra 1d6 hit points if they spend any Hit Dice to regain hit points at the end of that rest. Zhìyí can confer this benefit on themselves as well.

Taunt (2/Day). Zhìyí can use a bonus action on their turn to target one creature within 30 feet of them. If the target can hear Zhìyí, the target must succeed on a DC 14 Charisma saving throw or have disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws until the start of Zhìyí's next turn.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Zhìyí makes three melee attacks.

Gǔzhēng Picks. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 5 (1 + 4) piercing damage.

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

REACTIONS

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

Protection. When a creature Zhìyí can see attacks a target other than them that is within 5 feet of their position, they can impose disadvantage on that attack roll.

CREDITS

Written by Alison Huang.

Art by Alison Huang



MIKAEL TRISE

A silvery-voiced performer with skeletal dysplasia, who is happy to engage with a ready wit.

The first thing you notice is a smile that lights up the room. Mikael has a silvery voice, which hints of his intelligence when he speaks. He is well dressed with a hand-stitched vest. He is a human who stands 3 feet and 10 inches tall with green eyes that sparkle with inquisitiveness.



TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Mikael has skeletal dysplasia, which causes distorted development of his limbs, spine, and ribcage and led to early, widespread osteoarthritis and constricted lung growth. Mikael is also a very intelligent person with an insatiable curiosity and the freedom to explore both intellectual and creative pursuits. His condition causes him pain, however, Mikael does his best to not let it show because he does not want others to show him pity. Mikael is known to sometimes over indulge in ale when the pain becomes quite severe.

In general, Mikael is kind to all. He has a soft spot for children because he admires their curiosity. He is especially protective of children with a similar condition to his, always taking the time to speak with them and encourage them to follow their dreams. He has been known to slip a few coins in their pockets when they are not looking.

Mikael can be patient, and tries to ignore such behavior, but if someone is persistent and vocal, Mikael will be quite angry.

In his home, Mikael has a little workroom where he explores and investigates whatever interests him. He has tried his hand at painting, music, chemistry and physics. While his paintings are quite good, he prefers to give them to close friends instead of displaying them. His curiosity and drive have helped him utilize his knowledge of the sciences to create a few inventions. He has created small trinkets, such as a coiled wire that can “slink” down inclines or steps that he has shared with children. He has tried to create a medicine that might help ease his pain, but instead created a powder that can shrink people. He is currently working on creating a mechanical man.

BACKGROUND

His parents were very supportive of Mikael and encouraged him in all of his interests. He learned to swim at an early age and is an expert swimmer. At that same age, Mikael also began to sing, which he found to be an easy way to positively interact with people. Mikael has had to deal with people pointing and staring at him all his life, though as he began to perform, the frequency of these events reduced. At the age of 22, Mikael was out drinking when he heard a young human named Antoinette perform. Enamored with her angelic voice, he approached her and the two quickly became friends. They started to perform together because they found their voices complimented each other. Ront, the half-orc owner of The Gandy Dancer tavern, befriended Mikael several years ago and upon hearing Mikael and Antoinette sing, Ront hired them to perform at his tavern. Mikael has attracted a small following, which includes a small circle of his closest friends.

INTERACTIONS

Mikael can often be found either alone or with his performing partner, Antoinette, in nightclubs, inns and taverns. Antoinette has a soprano voice that causes others to stop and admire it when they hear it. She is a very talented harpsichord and spinet player. Antoinette will accompany Mikael both vocally and instrumentally. Alternatively, they may be found performing in city centers or wherever the mood strikes. Anyone is welcome to join in one of Mikael's performances, assuming they are an adequate performer.

Mikael is always willing to engage in conversation and will share information with those he finds pleasant. He is always polite and cordial unless someone upsets or angers him. Anyone who angers him runs the risk of Mikael bringing his great intellect to bear against them. When Mikael becomes very angry, his gift for song and words disappears. He will withdraw and plot against his new foe. Mikael will use his inventions against others, rationalizing that they have brought it upon themselves with their bad behaviour.

STATISTICS

Mikael uses the statistics of a commoner (Monster Manual, pg. 345).

CREDITS

Written by Paul A. Keiter.

Art by Fernando Salvaterra.

MIRIANA HARDWICK

Miriana is an elderly human librarian with dwarfism. She is undistracted and perceptive, discrete and the favorite confidant of artists, aristocrats and academics. Everyone knows her but most importantly, it is said that she knows everyone who's worth knowing.



A human woman, 3 feet tall stands near a desk in the library, examining a thick book. She seems to be in her 60's, is well dressed in a noble's gown and wears a fine monocle and rich jewels. She has grey hair, eloquent facial expressions and a contagious sparkle in her eyes. One look at her makes it clear that nothing surprises her anymore.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Miriana is well known in the city. Her family has low noble titles but she is not interested in maintaining that kind of power and influence. Instead, she dedicated herself to academic and bohemian life. She is a master cartographer and heraldic lore tutor to aristocrats and royalty. To the common folk, she is the right poetess for the right time, a drink-you-under-the-table scholar, the soul of any party and protector of the good-hearted bohemian people who flock to her side. People of all kinds seek her friendship and council; writers, bards and historians seek her knowledge; while young artists seek out her patronage (although she already helps as many people as her means allow for). Even now, gallant poets, courtiers, musicians, admirers and avid readers of all genders compete for her love, although she appears to have lost patience for love affairs.

Miriana dresses herself like a princess but is not arrogant. She doesn't like adulation but demands to be treated with respect. Miriana loves knowledge above all things, but is not impressed by magic. She can provide valuable information or at least knows where the information can be found and is a perfect know-all contact. As a result, she has come to be associated as a contact with various good-aligned spy organizations, though she has no interest in plots or schemes. She is impressed by useful knowledge and has a strong love for poetry and folk music.

BACKGROUND

Miriana was not well treated by the people of her village as she grew up. She locked herself in the library of the family, largely fomented by her aunt Sibirina, an important historian that saw in Miriana a great mind to be nurtured. In the library she discovered her talent for oratory and gained the admiration

and fearfulness of her neighbors after writing and circulating a satirical play about the idiosyncrasies of the little aristocrats and rich merchant families of the countryside.

Some of Miriana’s works are published as anonymous texts because of their high romantic themes, considered libidinous by some important and conservative citizens.

Miriana’s father was a baron in the country, a title that she didn’t aspire to, even though she was the elder of three sisters. The title passed to her sister Mirlene who admired her so much she gladly funded her life in the city as a writer. However, Miriana uses these funds to support young authors and lives through the funds earned by her own publications and her title as the royal curator and chief librarian. Miriana’s sister, Baroness Mirlene, demands a constant correspondence from Miriana with all the important news from the kingdom, lots of poetry and the proper amount of gossip.

Her life was filled with intense and passionate love affairs, some that even caused scandal and provided material for the ballads, poems and plays of other authors. One dispute between two powerful suitors ended with Miriana being imprisoned for one month in a dungeon.

Now that she is a mature and well established academic and person of importance in the court, she has settled down and become even more focused on academic research and production.

INTERACTIONS

Miriana projects an air of respect and impatience when dealing with bards and artists these days because little surprises her anymore. In her 60 years, she has consumed and produced enough art for five lifetimes. Now, she is less impressed by talent than with consistency and hard work, the opposite of her younger self. She loves to debate with scholars, especially at a tavern table. She despises meanness, unkindness and values generosity. She treats simple people well and is suspicious of aristocrats, although she is always surrounded by them.

If sought for information, contacts or connections, she tries to determine if the characters are well intentioned and good hearted. Her price usually involves providing assistance to someone in need, especially young artists or the impoverished.

MIRIANA HARDWICK

Medium humanoid (Human), Neutral Good

Armor Class 9 (no armor)

Hit Points 16

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	9 (-1)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Int +7, Con +6

Skills Arcana +7, Deception +7, History +7, Insight +6, Performance +7, Persuasion +7, Religion +7

Tool Proficiencies Calligrapher’s Supplies, Cartographer’s Tools, Forgery Kit, Playing card set, Dragonchess set, Dice set, Flute, Navigator’s Tools

Senses Passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Draconic, Elvish, Gnomish, Thieves Cant

ACTIONS

Magic Dagger +2. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft, or range 20/60 ft., one creature. Hit: 3 (1d4+1) piercing damage.

CREDITS

Written by Fernando Salvaterra.

Art by Fernando Salvaterra

YAK YAK

An attention-seeking and rambunctious goblin, Yak Yak lives to perform for others. From singing his favorite songs to playing his multiple makeshift instruments, Yak Yak takes every opportunity to show off what he can do (even if it's not very much). After taking up residence in a theater town, Yak Yak does his best to prove his talent to anyone who will take the time to watch one of his improvised performances.

A wiry, green skinned goblin with pointy ears, yellow eyes, and a large grin full of sharp teeth. He carries a collection of makeshift instruments strapped around him including a drum, a flute, and a brass horn. He also has a net slung over his back, holding a variety of scavenged hats. His outfit consists of several layers of stained, colorful fabrics sewn together and he is adorned with several pieces of mismatched jewelry. He carries a flag with a crude portrait of himself depicted; the flag is made with a broken broom handle and a scrap of fabric tied to one end.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Born with the true spirit of a bard, Yak Yak loves nothing more than performing and having a good time. The first thing he always does when meeting someone new (provided they are not chasing after him) is offer to perform something. What type of performance Yak Yak will do at any time is a mystery, even to him. The goblin has practiced singing, dancing, poetry, acting, and playing multiple instruments and will perform at random whenever the mood strikes. Almost all of his performances are improvised, since he never bothers to write down any of songs or poems. His acts are typically just stories he made up or mocking imitations of people he has met.

Yak Yak likes to listen to other bards perform and take inspiration from them to improve his own skills. To the few individuals he admires, he can talk for hours on end if given the chance. Beyond performing, Yak Yak usually gets bored quickly and would prefer to tell dirty jokes than talk complicated politics. When it comes to protecting his friends and fellow bards, Yak Yak is loyal and reliable and will defend his “new tribe” to the best of his ability.

BACKGROUND

Yak Yak was born into a chaotic tribe of goblins who made their living stealing and raiding from others. As he grew, Yak Yak had more interest in the random items the tribe stole rather than the act of stealing itself. He was fascinated with the things other races could make, and spent most of his time playing with these items. One day, while rummaging through a pile of stolen goods, Yak Yak found a book filled with depictions of people in bright outfits playing instruments and singing to large crowds. Yak Yak instantly became enamored with these illustrations and set his mind to becoming the first “noise maker” of his tribe.

Gathering discarded “junk” from what the tribe had stolen, Yak Yak fashioned together makeshift instruments and costumes to put on a show for his tribe. None of the other goblins held much interest in Yak Yak’s performance, yelling at him to be quiet instead. Yak Yak kept practicing, however, and tried again and again to put on shows with singing, dancing, and music for his fellow goblins. Eventually, the rest of the tribe grew tired of listening to this and drove him out of the tribe for annoying them so much. Yak Yak was sad to leave his home, but realised he could find other noise makers like himself and prove his worth.

Yak Yak journeyed along the roads his (former) tribe often ambushed. When there were other travellers, he would secretly follow them back to their hometowns, to the “big tribes” (towns/cities). He would try to show off his performances there, but would always be chased off. Eating their food may have contributed to that though...Before long, Yak Yak found his way to a town with a lot of noise makers like the ones he saw in the book. They sang, danced, and pretended to be different people to entertain everyone. Yak Yak was overjoyed to finally see other noise makers and began studying them from a distance.

Finally the day came when he felt ready for his big debut. Yak Yak put on the costume he made, donned the mask he found after a party, and tuned the lute he borrowed from a sleeping dwarf. For the first time ever, Yak Yak crept out into broad daylight where all the townspeople could see him. Knowing this was his only chance, he reached down deep and played with all his might. Although his appearance initially frightened the townspeople and made them nervous, Yak Yak's performance slowly drew a crowd around him. By the time the guards showed up to investigate, many were enjoying the tiny bard who had come to town. After seeing the goblin meant no harm, the people allowed him to stay. Yak Yak is now a regular feature in town performances and regularly performs as loud as he wants.

INTERACTIONS

For the most part, Yak Yak is more friendly and personable than other goblins. He will eagerly listen to other people's stories. He is the curious type and will ask a lot of questions while listening to these tales. Not knowing much of formality, he is often direct and openly speaks his mind; sometimes indirectly insulting others or making rude observations. He is more cordial and polite to people who agree to watch him perform, and instantly considers them friends if they liked his performance. If he is scorned or his acts insulted, Yak Yak will respond with petty retaliation (such as insults or childish pranks) but avoids direct confrontation since he is not much of a fighter.

YAK YAK

Small humanoid (Goblinoid), Neutral Good

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 13 (2d6 + 2)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Cha +4
Skills Performance +4, Stealth +5
Senses Darkvision 60 ft., Passive Perception 10
Languages Common, Goblin

Spellcasting. Yak Yak is a 2nd level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is charisma (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following bard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): Prestidigitation, Vicious Mockery

1st Level (3 slots): Hideous Laughter, Silent Image, Speak With Animals

Nimble Escape. Yak Yak can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on his turn.

ACTIONS

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 4 (1d6+1) bludgeoning damage.

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5ft., or range 20/60ft., one creature. Hit: 3 (1d4+3) piercing damage.

CREDITS

Written by Jay Davidson.

AETHER

Aether is a tall, air genasi woman who sustained permanent nerve damage to her leg. She is an experienced wood and stone carver who infuses magic into her pieces.

An air genasi sits at workshop table covered with scraps of wood and bits of rock, etching a piece of stone. Her wispy white hair is wrapped up in a messy bun with strands falling in her face. When she notices you, she stops her work and stands up to greet you, using her hands to push herself up from the table. In full view, you see a metal brace, strapped around her right leg.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Aether's personality can be described as a gentle breeze. She's a calm individual who prefers to spend her time working on her craft. While her voice is airy and light, she isn't a pushover. She prides herself on her creations and is more than willing to discuss her process and techniques to those interested.

Aether walks with a limp on her right leg. If she sits too long she has to take extra effort to get up, such as pushing herself up and off a table or physically moving her leg up.

BACKGROUND

Aether's parents left the Elemental plane as outcasts, with a desire to see the other planes of the multiverse. Once settled they became a miner and a woodcutter, leaving Aether to grow up crafting from the scraps of wood and rocks. Much of her childhood was split between the lumber camps where her father worked and the mines with her mother. From her father she learned the art of wood carving, while her mother taught her about the different stones and gems that populated the area.

Initially, as Aether grew more skilled at carving, she gave her crafts to her family members and friends



as gifts. However, one day Aether happened to be with her mother at the quarry when a famous artisan came to find material for their own projects. They noticed the pieces she was carving and became immediately enamoured. The artisan offered Aether an apprenticeship, which she quickly accepted. While apprenticing, she slowly made a name for herself, becoming known for the large pieces she carved for bigger clients.

One day when she was selecting for new material at the quarry, there was an accident. One of the mining tunnels collapsed on top of her, pinning the lower half of her body under some rubble. After hours beneath the rocks, she was pulled out of the mine, but sustained permanent nerve damage in her right leg.

Following the accident, Aether required a brace around her leg to walk, which limited her movement and made working on the large pieces that she had

become known for impossible. While larger wood or stone statues were out of the question, she took to perfecting her craft through smaller creations such as jewelry and small charms.

Aether always had an innate magical talent from her genasi heritage, though she never really developed it until she was bedridden recovering. With many books and much time, she began to hone her magic, focusing specifically on the spells that could help with mundane life rather than those that caused destruction. After much practice, she learned how to enchant spells directly into the runes. She began to carve minimalistic script into small pieces of stone, infusing them with a single spell.

INTERACTIONS

Aether speaks openly about her disability and the accident which caused it. If an adventurer asks if she uses magic to help movement, she does say she does, but doesn't rely on it. For example, she uses mage hand to get an object from a high place or heat metal to help her sculpt.

The genasi can also be commissioned to do non-magical pieces. A commission is based on the size, intricacies, and type of material of the piece. She charges a 300 gp baseline for commissions going up with the complexity of the piece.

Aether can be a merchant players can buy one time use spells, contained in runes that can be crushed. For the purposes of spell choices, Aether has access to the Bard and Artificer spell lists. At a cost, the genasi can inscribe up to 3rd level spells into runes.

Aether has the "Additional Magical Secrets" class feature from the College of Lore bard, potentially giving her access to additional spells from any class. Spells outside of the class can be inscribed at the DM's discretion.

Bard Spell Level	Cost
Cantrip	150 gp
1st Level	300 gp
2nd Level	600 gp
3rd Level	900 gp

Non- Bard Spell Level	Cost
Cantrip	200 gp
1st Level	350 gp
2nd Level	700 gp
3rd Level	1000 gp

AETHER

Medium humanoid (Air Genasi), Lawful Good

Armor Class 10
Hit Points 20
Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	4 (-3)	10 (+0)	15 (+3)	15 (+3)	15 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Con +5
Skills Arcana +5
Damage Resistances Lightning
Languages Common, Primordial

Spellcasting. Aether is a 3rd level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is wisdom (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks. Name has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *Mage Hand*, *Mending*, *Message*
1st Level (4 slots): *Identify*, *Detect Magic*, *Comprehend Languages*
2nd Level (3 slots): *Heat Metal*, *Locate Object*
3rd Level (2 slots): *Dispel Magic*

Additional Magic Secrets. Aether can learn spells from any spellcasting class.

Infuse Magic. Aether performs a ritual, taking 8 hours to infuse a single spell into a rune, including spells she has knowledge of, but can not cast through her normal spellcasting feature. The spell is stored in a rune that can be crushed to cast the stored spell. The effect lasts for 1 month before the spell expires from the rune.

ACTIONS

Carving Tools. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 1 piercing damage.

CREDITS

Written by Collette Quach.
Art by David Markiowsky.

ALANNA MYCEENE

Alanna Myceene is a half-elf, half-earth genasi baker and wild magic sorcerer, who infuses baked goods with wild magic effects. A devout follower of Selune, she offers a warm smile and a caramel-turtle brownie to everyone she meets.

The owner of the Purple Pie bakery, a half-elf with russet skin and silver-ringed, green eyes smiles widely. Several small silver earrings peek out from beneath her dark brown hair, which is cut short and swept to the side. Patches of flour dust her loose clothing. A series of tattoos depicting the phases of the moon are visible along her collarbone.



TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Alanna is a half-elf, half-earth genasi wild magic sorcerer, blessed by Selune. Her innate connection to the lunar goddess manifests through the phases of the moon, which affect her emotions. Her emotions, in turn, affect the manifestations of her magic, which she naturally infuses into everything she creates.

As a bakery owner, she infuses her baked goods with wild magic, resulting in unique flavors, appearances, and magical effects. She is eager to acquire unique ingredients, especially those with rare or magical sources. She often approaches merchants and adventurers to barter for rare goods.

As a master baker, Alanna judges local cooking competitions and teaches cooking classes at her bakery, The Purple Pie, twice a week. She also publishes recipes and answers readers' questions in her column, Cooking for Two, for the local newspaper. She lives above the bakery with her cat and her girlfriend.

BACKGROUND

When Alanna was a few days old, she stopped breathing and died in her sleep. Her parents sought a traveling priestess- an initiate of Selune- to bring her back to life. Under the light of a full moon, the priestess laid Alanna in a shallow pool at the peak of a verdant hill and whispered a prayer. Moments

later, Alanna was revived, with a pair of silver circles encircling her pupils that perfectly matched the color of the full moon.

Ever since Alanna has experienced wild magic that naturally infuses everything she touches. She has maintained a close connection with Selune throughout her life, causing Alanna's moods to fluctuate with the phases of the moon. Despite her warm personality, Alanna often remains emotionally detached; her strong emotions can result in uncontrolled expressions of wild magic. With practice, she learned to control and channel this magic through creative tasks. When she started baking, she began channeling her innate magic to create different colored snacks, unique flavors, and even magical effects within her baked goods.

After opening her bakery, The Purple Pie, she became famous for her magical baked goods: psychedelic lemon lamingtons, goodberry sundaes, color-changing cookies, and everlasting sweetstoppers.

Soon after opening, she began sourcing exotic ingredients, such as powdered basilisk stone, griffon toenails, and dragon scales to spice up her cooking. She is always experimenting with new ingredients and creating new recipes. She has become a local expert on baking and a valuable contact for sourcing rare and expensive fixings.

Alanna has several loved-ones that may be seen in or near the bakery. She lives in a small apartment above the bakery with her girlfriend, Chesh Limnet, a human game designer. Chesh is developing a new expansion set for Three-Dragon Ante and is the taste-tester for Alanna’s latest recipes. Alanna also maintains a friendly relationship with her ex-boyfriend, Xan Grumshire, a half-orc male who is a prominent member of the city’s Lamplighter’s Guild. She found her grumpy, grey cat, Xephyr, when she was a child. He is often found sunbathing in the window of the bakery, where he has a small purple cat bed. Xephyr is primarily nocturnal and sleeps through all but the loudest of ruckuses.

INTERACTIONS

As a shopkeeper, Alanna is kindhearted and often offers leftover baked goods to homeless people, orphans, and others in need. She is known to give baked goods, free of charge, to individuals that look sad or disheartened. Her items are priced high enough to provide income to pay for the cost of ingredients, the bakery, and a modest lifestyle. Alanna knows she could charge more for her baked goods but wants them to remain as accessible as possible. She places more value on new experiences and connections than she values amassing wealth.

As a merchant, Alanna is willing to trade baked goods for rare ingredients she can use in her cooking. She is terrible at bartering and is likely to accept any offer, provided she can afford it. If present, Chesh barter with characters on behalf of Alanna; Chesh drives a much harder bargain.

Alanna is enthusiastic and eager to have customers try her newest products. She is appreciative of anyone who compliments her cooking, especially of those willing to try new things. Additionally, she is a devout follower of Selune and is especially kind to those associated with the lunar goddess.

Alanna has generalized anxiety disorder, quickly becoming overwhelmed by crowds and successive loud noises. When attending parties, she often leaves early or spends her time near the edge of the gathering. If Alanna becomes overly stressed, her eyes begin shedding silver light and wild magical effects manifest around her. Depending on the stress level, she retreats into herself and mentally withdraws from the situation, focusing her attention inward until she is able to calm herself down. These effects naturally recede once she calms down.

ALANNA MYCEENE

Medium humanoid (Human), Neutral Good

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)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Wis +4, Cha +6
Skills Arcana +4, Insight +4
Languages Common, Elvish, Terran

Spellcasting. Alanna is a 9th level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is charisma (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks. Alanna has the following spells prepared:

- Cantrips (at will): firebolt, light, mage hand, prestidigitation
- 1st Level (4 slots): detect magic, mage armor, magic missile, shield
- 2nd Level (3 slots): misty step, suggestion
- 3rd Level (3 slots): counterspell, fireball, fly
- 4th Level (3 slots): greater invisibility, ice storm
- 5th Level (1 slots): cone of cold

Wild Magic Surge. When Alanna casts a spell of 1st level or higher, roll a d20. If you roll a 1, roll on the Wild Magic Surge table (Players Handbook, pg. 104) to create a random magical effect.

ACTIONS

Dagger. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 7 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

CREDITS

Written by Emily Smith.
Art by Sara Rude-McCune.

ANGELA NYTEMYRE

Angela is a former adventurer turned potion maker. She's headstrong, independent and self-assured, but is kind and welcoming to those that visit her shop.

As you enter the shop, the smell of herbs, flowers, and dirt fills your nose. A slender, human woman, wearing a simple dress colored various shades of green is working behind the counter. Her auburn hair is a little frazzled though generally well-kept and if it weren't for the rounded ears, she could almost pass for an elf. She looks up at you with a friendly smile and welcomes you in.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Angela is a former adventurer, turned pacifist. She is genuinely kind and friendly, a little absent-minded and clumsy at times but she makes up for this with her strong will. She approaches problems head on and has a complete disregard for what others may think of her. When she gets extremely busy or is faced with a difficult problem, Angela often starts pacing around her work area, talking quickly to herself to work through her problems.

Angela has sufficient knowledge and skills to create almost any kind potion, if provided with the proper ingredients. However, most of her time is spent crafting supplies of the more common potions she used in her time as an adventurer. Angela is very private about her former life as an adventurer and won't generally talk about it unless given a compelling reason.

Angela is demisexual. While she appreciates and enjoys developing close relationships, she tends to gently brush aside direct attempts to woo her and not notice subtle flirting. If a suitor continues to pursue her, Angela makes her feelings clear in a straight and concise manner. She avoids being mean or cruel but may get irritated or confused at the continued attention. Angela may be open to a romantic partner as long as a close friendship has already been established.

BACKGROUND

Angela was found abandoned as a young child by a small group of elven druids. They took her in and raised her as one of their own. As Angela entered adulthood, she found herself growing restless among the elves. She had heard stories of great adventurers and longed to be able to make an impact on the world. Shortly thereafter, Angela packed up her few possessions and left.

She soon found a group of friends with similar aspirations and they spent several years traveling, helping where they could. Angela's adventuring career ended when she and her companions were sought out by the leader of a



village being overrun by a lich and their zombie horde. Angela and her companions were able to vanquish the lich, but at a great cost. Only she and the group's cleric, Dean, survived. Angela retired from adventuring immediately, choosing to settle down in a small village and become a potion maker. She still maintains a close friendship with Dean and is frequently looking for couriers to deliver letters to him.

INTERACTIONS

Angela is more interested in helping adventurers stay alive than in making a profit off her wares. She will haggle the price of her potions and even offer her goods to a customer in trade for fresh alchemical ingredients or other services if they do not have the coin. She relies on adventurers to procure the most rare ingredients she uses in her potions and will offer her services as a spellcaster to those she has come to trust.

As a pacifist, Angela avoids becoming embroiled in conflict where possible, but will employ her spellcasting abilities to immobilize combatants or control the battlefield in an attempt to end hostilities before anyone dies.

CREDITS

Written by Blake Origer.

Art by David Markiowsky.

ANGELA NYTEMYRE

Medium humanoid (Human), Chaotic Good

Armor Class 12 (No Armor)

Hit Points 84 (12d8+24)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Int +6, Wis +8

Skills Medicine +8, Nature +6, Perception +8

Languages Common, Druidic, Sylvan, Elvish

Spellcasting. Angela Nytemyre is a 12th level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). She has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *Druidcraft*, *Mending*, *Shape Water*

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 (2 slots): *Mass Cure Wounds*, *Reincarnate*

6th level (1 slot): *Heal*

Change Shape (2/Day). Angela magically polymorphs into a beast or elemental with a challenge rating of 4 or less, and can remain in this form for up to 6 hours. She can choose whether her equipment falls to the ground, melds with her new form, or is worn by the new form. She reverts to her true form if she dies or falls unconscious. Angela can revert to her true form using a bonus action on her turn.

While in a new form, Angela Nytemyre retains her game statistics and ability to speak, but her AC, movement modes, Strength, and Dexterity are replaced by those of the new form, and she gains any special senses, proficiencies, traits, actions, and reactions (except class features, legendary actions, and lair actions) that the new form has but that she lacks.

The new form's attacks count as magical for the purpose of overcoming resistances and immunity to nonmagical attacks.

ACTIONS

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage.

MASTER COLETTE ABBAN

Colette is a master weaponsmith famed on multiple continents for the quality of her work. Now that arthritis is getting a grip on her back, she is gradually shifting over to passing on her knowledge to gifted apprentices.

The smell of the forge - hot metal and coal fires - clings around Colette, worked into the leather of her apron and the curls of her hair. She is stout, soft around the middle but still strong and muscular, and the look she gives you is that of a woman who doesn't suffer fools.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Colette is a master of her craft and fully aware of her skill and value. She exudes a quiet, firm, confidence that can quickly shut down any nonsense. She is not one to waste words on small talk or arguments. Having spent more than two decades in the business of making and selling weapons she has become exceptionally shrewd. It is said that the last person who tried to swindle Colette left her shop with less gold than they walked in with and a profound confusion about what just happened.

She charges top prices for her goods because they're the best quality, not because she is a famous smith – even though she is, a fact of which she is quietly proud.

It is getting harder and harder to acquire a 'genuine' Abban blade. Colette takes fewer commissions every year – which only increases the demand. She never admits it to anyone else, and rarely even to herself, but she has been affected by arthritis in her back for the last several years. Although she would rather cut off a limb than show she is in pain, she spends most of her time sitting in a chair in her store or overseeing the work of her apprentices. Increasingly, there are hints of her pain on her face: an occasional flinch and lines carved into her skin from maintaining a stony unemotional expression.



There is great demand to become one of her apprentices, even though Colette is famously hard on them, working them long hours and teaching them the finer details of metallurgy before they ever get to put hammer to steel. She is selective about who she takes on: no one frivolous, no one who talks back, and no one too proud to learn. At least, that is what she says. In reality, she has got a soft spot for those who display kindness, though she herself is not kind.

Colette would also consider taking on a talented enchanter: as smithing gets harder, she would like to learn the secrets of how to pour magic into steel.

BACKGROUND

Colette owns her shop, the forge behind it, and the small, cozy set of rooms above it. She has worked hard for that independence from the day she first walked into the forge. Back then it was owned by a gruff dwarven master smith by the name of Eoin. Colette visited every day for over a month to wear him down. Eventually, he agreed to take on a human teenager as an apprentice.

Since then she has made swords for princes and heroes, mighty weapons that have been used to bring down some of the greatest evils in the land: monsters and villains, and, sometimes, good people who didn't deserve to bleed. While Colette would firmly say that it is no business of hers what her swords do once they leave her hands, she is cautious about who she sells to these days: anyone who gives her a bad feeling gets sent away empty-handed. She would rather miss out on a sale than add to her small collection of regrets.

One of those regrets is bigger than any other. Few people know that the sentient longsword Viper was made by her hand. She sold it to a warrior, who gave it to a wizard, who enchanted it, which made it powerful and hungry for blood. Every year brings a new story of its misdeeds in some villainous hand. To Colette, it is like watching a child go bad. If she ever had the chance or found someone she trusted to do it in her place, she would take back that sword and melt it down.

INTERACTIONS

Player characters are most likely to encounter Colette as a merchant. She does not haggle. She knows exactly how much she is worth. She also doesn't scare easy. Threats or attempts to bully her are likely to be met with a derisive laugh and orders to get out of her shop.

Colette would also make an interesting mentor, though a student would have to seriously prove themselves before Colette would consider them. She is a stern mentor, and demanding, but she shares her knowledge freely.

Alternatively, Colette might approach characters to teach her how to enchant weapons instead of making them; if so, she will be reluctant to admit she is a beginner and describe it as an exchange of skills rather than a favour to her.

STATISTICS

Master Colette uses the statistics of a **commoner** (Monster Manual, pg. 345), with the following modifications:

- Strength score of 16, Intelligence and Wisdom scores of 14
- +9 to skill checks using smiths tools
- Speaks Dwarven

CREDITS

Written by Catherine Evans.

Art by Gordon McAlpin.

VELUM SAHAR

Velum Sahar is a portly adult with brown skin and long curly hair that works in a chandlery. Their thick hands are covered in burn scars and calluses from years of work. They welcome customers with a warm smile and navigate their shop with careful movements lest they topple the intricate displays of candles and soaps they spend hours setting up each morning.

This chandler stands behind a long, low table covered in piles of carefully molded bits of wax and soaps. They are a hulk of muscle and fat, with soft brown skin and a mass of black curly hair. Bent over their current project, thick hands wrapped around tiny carving tools they are carving intricate patterns in a bar of soap. When they hear people enter their shop, they look up, and greet you with a warm smile reminiscent of an old friend welcoming you home.

destroy their stock. They point out to anyone they see using it that magic and spells are strictly forbidden in the chandlery.

If someone shakes hands with Velum in greeting or to mark a deal they will notice the immense number of burns and calluses on their skin from years of work with hot wax and fire, but this doesn't impede Velum's strength or hand coordination.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Velum is warm, open, and always eager to please. They treat their customers with care and attention, offering samples of their soaps to test on their skin or taking candles off their shop displays to show off the delicate carvings Velum crafts into the wax.

They speak in a soft voice but are not quiet, using gentle tones and making a point of asking others for their opinions and thoughts to make them feel included in the conversation. When explaining prices, Velum will usually end with an invitation for bundles or deals to encourage people to come back and help them feel like they've been taken care of. However, Velum is no pushover; if they sense someone taking advantage of their good nature, they are quick to square their shoulders and push them out of the shop, by force if they have to.

They move with caution around the shop, which is crowded with several tables displaying artfully arranged piles of soap or candles. Velum's large stature makes it difficult to move in crowded spaces so they take care not to accidentally bump into anything, especially on tables where candles are lit. Velum fears fire more than anything as it would



Velum most enjoys custom orders. They carve patterns and designs into their products and enjoy when they can spend hours crafting a candle or soap for a special occasion like a wedding or birthday.

Velum is soft on families that come into the shop and adores children. Their friendly nature and kindness to local children has also endeared them to other shopkeepers and families living around them. Velum has a good rapport with local merchants and when they are not working they are often visiting other stores to chat with the owners.

BACKGROUND

Velum grew up with parents who bought and sold animals, seeing the many ways they were used by people for farming, food, and transport. Velum would often wander the market shops while their parents haggled with tellers, perusing wares and getting a sense for the value of including a personal touch in crafting. These experiences inspired Velum's work today. Velum's parents also fueled their hatred of waste. Their parents never wanted their livestock to be wasted and Velum is the same with their candles, encouraging customers to return excess or unused wax and fat so they can smelt it to forge new candles.

During Velum's adolescence, a band of adventurers stole a group of horses from their parents and set fire to their barn, killing the rest of the animals. The experience left their family devastated and destitute for the next four years, and Velum never entirely forgave the people who did it. As a result, although they don't ban adventurers from their shop, they are highly wary of them and quick to get angry at any idle fire magic they see around their property.

Velum's parents are retired and live in Velum's home above their chandlery. Money is tight, in part because Velum doesn't mark up their prices as much as they could, but the family is relatively content.

INTERACTIONS

Velum doesn't care much for magic, especially fire magic. If they catch anyone using magic in the chandlery, the person will be politely asked to leave. If they refuse, Velum will use their physical strength and imposing stature to intimidate them to leave, but will not enter into any physical confrontation. Instead, if an unruly customer won't leave, as a last resort, Velum will call the local guard to have them removed.

Velum is sympathetic to anyone in poor circumstances who is lacking money or food. While they can't offer long term help much as a chandler, they're happy to offer a kind ear to listen to anyone's woes.

Velum is open to haggling for their products and tries to be accommodating, though they won't go so low as to break their own funds or sell at a loss.

If children come into the shop, Velum likes to give them scrap bits of soaps that have been infused with pleasant scents, or bits of wax the kids can mold or chew on like gum.

STATISTICS

Velum uses the statistics of a **commoner** (Monster Manual, pg. 345).

CREDITS

Written by Chai Power.

Art by Corin Kumamoto.

ALEYA VENSYS

Aleya, a wood elf warlock, can often be found using her magic to assist with her research as she travels the realms in search of new and interesting information. She's a dedicated researcher and scientist and is typically willing to trade information with new friends.

A dark-skinned elven woman stands in front of you, muttering under her breath. She waves at the pile of large rocks next to her and it comes to life, stacking into a humanoid form and reaching up into a nearby tree. The elemental hands her the flower it retrieved, and the woman continues muttering as she examines it.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Aleya's thirst for knowledge prevents her from staying still for long. She travels the world, staying in one place only for as long as it takes to learn everything she can before her curiosity propels her elsewhere. Though she would ideally use her knowledge for good, she hasn't stopped researching long enough to take direct action with it, instead passing on what she learns to any who know how to ask. Because she spends so much time observing rather than interacting, she approaches communication scientifically and might try several different strategies to compare results.

Through her bargain with her archfey patron, Aleya has taken on some personality traits typical of the fey: she can sometimes be tricky or manipulative, and she insists on making deals when she believes she has the upper hand. She doesn't do this to be cruel, however, so her deals are always fair.

Crag. An **earth elemental** (Monster Manual, pg. 124) Aleya summons when she needs an assistant while she works or in combat, is her closest friend. They communicate with Aleya through a system of grunts and hand gestures. Crag protects Aleya with a fierce devotion and will attack anyone who attacks her. Aleya can attempt to calm Crag if she wants to try to end the encounter peacefully, but Crag continues to attack as long as Aleya takes damage.

BACKGROUND

As a child, Aleya witnessed a terrible war which destroyed entire towns and forests. When the war reached her home, she made a bargain with an archfey of the spring court for the power to regrow the forests of her childhood home. Since she was too young to join the fight at the time, keeping the forest alive was all she could do while her family and neighbors battled.



After the fighting ended, Aleya discovered a part of the forest that no amount of magic could heal. While searching for a possible cause, Aleya discovered her love for knowledge. Though she's still searching for a way to cure that dead patch of forest, she has learned so much in her centuries of study that she has many other quests now, as well. She's always on the hunt for new and interesting information, and she loves a mystery.

About a century ago, Aleya learned her archfey patron may not be who she initially claimed to be, and her current research revolves around her true identity. Her relationship with her patron is personal, and she doesn't reveal who she made a pact with, but she is easily distracted by any research about the fey, especially old, powerful fey of the spring court.

INTERACTIONS

Aleya, while very charismatic, doesn't always fully understand interactions with other people if they don't serve a purpose. She doesn't mean to be rude, but she has better things to do than stand around chatting when there's studying to do. She tends to speak quickly, trailing off as she's distracted by some new idea or plan. If promised some new information, Aleya can be made to focus, and she speaks at length if questioned about a particularly exciting bit of research. Though she is happy to share her knowledge, Aleya is well aware that everything comes at a cost, and she expects bargains to be struck for the exchange of knowledge, even if she reveals her part before making a deal.

If she meets a group that piques her interest, she attempts to analyze the group while speaking with them, asking prompting or leading questions, making vague remarks about her research, or even attempting to convince people to participate in an experiment. She may even whip out her notebook and jot a few things down in coded shorthand.

Aleya's fascination with knowledge can also be her weakness—she may be willing to make unfavorable deals to learn something new, and though she's intelligent, she often falls into obvious traps when baited with the promise of information. While Aleya is interested in many topics, the promise of information about old fey is the quickest way to grab her attention. There is no amount of convincing, however, that can persuade her to reveal why she wants this information.

She is a scientist first, and though she's fully capable of defending herself if needed, she doesn't enjoy combat and tries to trick or manipulate her way out of it. If she's attacked, Crag keeps Aleya behind them and attempts to push fights away from her.

Crag does not interact with strangers except to protect Aleya in battle. Otherwise, they tend to carry heavy things, lift Aleya up for better reach, or gather simple objects from surrounding areas as Aleya's research assistant.

STATISTICS

Aleya uses the statistics of a **warlock of the archfey** (Volo's Guide to Monsters, pg. 219), with the following additions:

- **Mask of the Wild.** Aleya can attempt to hide when only lightly obscured by foliage, heavy rain, falling snow, mist, or other natural phenomena.
- **Fey Presence (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).** Each creature in a 10-ft. cube originating from Aleya must make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or become charmed or frightened by her (her choice) until the end of her next turn.
- **Elemental Friend.** Aleya's intensive research led her to developing a tweak on the conjure elemental spell. Twice per day, Aleya can summon Crag, and the spell's duration is 4 hours. Even if Aleya's concentration is broken during that time, Crag does not become hostile, but they are less useful as a research assistant and instead turn to shielding Aleya from potential threats.

CREDITS

Written by Jessica Ross.

Art by Amelia Ng.

ALLISON

Allison is a human necromancer who is often seen riding through town with her large horse-drawn wagon mounted with two ballistas. She is always helping locals and questing travelers or out on her own adventures in search of knowledge and herbs for her arcane research and potion making at the local Mage's Guild.

Horses feet and the clatter of wooden wagon wheels approach the guild. A woman's voice halts the horses, and a tall slender woman with a long blonde braid and mages guild robes climbs down from the wagon. She collects a leather bag, staff, and a large burlap sack from the back of the wagon and warmly greets those nearby. A few passing bystanders hesitate as they see skeletal remains between the folds of her sack.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Allison is a good aligned, human necromancer. She is a young member of the Mages Guild and was trained in the arts of wizardry and the weave since childhood. She was mentored by a powerful sorceress elder in a small town, magically tucked away in an ancient Northern forest home to druids and spellcasters. Allison is regularly seen riding a large, horse drawn wagon mounted with massive crossbows, Allison has a talent for alchemy, herbalism, and brewing potions. She spends a lot of time at the Mages Guild studying arcane knowledge discovered on her travels.

Allison is calm, intelligent, and friendly, but some feel uneasy around her due to her necromantic practices and her friendly ties to odd arcanists such as the Keepers (Unaligned worshipers of Vecna who follow him for his deep knowledge of the dark arcane arts and not for his evil deeds. The Keepers protect vast hidden archives, view all alignments of magic as valuable and seek knowledge for intellectual and archival purposes.)

Allison carries a large burlap sack, usually thrown over her shoulder or tucked away with other supplies in the back of her wagon. This sack is filled with the bones of seasoned heroes and arcanists to aid in the fight against injustice and evil when raised from the dead by Allison's arcane power.

Allison is easy to get along with and not afraid to share her opinion, speak up if she witnesses injustice, or step into battle if required. She is always willing to aid fellow spell casters and adventurers in need, especially if the mission helps her find rare arcane books to add to her collection.

Allison is confident and sees no issue with being a little out of the ordinary. She strives not to judge others by their appearance and background and believes everyone has knowledge to offer. Undesirable places are no obstacle in her search for knowledge.



Allison is well known within the Mages Guild, so make sure not to run off with her wagon without her! She is in contact with a diverse group of spellcasters and has some unique friends such as the keepers, eccentric wizards, and good aligned goblin sages. She views necromancy as a gift that has received negative stereotyping and believes the art can be used for the greater good when practiced ethically.

BACKGROUND

Allison’s parents were both spellcasters and adventurers while she was growing up. Her mother was a power cleric of the Red Knight and her father a supportive wizard. They had the Mages Guild take care of her and educate her while they were out protecting the forest. Growing up at the Guild, Allison was exposed to many different spellcasting arts and gained a wide array of interests from her mentors. Allison was always fascinated with the magic of life itself and the phenomena of consciousness which led her to her studies and research into necromancy.

INTERACTIONS

Allison will not turn down an adventure when asked for help and will freely offer supplies such as potions or spell scrolls from her lab in the Mage’s Guild. (See Allison’s Aid Roll Table below.) She is protective of those who stand up to adversity or seek to harm the vulnerable

1d10	Item from Allison
1	Color Spray Spell Scroll
2	Acid Arrow Spell Scroll
3	Aura of Life Spell Scroll
4	Potion of Vitality
5	Chromatic Orb Spell Scroll
6	Potion of Longevity
7	Alchemist’s Fire
8	Potion of Greater Healing
9	Snare Spell Scroll
10	Oil of Sharpness

Allison is not easily intimidated by strange creatures and monsters, and is quick to utilize diplomacy with creatures most adventures would be scared of. She has no interest in lavish gifts but is happy to barter for knowledge and arcane books or scrolls. If there is downtime while traveling, she is usually collecting

herbs, mixing potions, or reading. Those who encounter her in her lab, may find her performing necromantic experiments on plants or small animals who have passed in the nearby woodlands.

ALLISON

Medium humanoid (Human), Neutral Good

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

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

Saving Throws Int +6, Wis +4
Skills Arcana +6, History +6, Herbalism Kit +6
Senses Passive Perception 11
Languages Common and any two languages

Spellcasting. Allison is a 9th level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). Allison has the following spells prepared:
Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt, mending, minor illusion, ray of frost*
1st Level (4 slots): *chromatic orb, catapult, ice knife, mage armor*
2nd Level (3 slots): *hold person, levitate*
3rd Level (3 slots): *animate the dead, lightning bolt*
4th Level (3 slots): *storm sphere, arcane eye*
5th level (2 slots): *hold monster*
2/day: *bestow curse, color spray*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Allison can make three attacks with her staff.
Staff. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6) bludgeoning damage, or 5 (1d8) bludgeoning damage if used as a two handed weapon.
Summon Mummy (1/day). Allison can summon a **mummy** (Monster Manual, pg. 228) to fight on her side.

CREDITS

Written by Elise Cretel.
Art by Luciella Elisabeth Scarlett.

FELIX AMBERTIDE

A young, half-elf cartographer, with dreams of adventure and exploration, who constantly battles to overcome his severe anxiety disorder.

A short half-elf man labors under the weight of an impossibly large pack overflowing with scrolls, rolled maps, books, cooking supplies, and all manner of other things. He has a nest of unkempt sandy blonde hair, sea blue eyes that he keeps meekly trained on the ground, and a thin-framed pair of spectacles that slide repeatedly down the bridge of his nose.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Felix is a highly skilled cartographer, trained in the royal academy. He is passionate about the history of ancient and lost civilizations and spends his spare time reading the accounts of the historians and adventurers who have studied them. He has spent countless hours tracking down whispers and rumors of ancient ruins and charting their locations on his maps in preparation for future expeditions. As part of these preparations, Felix has saved a considerable amount of money, created cost estimates and lists of supplies, and has even gathered names of supply caravans, guides, and adventurers that he might want to hire for a dozen different expeditions. Despite all his preparations and having read the accounts of a hundred others who came before him, Felix's severe anxiety keeps him from embarking on an expedition of his own.

Felix often visits the taverns frequented by adventurers but finds himself paralyzed by his anxiety when he thinks about approaching them. Most of the serving staff and many of the patrons in these taverns have seen him around, but they have never exchanged more than a few words with him before Felix stammers an apology, excuses himself from the conversation, and flees the tavern.

Felix's anxiety manifests largely in fears that he is not worth anyone's attention, that he is not wanted, and that he does not belong. These fears have kept



him from pursuing meaningful friendships and relationships in his adult life. More recently, as he has acquired his own studio and begun saving for potential expeditions, Felix has begun to feel anxiety about thieves and arsonists destroying, damaging, or stealing his property. This has caused him to add additional locks to his doors and windows and to carry most of his possessions in an extremely large pack wherever he goes.

Anxiety disorder: A chronic condition characterized by an excessive and persistent sense of apprehension, with physical symptoms such as sweating, palpitations, and feelings of stress.

BACKGROUND

Felix grew up poorer than most, but not so poor as to have been driven to begging. He was raised by his mother Alaina, a human woman who was left to raise Felix alone when his elven father was killed after falling in with one of the city's criminal gangs. Alaina took odd jobs wherever she could, bringing in just enough coin to keep food on the table, though not enough to maintain any long term home for her and Felix. As a result, Felix's childhood was spent moving from place to place, often living stretches at a time with friends of his mother or in boarding houses until they were inevitably kicked out.

Throughout his childhood, art became Felix's escape from the desperate reality of his life. He began drawing at an early age, crafting stories and characters in his head, then putting charcoal to paper to bring them to life. At the age of ten, Felix snuck into a library and paged through a book of history for the first time. Seeing the illustrated maps of cities long gone and reading the accounts of the adventurers who discovered the ruins opened his mind to another world.

At the age of 17, Felix left his mother to attend the Royal Academy on a scholarship to become a cartographer. Finally given a stable life, Felix blossomed, devoting every spare moment to his studies. He pioneered a new method of mapping in three dimensions, which could be used to accurately map the tunnels of the Underdark. However, as his studies ended and he was forced to seek his own lodging and employment, he was assaulted by the onset of his anxiety disorder, leading him to abandon work on many of his projects and isolate himself from most of the people he knew in his academic life.

INTERACTIONS

Felix is friendly, but quick to end conversations as his anxiety mounts. He craves companionship, but inevitably pushes away those around him. He is hesitant to reveal his inner thoughts or details of his past until he is sure that he won't be rejected.

If the adventurers have been in the city for any length of time, Felix has already heard of them and possibly seen them moving around the city. He may go so far as to inquire about their rates for his future

expeditions (something he has done with numerous adventuring groups, though he has never hired any of them). If someone inquires about the expeditions he is planning, Felix becomes excited and animated in describing them and reveals all his detailed plans for his adventures. However, if real plans to pursue the adventures are made, Felix requires constant reassurance to keep his anxiety at bay and may try to abandon the plans before setting out for the expedition.

If engaged in combat, Felix's first instinct is to run, but he can draw on the limited magic he learned in his time at the Royal Academy to defend himself.

FELIX AMBERTIDE

Medium humanoid, lawful good

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 13 (3d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR

9 (+0)

DEX

13 (+1)

CON

10 (+0)

INT

16 (+3)

WIS

12 (+1)

CHA

8 (-1)

Skills Investigation +6, Perception +3

Languages Common, Celestial, Dwarvish, Elvish

Innate Spellcasting. Felix is a 3rd level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). Felix has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *firebolt*, *light*, *mending*

1st Level (4 slots): *burning hands*, *comprehend languages*, *illusory script*, *shield*

2nd Level (2 slots): *invisibility*, *locate object*

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 4 (1d4+1) piercing damage.

CREDITS

Written by David Markiowsky.

Art by David Markiowsky.

JYOTSANA ACHARYA

Jyotsana Acharya is a brilliant and somewhat shy aasimar astronomer and navigator on a quest to discern her purpose. She is generally not interested in sex, but she sometimes finds herself attracted to women with whom she has formed strong bonds.

Before you is a tall woman of radiant beauty, with brilliant topaz eyes and dark tawny skin that almost seems to shimmer. Her long and lustrous black hair is woven into a loose braid, which hangs down in front of her right shoulder. She wears a long, beautifully made yellow tunic and billowy leg coverings. On her hip appears to be a spyglass in a leather case, and an ornate dagger. Her only jewelry is a simple-looking gold ring on her right hand.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Kind and generous, Jyotsana quietly offers what help she can to those in need, whether it be food, a bit of coin, or a friendly smile. She prefers not to draw attention to herself, though this is not entirely out of humility; still coming to terms with her celestial heritage, she's realized that it's sometimes wise to be cautious around strangers. Around those she knows and trusts, however, Jyotsana's true joyful self shines through. She has a beautiful singing voice, which most people have never heard; Jyotsana usually sings when she believes she's alone, her emotions coming through in her choice of song. When she's happily deep in her studies, astute listeners can hear her softly humming a tune to herself as she reads.

Money is rarely a motivation for her, beyond what she needs to survive. In her quest to discern her purpose, she travels frequently. She keeps few possessions, but will eagerly borrow any book and read it thoroughly. Blessed with a keen mind, she has a talent for remembering what she sees and hears, which she supplements with a journal documenting her travels.



BACKGROUND

Jyotsana's father, a scholar and mathematician, was the headmaster of a prestigious academy, and both parents delighted in filling their home with books and conversations with family and guests alike. She developed a love of learning, and was drawn particularly to the stars. From her youngest days, Jyotsana felt most comfortable at night, under a canopy of stars or bathed in moonlight. She excelled in her studies, learning to chart the movements of the sky.

Around the time that she was coming of age, a fire broke out in the academy. It could have been much worse, and thankfully no lives were lost, but it did damage to the library and other precious holdings and was incredibly stressful for everyone. As she was rushing around to help salvage what she could, Jyotsana - overwhelmed and exhausted - suddenly began speaking in a different language. Her father was the only one who recognized it for what it was: Celestial, a tongue she'd never learned or even heard before.

Good people by nature, and inclined towards religious devotion, the family decided that there was something happening that Jyotsana needed to investigate - that the gods, perhaps, were calling to her and that she wasn't going to find her answers by staying in the library. Though it pained her to leave her family, Jyotsana set out on her own. Before long, she was on a ship. The navigator, impressed with her knowledge of the skies, took Jyotsana under her wing and taught her all she knew. The ring that adorns her right hand is both a practical navigational tool and a cherished reminder of that relationship. To the untrained eye, this ring appears like any other gold band. Close inspection reveals it to be an astronomical instrument in disguise. Composed of several rings and meridians, this ingenious device can serve as both an astrolabe and a sundial when opened.

INTERACTIONS

Jyotsana is a smart, beautiful woman who has seen and heard much, and she knows what she is not willing to tolerate. Characters wishing to connect with Jyotsana have the greatest chance of success by first appealing to her intellect and skills. Jyotsana is not swayed by those who try to charm her into offering her aid, and does not take kindly to unwanted advances; there's a reason she carries a dagger these days, despite her innate preference for nonviolence. She delights in knowledge in all forms, and will happily share what she knows with those who ask - most of the time. Politeness definitely helps. She is inclined towards forming bonds with kind women who share her love of adventure.

Jyotsana offers a unique combination of talents that may be of interest to characters who meet her. While sometimes sought for general scholarly advice, or insight into religious matters, Jyotsana is a skilled navigator; a party looking to set sail upon the sea could bring her on as a member of the crew. Present her with the opportunity to deepen her

understanding of the world, or pursue a worthy cause, and she'll almost assuredly take the job.

Jyotsana frequents places where she can observe and learn. Sometimes this means libraries or schools, but it's just as likely to be a marketplace where she can people-watch and engage in conversation with those who seem to have interesting stories to tell. Musicians always draw her attention and favor, unless their performance is of a vulgar variety.

JYOTSANA ACHARYA

Medium humanoid (Aasimar), Neutral Good

Armor Class 10
Hit Points 21
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	17 (+4)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Int +6, Wis +5
Skills Perception +5 Nature +6 Investigation +6 Religion +6
Damage Resistances necrotic, radiant
Senses Darkvision 60 ft.
Languages Common, Celestial, Draconic, Elvish

Light Bearer. Jyotsana can cast the light cantrip at will. Charisma is her spellcasting ability for it.

Radiant Soul. Jyotsana can use her action to unleash the divine energy within herself, causing her eyes to glimmer and two luminous, incorporeal wings to sprout from her back. Her transformation lasts for 1 minute or until she ends it as a bonus action. During it, she has a flying speed of 30 feet, and once on each of her turns, she can deal an additional 4 pts of extra radiant damage to one target when she deals damage to it with an attack or a spell. Once she uses this trait, she can't use it again until she finishes a long rest.

ACTIONS

Dagger. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 4 (1d4) piercing damage.
Healing Hands. As an action, Jyotsana can touch a creature and cause it to regain 4 hit points.

CREDITS

Written by Lynne M Meyer.
Art by Gwen Bassett.

KIMRI GODSBLADE

Kimri is a bisexual dwarf and travelling researcher, seeking tales and myths from across the world to compile a complete History of the Dwarves. She's as likely to be seen with an axe in her hand as a book, because secrets don't always go quietly.

A dwarf with long, braided copper hair trailing over her well-worn plate armor takes in her surroundings. Across her back, she carries a dwarven war axe over a curious, shield-sized book, bound in metal. A slash cuts across the sigil on the book's cover.

her research freely. Kimri disdains secrecy and subterfuge in all its forms, although she has learned to grudgingly appreciate stealth when she must. Kimri has also clashed with fellow dwarves who dislike her sharing of dwarven culture and history, but Kimri believes that her own upbringing would have been less full of longing if these stories were more widely shared.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

To Kimri, the world is divided into three groups: fools, students, and fellow scholars. Just about everyone she meets starts out as a student, in her eyes. She will share anything she knows with anyone who asks, shifting immediately into the attitude of a teacher — unless she has reason to think the questioner will misuse the knowledge. Such people are fools, and Kimri is very impatient with fools.

Kimri is primarily interested in dwarven history, but believes no knowledge earnestly gained is ever wasted. She can be arrogant at times, but counters that arrogance with a readiness to admit when she doesn't know something.

Kimri is generally disinterested in treasure for treasure's sake, but even the most dedicated researcher needs to eat, so she occasionally takes mercenary jobs to support herself. She's selective about what jobs she takes — her early training was as a paladin, after all, and she has a strong moral code as a result. She will turn her axe to the defense of the weak whenever she can.

Kimri's research means that she's well-connected among the scholarly community. Other researchers view her as eccentric; some are aghast at her adventurous spirit and fighting skills, while others simply shake their heads at her willingness to share



BACKGROUND

Kimri grew up in a human city, surrounded almost entirely by humans, save for her family. Her parents — a paladin and a mercenary — had a painful history they didn't like to discuss, heightening Kimri's sense of disconnection from her dwarven roots. Kimri trained as a paladin, following in her father's footsteps, but took up traveling and study when she reached maturity, seeking the stories and history her upbringing did not impart. At times, she has wondered if her constant travels are doing more harm than good to her search.

Kimri's travels have taken her far from home over the past 25 years. She has studied at remote monasteries, delved forbidden dungeons, and even saved a noble mage from an assassination plot with nothing to defeat the would-be assassin but her research book and a scathing lecture. She bears that research book as a shield, after the grateful mage enchanted it for her — the slash across its cover is a reminder of that day, and symbolizes to her the power of knowledge.

INTERACTIONS

If the adventurers are going somewhere Kimri would like to go, or have a common goal with Kimri, she will readily suggest working together to achieve it. Kimri will be a stalwart ally until they meet that goal, offering whatever knowledge and protection she can.

If the adventurers want information she already has, she is likely to share it freely. If she doesn't have the information but knows where to get it, she's likely to request that she accompany the adventurers — first-hand sources are always best, and she doesn't want anyone to get hurt in their questing.

If, at any point, Kimri is around a campfire or quiet pub table, she's likely to start telling stories of her adventures — especially if an adventurer is willing to swap stories with her. She's a riveting storyteller and has had many wild adventures to choose from. Kimri is also a genuinely interested listener if someone has their own stories to share in return. She will immediately count as friends any adventurers who trade tales with her.

If a character flirts with Kimri, she is likely to be easily flustered. She is most likely to be interested in characters who are unlike her in some way, but who have earned her respect — gender is not a factor for Kimri. If they've traded tales or Kimri has reason

to respect their intellect, she's more likely to be interested in the flirtation, but if she thinks of them as a fool or a young student she will let them down gently but bluntly.

If Kimri accompanies the adventurers into combat, she is likely to fight on the front lines or act as a healer whenever possible. She wears plate armor, carries her book-shield, and wields her dwarven war-axe with skill. Her skill with lectures and storytelling can also manifest as bardic inspiration. Kimri will focus on defending the weaker adventurers whenever possible.

STATISTICS

Kimri uses the statistics of a **war priest** (Volo's Guide to Monsters, pg. 218), with the following addition:

- Bardic Storytelling. Kimri can spend 1 minute telling a story or giving a lecture. Up to 10 creatures who hear her become inspired for up to 1 hour. Once within the next 1 hour, an inspired creature can roll a d6 and add that number to one ability check, attack roll or saving throw it makes. The creature can wait until after it rolls the d20 before deciding to use the Bardic Storytelling die, but must decide before the DM says whether the roll succeeds or fails.

Kimri can use this feature once, regaining its use when she completes a short or long rest.

CREDITS

Written by Stephanie Lee.

Art by Corin Kumamoto.

ARPEUS THISTLEFOOT

A genderqueer gnome gardener whose heart for helping others is almost as big as her love of smoking. She is a night owl.

Sitting with a bright blue eye trained on the bowl of her pipe, a gnome dressed in plain shirt and trousers with suspenders smiles as smoke snakes its way through her teeth. Her untamed hair casts a shadow on her face, countered only by the light from the embers in her pipe.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Arpeus is motivated by an underlying desire to be appreciated and belong. She believes everyone is capable of doing better than they are now and she dreams of a world where everyone looks out for each other. If someone needs help, she will do her best to help in whatever way she can. She can be stubborn and unwavering in her own sense of right and wrong. She regards authority with suspicion and contempt. She hates bullies and stands up for underdogs.

She is rather direct and speaks plainly, but is inclined to keep silent when others speak. Arpeus learned the value of discussion during her time as formal student of the arcane. She waits until she has heard what others have said so that she may offer her impassioned opinion when the time is right. She is a slow and methodical person who takes pride in her work as a gardener. Any time that she feels rushed to finish something, she is likely to be terse and display signs of stress on her face.

Arpeus sleeps during the day and usually can't be found out and about before the sun begins to set. If she is up during the day, she is usually cantankerous and short-tempered.



Delayed Sleep-Phase Disorder: A sleep condition in the family of circadian rhythm disorders that can cause people to have an offset or completely inverted sleep schedule. People with this sleep condition may sleep during part or all throughout the day. Only mild cases can be treated with light therapy, over-the-counter medication, and disciplined sleep regimens.

People often end up talking to her simply because she is there: the garden, the tavern, or wherever. The people of the town know her for her willingness to help get something done. Always with her corncob pipe in her mouth, Arpeus rarely stops smoking and as such her voice has a bit a rasp to it. She gets defensive when people criticize her smoking.

BACKGROUND

Arpeus once studied to become a wizard, but her independent spirit rubbed her wealthy, entitled peers and self-important teachers the wrong way. She abandoned her pursuit of the arcane and wandered aimlessly from job to job as hired help. For a time, she was a drifter who was unknown to everyone. Fear and distrust of strangers made life difficult for her, even landing her in jail a couple times.

She had many friends and acquaintances during her time as an arcane student. Arpeus always made time for them, but often found herself alone when the day was through. Though the people she called friends abandoned her when they received the support they needed from her, she is always ready to help potential friends in the hopes of being truly appreciated.

INTERACTIONS

In the Know. Any time someone talks to her she will immediately see it as an opportunity to get comfortable and light her pipe. If a person were to tell her to stop smoking, she would likely blow smoke in their face and walk off. She has no time for people who try to tell her how to live her life.

Under Pressure. Pushing her to do anything quickly will make her self-conscious, irritable, and likely to make mistakes such as dropping and breaking important items.

Daysleep. If she's out during the day, it means she's off her sleep schedule and likely quite cranky about it. She uses colorful metaphors more frequently, insults people who waste her time, and can even turn away those seeking help if they give her an attitude.

Combat. Arpeus is not a combat NPC, but if she ends up in scrap then she will use her gardening trowel as a dagger.

STATISTICS

Arpeus uses the statistics of a **apprentice wizard** (Volo's Guide to Monsters, pg. 209).

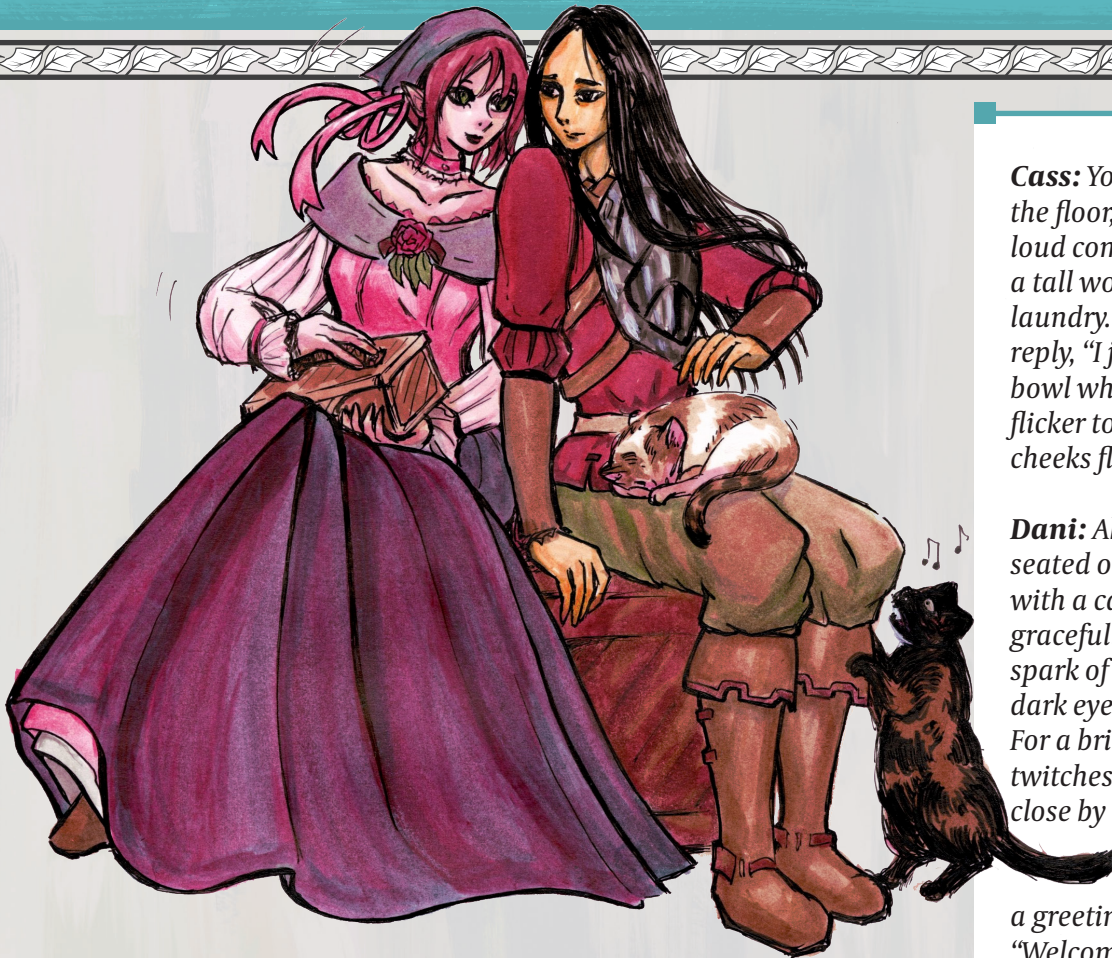
CREDITS

Written by Jamie O'Duibhir.

Art by Alison Huang.

CASS AND DANI

Cass (aromantic asexual cis woman) and Dani (aromantic pansexual trans demiwoman) are two best friends that live in the mountains with a small army of spayed/neutered cats. Cass is the daughter of a merchant family who sought solitude rather than being forced into a marriage of convenience. Dani is a former adventurer who was rescued by Cass and chose to settle into domestic life after an uncomfortably close scrape with a rampaging dragon.



Cass: Your attention is drawn first to the floor, where a calico cat mews a loud complaint around the heels of a tall woman clutching a basket of laundry. She calls out an exasperated reply, "I just fed you! The food is in the bowl where you left it!" Her hazel eyes flicker to you and she jumps slightly, cheeks flushing.

Dani: Ahead, you see a stranger seated on a simple wooden chair with a cat in her lap. Her figure is gracefully athletic, and there is a spark of sharp intelligence in her dark eyes as they flicker towards you. For a brief moment, her free hand twitches towards the sword placed close by her side, before she quickly withdraws. She grants you a cautious smile and calls out a greeting in a smooth, tenor voice. "Welcome," she says. "And you are...?"

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Cass is bright and extroverted, though she becomes closed and aggressive if the conversation turns to her family. Dani is a charismatic introvert: she doesn't chatter, but her rare words carry weight.

Cass and Dani have a committed non-sexual queerplatonic relationship. They are very close and care deeply about each other, though that does not mean their communication is perfect. Characters that interact with them separately can learn the following:

Cass:

Cass believes that Dani remains an adventurer at heart. She seems stifled and unsettled in this place and still keeps her weapons close. If Dani wishes to leave, Cass has resolved not to stand in her way. Even without Dani, it is not as though she'll be entirely alone: there are plenty of cats needing her attention.

Cass knew she was cold to Dani's friends when they last met and regrets it. She had tried to hide her jealousy, but it seems Dani caught her out. She promised Dani to be kinder next time.

Dani:

For the most part, Dani enjoyed her adventuring days but wonders if she would ever have left home if she didn't feel that she had to prove herself. Her close shave with death frightened her, as did many other aspects of their journey. She admires her companions and marvels at their tales but cannot imagine herself setting out again.

Cass was cold to Dani's friends on their last visit, and Dani remains frustrated with her apology; it wasn't that Dani or her friends were disappointed, but that Dani was worried about Cass, who never seems to want to open up to anyone else. Dani is aware that as a human, her own lifespan will pass well before Cass's (a half-elf), and she doesn't want her partner to be alone in the world when that happens.

BACKGROUND

Cass is the youngest child and sole daughter of a wealthy merchant family. From an early age, Cass demonstrated an aptitude for druid craft, and her mother made sure to invest in a tutor to develop her talents, as well as teach her history, languages, art, and household management. It was only later that Cass realized that she was being trained not for the purpose of the family business but for a favorable marriage. Various heated debates resulted in little more than the formation of an ultimatum: obey or leave. Cass chose the latter. Her new life in the mountains certainly lacked the convenience of her former home but was far freer. Discovery of a local cat colony beginning to multiply beyond control gave Cass both companionship and purpose, as did the later discovery of the adventurer named Dani.

Dani grew up in a hamlet in the distant countryside. As a child, she heard tales of strong and daring adventurers, and dreamed of becoming one herself. Her parents taught Dani what they knew of bows and blades and allowed her to join them in honing her skills against the wild animals that threatened the region, though both her mother and father quietly hoped that her restlessness would fade with age. To their dismay, the opposite was true: though Dani could not yet put a name to her feelings, something always felt strange when she looked in the mirror and when she heard voices call her former name. Her family were loving and supportive, but she felt restless. By her eighteenth birthday, she had made the decision to leave her village. Her father granted her a sword, and her mother an enchanted cloak, and begged her to take care of herself.

Dani made new friends along the road, and they traveled together for several weeks before the disastrous encounter with a dragon that split their

party and left a badly injured Dani stumbling alone through the mountains, where Cass found her, unconscious and close to death, and slowly nursed her back to health. During that time, the two grew close, and by the time Dani was well enough to leave, she had made the difficult decision to stay. Cass was even able to help Dani put labels to the feelings she had struggled to express: she now tentatively calls herself a demiwoman, using she/her pronouns. Her once reckless behavior was tempered by her brush with death, and by the many things she now sees as worth living for.

INTERACTIONS

Unless the adventurers approach with hostility, Cass and Dani are gracious hosts. Cass does most of the talking, and, so long as the conversation does not stray into uncomfortable territory, she remains friendly and extroverted, if easily distracted by the many demands of her feline friends. If the adventurers bear a message from her family, she is short and harsh in her rejection of the subject. For her part, Dani is quiet and reflective, watching curiously until approached directly. She does not shy away from answering questions if they are addressed to her and is friendly enough in her own quiet way. She is rarely seen without weapons in easy reach.

The cats range from friendly to feral: a few live alongside Cass and Dani, while others prefer the surrounding area. Perhaps due to the influence of Cass's druidic magic, the animals seem unusually clever.

STATISTICS

Cass uses the statistics of a **druid** (Monster Manual, pg. 346) and Dani uses the statistics of a **veteran** (Monster Manual, pg. 350).

CREDITS

Written by Luciella Elisabeth Scarlett.

Art by Luciella Elisabeth Scarlett.

HALLIAD GOLDENPIN

Halliad Goldenpin is a femme non-binary dwarf who runs Life's Garden, a magical flower shop. Although they have a calm demeanor, they reserve a gentle fury for anyone who disrespects them or their flowers.

As you enter Life's Garden, you are greeted by a chubby dark-skinned dwarf. They wear silk robes with beautiful pastel colors and flower embroidery. Atop their head lies a crown of fresh flowers that appears to have been recently made.

As they move to greet you, the smell of your favorite flower fills the air around you and the dwarf gives you a warm and welcoming smile. "I'm Halliad, welcome to my store! The flowers say 'hi!'"

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Halliad Goldenpin is a middle aged dwarf. They have brown skin and dark brown hair, both appearing to be well cared for. Halliad has a large build but is not muscular. They are very comfortable in their body and love it deeply, even the parts others might consider "flaws". They wear pastel free-flowing robes and an enchanted flower crown atop their head. The flowers never wilt and whoever catches a whiff of their perfume, smells their favorite flower. Halliad smells Gardenias.

Halliad reserves a special kindness for flowers, no matter who grew them. However, their love and kindness extends to all living things. Halliad is vegan and only eats what a plant is willing to provide them with. They spare no kindness to any visitors or customers, greeting all with a warm and welcoming smile. That said, they are quick to anger when someone mistreats the flowers.

In the central part of their store is a giant animated plant (reskinned **shambling mound**, MM p. 270) named Nepenthes. The plant lies about peacefully, but Halliad can command it to fight, should they deem necessary.

Halliad is sweet and patient, but has a poor sense of others' boundaries. Because they spend most of their day dealing with and talking to plants, their social skills are a bit rusty. Halliad may sometimes make unwelcome remarks or give unsolicited advice, but they always have the best of intentions in mind.

No one can do what Halliad can, and they know it. However, they try not to be smug about it. They will happily talk for hours about a new infusion they are making and everything that can and has gone wrong so far.

Halliad is somewhat of a bookworm and can often be found reading famous bardic tales of heroic deeds. They are very interested in knowing people who have travelled a lot, or who have come from far away places and may offer them a nice discount or even throw in a freebie if the story is entertaining enough.



BACKGROUND

Halliad has led a happy, albeit not very exciting, life. They grew up in the city they currently live in, and have inherited their shop, Life's Garden, from their parents. Halliad cares deeply about the town and its traditions, as well as its citizens.

They grew up reading great tales by adventurers, and fell in love with tales of grand battles and fierce adventurers. Halliad is a bookworm and is a frequent visitor to the city's library, though she has read all of the heroic tales to be found there many times over.

Halliad is currently having a love affair with the royal herbologist, Parven Laerormen, a tall, blond elf. This affair is kept secret, as Parven is currently in an influential, although unhappy, marriage with the youngest daughter of a local noble.

INTERACTIONS:

Halliad takes no offense in haggling and even finds it fun. They are willing to make unusual trades, such as trading an item for another, or giving discounts in exchange for adventuring tales. They like adventurers and becomes very excited to have them in their store.

If invited to go adventuring, Halliad shows great enthusiasm but politely refuses. The flowers of Life's Garden require their constant care and attention, and cannot be left alone for long. They consider going with the party only if Parven Laerormen, their lover, or Dahleela Springheart, their rival, can be convinced to look after the shop.

Halliad doesn't appreciate being misgendered, but will be patient with people who are still learning.

If they are threatened, Halliad gives one warning before unleashing Nepenthes. Halliad does not fight directly, but uses magical flowers from their shop to defend themselves. They avoid killing anyone, preferring to render them unconscious and turn them over to authorities.

Outside of their store, Halliad can be found visiting friends, at the city market, at the local library, or more likely, visiting the city's flower beds and trees. They are friendly, and often bring up the subject of flowers and plants.

Halliad has a feud with Dahleela Springheart, a rude halfling botanist, known for growing the queen's favorite petunias. Although the two share a deep love and understanding for plants and flowers, their once close friendship ended after Halliad began to magically infuse their flowers. Dahleela claims those experiments go against the laws of nature, while Halliad believes their old friend is simply jealous of their abilities.

Every Thursday, late at night, Halliad secretly meets with Parven near the city graveyard. The two may take desperate measures if their secret love affair is found out. Parven will promise political favours or high amounts of gold, while Halliad will offer even Nepenthes, her most prized plant, in exchange for the adventurers' silence.

The Store

Life's Garden works both as a mundane flower shop, and as a magical item store. It's stock is similar to an average magical item shop, with only two main differences. Most enchantments are related to nature in some way, and there is close to nothing related to the school of evocation. For the right price, Halliad is willing to commission magic items belonging to any school. However, they are hesitant to do so if they believe the item will be used to bring harm.

STATISTICS

Halliad Goldenpin uses the statistics of a **commoner** (Monster Manual, pg. 345).

CREDITS

Written by Awkward Bard.

Art by Alldrya Blue.

MOUSE

Mouse (she/her) is a self-reliant drow living comfortably in the urban underbelly. Her underground farm is aided by her divine magic and commitment to community.

The drow smiles when she sees you, her plump cheeks dimpled. She swipes a fallen strand of white hair back behind her ear to see you better, leaving a dirt streak across her dark skin as she does.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Whether in the ruins the city is built on top of, an unused sewer system, or underutilized escape tunnels from the nearby fortress, Mouse's home is a comfortable abode of worn furniture and happy plants. Mouse is comfortable with the spiderwebs hanging from the ceiling and the spiders that also make their home in hers, a relationship that helps her plants avoid infestation and reminds her of home.

Living without her family and the society she was raised in or the approval of either, Mouse has planted new roots in her local community—the diverse folk that live above her head. She started an underground farm growing foods native to both above and below ground with the help of light-based spells, spells that skirt her sunlight sensitivity. Anything she doesn't need for food or trade she gives back to the community with boxes of fresh produce appearing on doorsteps after a moonless night.

Mouse is a demisexual lesbian, interested only in a sexual relationship where there is already a strong emotional bond. Wisdom, determination, and compassion mean the most to her in a partner and in friends.

Mouse loves to meet strangers and learn about new cultures, a pleasure not afforded to her in her past. Mouse is genial to everyone she meets, but her trust is hard to gain—she only trusts actions, not words,



and particularly distrusts those who rely on their charms and silver tongues over earnestness and goodness of heart. Once gained, however, Mouse's loyalty is unbreakable. She gladly offers her powerful spellcasting abilities to a worthy cause. Mouse is especially excited to learn of new recipes and crafts, and is a voracious reader of scandalously bad pamphlet literature. The scientific names she uses for her plants, her manner of speaking, and her magical ability may mark her out as an educated, devout woman.

BACKGROUND

In her life before she came to the surface, she was nominally devout, but she came to the service of her goddess through her conviction that her former society can and should improve. Mouse worships the drow goddess of art, beauty and goodness, but that worship had been largely outlawed by the drow. Continuing to worship was dangerous underground—even leading to brushes with drow authorities—so Mouse sought the literal high road. Now she has completely disowned most aspects of her home culture, former life, and even her name—choosing instead to go by Mouse for her mouse companion, also called Mouse. This is a fairly recent development in Mouse's long life. She doesn't speak on it often as it still brings her pain. Mouse does not wear the symbol of her goddess openly nor does she have a shrine in her home. Her worship is quiet, but it is joyful, and it is filled with hope.

Mouse chose her name for functionality, both because she did not know that many non-drow names and because her mouse was her first companion in her new home. If questioned she would dismiss the choice with a shrug and say "in my long life, it is likely not the last name I will wear... but maybe the smallest." If pressed, she would not hide her former name: Xenia.

INTERACTIONS:

Mouse can provide food and shelter to travelers, but is largely uninterested in receiving coin in return. Instead, she might offer adventurers passing through a safe hideout for the night in exchange for a cutting from a noble's greenhouse or aid for a local family. Additionally, because she gives so freely of her own crop and is almost wholly self-sufficient, should she require aid herself she does not have much coin to

spare. She has an emergency stash of coin from drow society (not more than 100gp) and is otherwise willing to trade the casting of up to a 5th level cleric spell, up to and including raise dead, so long as the party can provide material components.

Mouse is loathe to give up the security and sanctuary of her underground abode or become a prominent figure in the community above. While she does not believe she is sought by anyone from her past, she does not welcome the attention. Should deeds of great injustice or cruelty be revealed to her, it is unlikely she would remain idle. The drow emigre would be surprised to learn her community is as protective of her as she is of them, as she did not experience that sort of connection and support in her previous home. She does not often socialize with those who live above her, but they know her for the kindness she provides.

Drow are particularly welcome in Mouse's home. She is kind to and willing to share her bounty with any drow in the party, particularly those who are kind in return. To a drow she might speak frankly on her past and the steps they too can take toward a life lived with softness and kindness, a type of bravery not appreciated by all underground.

STATISTICS

Mouse uses the statistics of a **war priest** (Volo's Guide to Monsters, pg. 218), with the following additions due to her drow heritage:

- Darkvision of 120 ft.
- Speaks undercommon and elvish
- Has advantage on saving throws against being charmed and is immune to magical sleep effects
- Has disadvantage on attack rolls and Wisdom (perception) checks while in bright light
- Can cast the *dancing lights* spell at will and *darkness* and *faerie fire* each once per day.

CREDITS

Written by Ashton Duncan.

Art by Liz Gist.

NERIA TEALEAF

Neria is a sweet old halfling—an ex-adventurer who has settled down as the owner of a small but thriving farm near a rural town. Generous in nature, she offers room and board to any willing to help her with farm work.

As you approach the farm, you see a single figure toiling in the fields, and as you get closer, the figure stands to face you. She's a halfling—old enough that her thick braid of hair is all silver, and it gleams in the hot sun. She wipes the sweat off her freckled face with a swipe of her hand, leaving a streak of dirt from her gloves, and smiles up at you.

“Need some help, traveller?” she asks, in a low, musical voice. “My name’s Neria. Come inside for a drink, and maybe afterwards you can help me harvest these potatoes—we’ll need them for tonight’s stew.”

However, while Neria was away, the village was attacked by bandits and her parents were killed. She still feels guilty that she wasn’t there for them. With her fighting skills, she believes she could have scared the bandits off, or at least saved her parents. This guilt led her to feel unwelcome in her old home, though nobody blamed her.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Neria is friendly and welcoming and has a distaste for deception. She has a no-nonsense way of speaking and cuts through any subtleties or half-truths in conversations. She values honesty, integrity, and hard work above all. She is good-aligned and offers aid to any who need it, regardless of their alignment. She has a deep need to take care of people, stemming from a core of guilt and trauma.

During her career as an adventurer, Neria learned the basics of druidcraft and knows some minor druid cantrips. She also has some basic skills with a shortsword and bow.

BACKGROUND

As a child, Neria lived in a small halfling village with her parents. Although she loved working on her parents’ farm, she also loved training to fight with the local guards. When she reached adulthood, she left to become an adventurer and do great deeds.



Neria left home and travelled on her own again. She tried to recapture her original adventurous spirit by exploring dungeons, searching for treasure, and helping those in need, but throughout it all, she felt hollow and unfulfilled. No matter how many adventuring teams she joined, or dashing princes and princesses she rescued and romanced, she felt deeply lonely.

Eventually, she settled down in some disused farmland near a town she once helped defend as an adventurer. Using her druidic skills from adventuring and her farming skills from her early life, she was able to establish a thriving farm. After many years working this land, Neria is now a stable and beloved part of the local community, and her farm has been a safe haven for many in need.

INTERACTIONS

Adventurers who are evil-aligned or are from a monster race: Neria is initially wary but willing to welcome them if they are willing to meet her halfway and not do evil things at her farm or in the nearby town. This hasn't always worked out in the past, but when it does, Neria is very grateful. In the case that an adventurer from a monster race is good-aligned, Neria is apologetic for her racist assumptions and more than happy to work with them.

Neria is happy to give room and board to those who need it in exchange for work done around the farm. She may also have minor quests for capable adventurers, such as scaring off bandits.

Neria knows the surrounding area very well and can provide information and maps, or guide adventurers to local sites. She is also a well-known figure in the community and can connect adventurers with local figures of authority.

STATISTICS

Neria uses the statistics of an **druid** (Monster Manual, pg. 346).

CREDITS

Written by Megan Irving.

Art by Reshma Zachariah.

FARADIN FIREBRAND

Faradin Firebrand is a fair-minded, albeit gruff, dwarf. He's always willing to help those in need and will do whatever he can to defend the innocent.

You see a relatively young dwarf with dark hair, bright, blue eyes, and a well-groomed beard. A scar runs across his right eye and trails down to his jawline. He's wearing dark scale mail armor, a shield slung over his back, and a polished warhammer on his belt. A holy symbol peeks out from under his beard. While his voice is gruff, you can see kindness in his eyes.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Faradin has a very strong sense of justice and is driven to help those who are in need. He doesn't pick up on social cues very well and is very direct in his communication. He isn't afraid to speak his mind and is rarely intimidated. If Faradin perceives something to be unjust or evil, he often acts to stop it before considering the consequences. He prefers to settle conflict peacefully but doesn't hesitate to fight if the need arises.

BACKGROUND

Faradin lost his parents at a very young age and was taken in by a local temple. His time at the temple was lonely and relatively uneventful. He had a hard time making friends so he found his own entertainment, exploring the area surrounding the temple and growing to appreciate the cycle of life. Eventually, his appreciation of life blossomed into a sense of responsibility to protect and even enforce the cycle of life. Faradin spent several days meditating and communing with his deity. During this self-imposed trial, he found his calling as a cleric. Upon completion of this ordeal, Faradin spent several years as a travelling priest. He rarely had travel companions until he met a group of adventurers who had set out to vanquish a vampire that had subjugated a nearby

kingdom. Faradin joined his efforts to theirs out of a sense of duty — he saw the vampire as a rejection of the innate cycle of life, and believed it his duty to right this wrong. Although the circumstances were grim, Faradin developed a reluctant friendship with his new companions.

After defeating the vampire, Faradin bid farewell to his new friends and set off on the road again. He can often be found traveling between smaller towns or in the poorer areas of big cities helping out as best he can.



INTERACTIONS

When interacting with adventurers, Faradin is polite and respectful, but in general is not very talkative. He is extremely direct and concise in his communication and doesn't use, or particularly like, fluffy or fancy speech. When confronted with especially loquacious characters, he will quickly become impatient and seek a way to escape the conversation.

He is forthcoming with his opinions about current events, as well as the players themselves. If questioned about his past or personal life, he will get distant and disconnect from the conversation almost immediately.

Faradin will always help in a fight, providing both offense and support with his weapon and his spellcasting. He always saves a spell slot or two, just in case someone gets seriously injured or killed. He provides spellcasting services to anyone who needs it. For spells with a specified GP cost, he only asks that the materials are provided by those seeking his services.

CREDITS

Written by Blake Origer.

Art by @staary_eyes.

FARADIN FIREBRAND

Medium humanoid (Hill Dwarf), Lawful Good

Armor Class 17 (scale mail, shield)

Hit Points 117 (18d8 + 36)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Wis +9, Cha +1

Skills Insight +9, Medicine +9

Senses Passive Perception 15

Damage Resistances Poison

Languages Common, Dwarvish, Infernal

Spellcasting. Faradin is a 9th level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). Faradin has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *Guidance, Resistance, Sacred Flame, Spare the Dying*

1st Level (4 slots): *Bane, Bless, Cure Wounds, Guiding Bolt, Healing Word*

2nd Level (3 slots): *Lesser Restoration, Ray of Enfeeblement, Spiritual Weapon, Zone of Truth*

3rd Level (3 slots): *Beacon of Hope, Daylight, Dispel Magic, Revivify*

4th Level (3 slots): *Blight, Death Ward, Guardian of Faith*

5th level (1 slot): *Antilife Shell, Mass Cure Wounds, Raise Dead*

Warcaster. Advantage on Constitution saving throws made to maintain concentration on a spell when he takes damage.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Faradin makes two melee attacks.

Warhammer. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 9 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

REACTIONS

Sentinel at Death's Door (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). When Faradin or a creature he can see within 30 ft. suffers a critical hit, he can turn that hit into a normal hit. Any effects triggered by a critical hit are canceled.

GRANDMA HOPE

Grandma Hope runs a home for abandoned children and has helped raise over 50 children over the course of her life. A pillar of the community, this tiefling woman is kind and warm, but firm, and her adopted offspring now inhabit all walks of life.

You see a short tiefling woman, her back a bit bent with age. Her gray hair is pulled up into a sensible bun, in fact, sensible is probably the best word to describe her. She is struggling with a heavy basket. When she sees you approach, she smiles at you through heavy breaths.

and supportive environment. She was raised with the same values and practices as are common in halfling households and sees herself as both halfling and tiefling. As is common with halflings, she eventually sought her own fortune. Hope didn't make it far, quickly arriving at a large city where she found what she thought was a box of kittens. The twin babies were hooved and unwanted. Hope used her savings she

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Grandma Hope has one of those faces and personalities that people tend to automatically trust, she is not one for surface level small talk. She wants to hear about how those around her are truly doing and is deeply perceptive. She will catch on that those around her are holding secrets and regrets.

Hope is infinitely practical and unconditionally kind; however, she is starting to feel her age. While she is still able to keep a handle on all the various challenges that come with tiefling children, staying one step ahead of small fires, unexpected charms, demonic screeches, and awkward first flights, she is losing her grace.

Her parenting style relies on affirming and positive discipline and trauma-informed care philosophies. Positive discipline is kind and firm. It relies on mutual respect between parent and child so that the child can develop into capable and empower people. Trauma-informed care focuses on safety, choice, collaboration, trustworthiness, and empowerment when it comes to working with others.

BACKGROUND

Grandma Hope was born of halfling parents in a small town. While her parents were perplexed by their tall, horned child, Hope was raised in a loving



had planned on using to adventure to buy a small, ramshackled home and started raising a family.

It's been about a hundred years now, Mama Hope has given way to Grandma Hope. She has raised dozens of unwanted children, tiefling or otherwise. Her home is warm, but worn and usually houses at least seven to ten tiefling youth. While they may not always have a lot, what she has she is willing to share.

INTERACTIONS

Possible Backstory. Grandma Hope can be the parent or grandparent of any character. She is a kind and firm parent who wants what is best for her children. She will ask about the character's health, their adventures, and their friends. She has no money to offer and is grateful if characters offer her some funds as she feels bad asking her grown children to help her continue providing a home for those in need. In exchange, she provides the kind of wisdom one only gains through age.

Additionally, her offspring tend to have the name "Hope" as a middle name.

I won't pry, but... Grandma, struggling with her basket, comes across a character who is upset. She puts down her basket, claiming to need a break and ask the character how they are doing. She will listen intently if the character confides in her and offer good advice. While she will not pry, she calls out bullshit. She is respectful of those who want space, but tells them that her door is open and she is willing to listen.

At the market. Grandma is in the process of getting some food for her family and could use some help carrying her basket home. If the party is respectful and offer to help her, she will invite them to dinner. Roll on the chart below to find out what's for dinner.

Finding a new home for an orphan/a youth from an unhealthy family situation. Should the party suddenly find themselves faced with the well being of a youth, Grandma has a place in her heart and home for them. If the party includes a person the youth feels comfortable with, Grandma will ask the party to stay for at least a week while they settles in.

Out of earshot of her children, she will express concern about being able to afford another child.

If wanted, she will send occasional letters describing how well the child is doing. If sent a stipend for the child, she will include the child's art.

STATISTICS

Grandma Hope uses the statistics of a **commoner** (Monster Manual, pg. 345), with the following additions:

- Grandma Hope has a charisma score of 16.
- **Innate Spellcasting.** Grandma Hope's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14). Grandma Hope can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *prestidigitation, thaumaturgy*

3/day: *counterspell, create/destroy water, healing word, lesser restoration*

CREDITS

Written by Sarah Gray Harker.

Art by Kari Kawachi.

J. STRIFE

A brilliant young man who specializes in the healing arts. He takes great pains to provide unbeatable service with a professional flair, despite the chronic pain he himself manages daily.

A whistling Tiefling works behind a counter covered in empty bottles, open books, and dried herbs. A bit on the short side, dark, curling horns add to his height, a shock of red hair framed between them. He doesn't meet your gaze, not quite, but you catch a glimpse of pitch black eyes, lacking pupils of any kind, and pointed teeth as he busily chews his lip.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Strife is a charming man, though he may not seem so at first. He can be overly formal with those he does not know and overly familiar with those he does, but he is friendly and welcoming nonetheless. He is reliable, dedicated to those he considers his friends and will often drop what he is doing in order to help those in need, sometimes to his own detriment.

Strife is autistic. Those who frequently request his services may notice a few persistent habits. He will tap his fingers against his hip as he carries a conversation, avoiding eye contact when possible, occasionally rubbing his thumb and index finger together as he thinks. He also has a habit of chewing on anything in his reach, from pens and pencils to his own fingers, though he avoids doing so when customers come calling. He also walks with a pronounced limp, the chronic pain making his movements careful and stiff.

Strife's greatest weapon is his keen mind, a vast repository of information both mundane and magical. His medical knowledge is second to none and he is eager to share what he knows, only to abruptly stop when he feels he has begun to overshare. Though he is slow to warm to strangers, those that take the time to befriend the Tiefling will find in him a true and trusted friend.



BACKGROUND

Strife has always been a dreamer. Even as a child, he constantly pushed at the boundaries of the small world that was his isolated village, despite the protestations of an overly controlling father. His mother, Aldina, supported his pursuit of knowledge however and began saving money to send the young Tiefling off for proper schooling in the big city.

But while his mind was eager to learn, his body had other plans for him. The first signs of what would become a lifelong struggle with his own health began cropping up early into his first two years of college schooling, making it more and more difficult to regularly attend classes and maintain his grades as his condition deteriorated. In addition to the mounting pain, while his family accepted his unique

way of thinking, the other students were no so understanding. Faced with dwindling funds, abuse from his peers, and ever worsening health, Strife was forced to drop out of school.

The knowledge he learned was not lost, however, and Strife refused to return to the unsatisfying life he lived before. Taking out a loan from a moneylender in the city, he risked personal and financial security and opened his own small storefront, from which he could apply the healing arts he had learned and start anew. Although he struggles to pay his debts and find balance in a life ridden with pain, he maintains a positive outlook on life out of sheer stubbornness alone.

INTERACTIONS

Strife detests conflict and does everything in his power to avoid it, occasionally bending to the whims of others instead of forcing the issue. That said, he will always stand by what he believes in and will never betray his values.

He is a professional and strongly believes in being paid for professional services, but he is far from heartless and will often give discounts of varying degrees to those in need, even going so far as to provide healing for free if his client is truly desperate. He will not, however, do business with those who are overly rude or antagonistic, and will outright refuse service to anyone who acts with prejudice or uses slurs.

Due to a medley of medical conditions that ail him (Arthritis and Fybromyalgia, to name a few), Strife’s services are not always consistent or even available. When Adventurers visit his shop, roll a d20 to determine how his battle with chronic pain is going that day:

Roll	Pain Level
1	A Very Bad Day: Services Unavailable due to crippling pain
2-4	A Bad Day: The pain is worse, only 3rd Level and lower spells available
5-16	An Average Day: Manageable pain, no change
17-19	A Good Day: The pain remains, but less than normal. All services are 25% Off
20	A Good Week: A string of good days means it’s time for be ambitious. Can cast spells at one level higher than normal.

J. STRIFE

Medium humanoid (Human), chaotic good

Armor Class 11
Hit Points 22 (5d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)

Skills Medicine +6, History +3
Languages Common, Elvish, Infernal, Sylvan

Spellcasting. Strife is a 5th level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). Strife has the following spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light, mending, spare the dying*
1st Level (4 slots): *bless, cure wounds, healing word, protection from good and evil*
2nd Level (3 slots): *lesser restoration, prayer of healing*
3rd Level (2 slots): *magic circle, remove curse*

Trusting to a Fault. Strife has disadvantage on Wisdom (intuition) checks.

ACTIONS

Dagger. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 2 (1d4) piercing damage.

CREDITS

Written by Allen Johnson.
Art by Kari Kawachi.

JASPER BRIGHTMOON-CILAR

A middle-aged halfling who uses baking as a way to spread their paladin oath of love and forgiveness, helping ease the emotional burdens of others and offer those in pain a new lease on life.

As you enter Luminous Pies, the sweet aromas of berries and pie crust fills your nostrils. A middle-aged halfling with a cheerful smile and serene gaze gingerly walks toward the till, leaning on a cane in his right hand. Powerful forearms poke from his humble tunic and calluses from holding a sword too closely, suggest a former warrior who moved to a simpler life.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Jasper may seem like any other halfling baker, but one conversation with him is enough to realize that most people don't visit their shop for the pie. It's just hard to put "Paladin & Counselor" on the sign without scaring away some of the people most in need. The shop is how Jasper can reach out to those most in need of emotional support, offering it freely to those who fear rejection. Helping others deal with their pain is how Jasper copes with his own physical limitations, early struggles with gender identity, and the loneliness of being unable to join their partner Lavena on another quest to save the world.

Conversations with Jasper start chipper and upbeat. They have a strong empathetic connection to other people's pain and try to put at ease, saying "You look like something's on your mind." When someone opens up, Jasper has an incredible knack for knowing what to say to put others' problems in perspective and teach them to forgive, rather than dwelling in anger. It was only through teaching others the power of forgiveness that Jasper got a second lease on life, so they set aside the old adventuring oath of vengeance on the undead and swore a new paladin oath to carry this message of love and forgiveness to others.

Most customers need time before opening up, so Jasper moves slowly unless someone needs a hug.

Jasper loves to give hugs and may trip over his cane in a rush to give a loved one a hug, but he always asks for permission before hugging a stranger.

The more you get to know Jasper, the more they share their wry sense of humor. They love talking about the weirdest places to put dungeons and the one vampire who relied entirely on apple-based traps to protect their lair.

Pronouns: Jasper uses he/him pronouns when doing things individually or thinking about his body and physical activities. Jasper uses they/them pronouns when thinking about their place in the world, bringing peace and love, and their incredibly inclusive faith.



BACKGROUND

Like many halflings, Jasper went on an adventure to try and discover who they really are. Was he brave? Of course. Kind? Definitely. Jasper was the party's voice of benevolence, always pushing others towards diplomatic solutions unless dealing with undead. He thought the party's elves would help him understand why masculinity only felt right when swinging a sword. However, the elves had never heard of a genderfluid halfling and ignored Jasper's discomfort in dance halls and other social settings. Jasper shrugged their shoulders and trudged along, until a stone giant threw him off a cliff and broke both of his legs.

For months of recovery, Jasper, the cheerful paladin of peace and love, was alone with Lavena, the moody human cleric. His right leg never fully healed. Jasper would never adventure again. Feeling completely abandoned by the gods and ready to abandon their paladin oath, if not more, Jasper took one last chance and told Lavena everything. To their surprise, Lavena understood completely and was better at healing Jasper's soul than their body. The pair realized they balance each other and began spending more time together. Two years later, they decided to get married.

As Jasper came to terms with his injuries, he grew comfortable asking others to use he/him pronouns in more physical settings and they/them in more social settings, while Lavena convinced them that they could still express their paladin oath by opening a bakery. After all, there are lots of ways to bring peace and love to a troubled land! Jasper specializes in slow-cooked blueberry pies, ensuring plenty of time to talk to customers without them having to ask for a sympathetic ear. Locals know Jasper is the best counselor in town.

INTERACTIONS

Jasper sells pies at market rate, because their gods like a serving of order along with kindness. If someone really wants to haggle or rush, Jasper keeps a second set of pre-heated pies in a magic oven to send jerks on their way and make room for important guests.

Anyone abandoned by their family, clan or adventuring party gets free pie and goat's milk in Luminous Pies. Jasper has plenty of coin from adventuring and can take a loss if needed. While Jasper has an uncanny eye for detecting most cheats, they don't confront anyone who takes advantage of

their kindness. Counseling is far more precious to Jasper than the pie, so in their eyes, cheats are mainly hurting themselves by losing the opportunity to get help later; they can never take anything truly valuable. Anger over petty crime is just a waste of energy.

On the rare chance that violence breaks out in Luminous Pies, Jasper prefers using nonviolent means like *calm emotions* and *sleep* to end hostilities. However, if violence is the only way to defend others from true evil, he swings his veteran's cane as a magic longsword with no fear of death.

JASPER BRIGHTMOON-CILAR

Small humanoid (Halfling), lawful good

Armor Class 11 (leather)

Hit Points 39

Speed 15 ft.

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

Saving Throws Wis +5, Cha +7

Skills Deception +7, Insight +8, Persuasion +7

Languages Common, Halfling, Celestial, Giant

Spellcasting. Jasper is a 5th level spellcaster. Their spellcasting ability is charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks. Jasper has the following spells prepared:

1st Level (4 slots): *cure wounds*, *sanctuary*, *sleep*

2nd Level (2 slots): *calm emotions*, *hold person*, *lesser restoration*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Jasper makes two attacks on his turn.

Sword-Cane. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage.

Lay On Hands. *Jasper has a pool of 25 hit points. As an action, they can touch a creature and restore a number of hit points to that creature, up to the number remaining in their pool. This pool refreshes on a long rest.*

CREDITS

Written by Noah Grand.

Art by Amelia Ng.

KRANTAS

Kantras is a satyr herbalist with a kind heart. He wishes to help those who are sick and to find a cure for the fever that took the life of his best friend.

Thick, curly, brown hair and two dull, slightly curved rams horns, chipped in places, top the head of this Satyr. He is of average build, standing just under six feet tall with a curly brown goatee covering his chin. Dirt has gathered under his fingernails and you smell an aroma that is a combination of mint, menthol and raw earth around him.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Krantas is an herbalist who lost his sight. He is happy to help those who need it, as long as they treat him fairly, but does not respond well when people show him pity for his lack of vision. While he is fairly self-sufficient, he will take someone's shoulder to help navigate, if it is offered.

Krantas is determined to try to make up for his previous behaviour when he first learned about his loss of sight. He has become an accomplished herbalist and continues to study and is determined to find the right herbs to develop a cure for the fever that took the life of his friend, Branto.

BACKGROUND

From a young age, Krantas embraced the often self-indulgent lifestyle of the Satyrs. Krantas indulged in rich, exotic foods and became particularly fond of pairing fine drinks with his food choices, indulging in both to excess. After a night of self-indulgence, Krantas often woke in places he did not recall, completely hungover.

Krantas continued this behavior until one day he woke and noticed he was having problems seeing objects directly in front of him. He could see out of

his peripheral vision fine, but there was a dark spot when he looked straight ahead. At first he did not give it much thought and attributed it to a night of overindulgence. However, the issue did not clear up as he expected. Krantas began to withdraw from his group but he continued to indulge in strong drinks; this time to drown out the sorrow he was feeling.

As Krantas withdrew, one of the elder Satyrs, Branto, took notice and decided to try to help him. Branto was a gray-haired satyr who used a walking stick because of hip issues. However, every time Branto offered Krantas help or advice, Krantas rudely dismissed him. Even though Krantas could tell his vision was getting worse because the dark spot was getting larger but he refused to accept any help when walking. This led to many bumps and scrapes as he bumped and tripped his way through the forest, spending as much time on the forest floor as on his feet. If he bumped into someone, Krantas would become rude and shout at the person, blaming them for the collision. Other satyrs began to avoid Krantas, not wanting to be subject to his temper. This continued for weeks, until Krantas' frustration boiled over and he broke down in tears. At his wits end he was considering how he could ever manage when he heard a familiar voice, "How can I help you?" asked Branto.

"Why would you want to help me after how I treated you before?" asked Krantas.

"Because you look like you need a friend. Here, take my hand", replied Branto. Krantas reach out his hand and stood up.

With help from Branto, Krantas learned how to navigate the forest and local surroundings with the use of a walking stick, his sense of hearing and sense of smell. By this time, the dark spot was all Krantas could see. Over the next months, Krantas became comfortable navigating in the forest. With the confidence that Krantas had gained, he decided

it was time to do something other than feeling sorry for himself, so he began to grow herbs. Initially he used them to flavor his food, but he soon learned that about how certain plants could be used for healing purposes.

Shortly after Krantas started learning about herbs, Branto became ill with a severe fever, to which no one had a cure. Krantas tended Branto and tried to make him as comfortable as possible. He used his rudimentary skills with herbs, but he did not have enough knowledge to help Branto. "I still do not understand why you helped me when I was being so rude", Krantas said.

Branto replied, "Because everyone deserves a chance to be the best person they can be."

Days later, Branto passed and soon after Krantas left in search of a cure, so no one else would have to die from the fever. Along the way, Krantas tried to help others as Branto helped him, so they too could be the best person they could be.

INTERACTIONS

In general, Krantas tries to be helpful, but can be easily angered depending how the adventurers treat him. If characters try to take advantage of his lack of sight, he will become angry. He is not above rapping them in the shins or on the knuckles with his stick if he thinks they deserve it. If they treat him with pity, he will deal with them quickly and curtly. However, if treated with respect, Krantas is happy to help any who come to him for aid, either by selling any of the herbs he has available or by trying to help the injured.

Once he hears a person's voice a few times, Krantas can recognize them by it in the future. And although he can not make a diagnosis visually, Krantas has, on occasion, helped to diagnose conditions based on the aroma of the patient.

STATISTICS

Krantas uses the statistics of a **satyr** (Monster Manual, pg. 267), with the following addition:

- Krantas has proficiency with an herbalism kit
- Krantas has a +8 bonus to medicine and nature checks
- **Blind.** Krantas is blind and navigates based on touch, hearing and smell.

CREDITS

Written by Paul A. Keiter.

OREN HEATHERWOOD

A healer and a werewolf tucked away in the cluttered recesses of his clinic, Oren Heatherwood quietly dedicates his life and work to his late fiancée's memory.

Heatherwood Healing is dim and just as cluttered as it looked from the outside. A thin man sits at a desk stacked with papers. He looks innocuous and middle-aged, with a mess of short brown hair and wrinkled clothes. He glances up as you enter, adjusting the glasses on the bridge of his nose. There's a claw-like scar on his cheek, visible but long since healed. "Hello, there. How can I help you?"

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Oren is dedicated to his work, though he focuses too intensely on it. He spends more nights asleep over whatever he was working on the night before than he does his bed - a cot in the loft of his clinic. He calls himself a healer, rather than a cleric — he has no godly allegiance, nor does he want one. A flask of something alcoholic (he's not picky) is his constant companion, but rarely does he seem drunk.

Oren is direct and deliberate in his actions, comforting in a crisis, and quick to jump in when others need help. He carries around a medical notebook, as well as his late fiancée's journal, which he treats with utmost care and speaks of as though it were her.

Around the full moon, he retreats to a small hunting cabin a few days out of town to transform without endangering others.

BACKGROUND

Oren was born to the leader of a nomadic pack of werewolves, and spent his youth wandering the wilds with them. They were a close-knit group that helped him handle his lycanthropic nature, but differing

desires made those relationships complicated as he grew up.

From a young age, Oren showed interest in healing, but it wasn't until a newly-lycanthropic cleric joined their pack, and he convinced her to teach him whatever she could, that he began to figure out what he wanted from life. Much to the disapproval of his father and the pack, Oren didn't want to stay with their community and someday take his father's place.

The cleric to whom he had apprenticed himself to had, before she had joined the pack, taught at a prestigious institute. When Oren was twenty, and had learned all she had to teach him, she reached out to her former colleagues and secured him a place there.

Magical healing is where he excelled, despite finding no connection to a deity as most of the clerics he trained beside had - instead, he drew on his environment, more similarly to the few druids he'd met. After graduation, Oren taught at the school but left a few years later, in order to start his own clinic. It was there he met Adrienne.

Adrienne was a brilliant non-magical healer. She wandered in search of cases that others had given up on and made her way to far-flung places to aid remote communities, but it was her own sickness that brought her to Oren's doorstep.

The two fell very quickly in love among late nights in search of a cure - something that his pack didn't approve of in the least bit, with Adrienne not being a werewolf herself. Oren's relationship with his pack had been strained since he left for school, and when their relationship was revealed during one of his visits back home, they cast him out for good.

As the sickness resisted more and more of their attempts to cure it, Oren and Adrienne started to lose hope of a future together. Despite this, the two decided to marry, allowing themselves that small

amount of happiness. Unfortunately, Adrienne passed away a week before the wedding, a little over a year into their relationship, and Oren found himself entirely alone for the first time in his life.

Oren closed his clinic and spent years following in her footsteps, going from community to community and healing whoever he found, occasionally spending stretches of time he only half remembers alone in the wild. The only constants were his yearly visit to Adrienne's grave on the anniversary of her death, a practice he still continues, and the flask at his side.

Oren opened a second clinic five years ago, Heatherwood Healing, and now quietly works and drinks alone. He has since focused more on non-magical solutions as Adrienne had done, feeling more connected to her through its use, but reaches for his old familiar magic when the situation's particularly desperate.

INTERACTIONS:

Coming to him for healing: Money has little importance to Oren; if he has enough to scrape by, he's willing to charge as little as he can for his services.

Meeting in town: He's friendly, but isn't much for small talk. Unless something is asked of him, he won't linger long. He helps if he can, but doesn't go far out of his way.

Meeting at the cabin: He's often on edge here, and would much prefer people stay out of his stretch of woods. If the party hasn't caught him at a bad time, he may offer a cup of tea. He's not entirely eager to offer lodging, though his goodwill might win out over his caution if the party has no other options. If they stay, he'll do what he can to avoid them learning he's a werewolf.

Meeting in the wild: Oren is likely either heading to or from his cabin, in which case he's willing to make conversation, or is in some stage of transformation. Transformed, he's no more dangerous than a wolf, but avoids being seen in that state.

STATISTICS

Oren uses the statistics of a **priest** (Monster Manual, pg. 348), with the following additions:

- Damage vulnerability to silvered weapons
- **Tracking.** You can detect opponents within 15 feet by sense of smell. If the opponent is upwind, the range increases to 40 feet; if downwind, it drops to 5 feet. Strong scents can be detected at twice the ranges noted above. Overpowering scents can be detected at triple normal range. When a creature detects a scent, the exact location of the source is not revealed—only its presence somewhere within range.

CREDITS

Written by Annamyriah de Jong.

ST. GREGORY LATAV

An accomplished cleric for a god of light, Gregory LaTav has spent his life as a force for good and justice. An encounter with vampires in old age resulted in him morphing into a vampiric spawn until the intervention of his god halted his transformation halfway.

A handsome man of venerable age with short, snow-white hair sits straight-backed in a wheelchair made from wood and woven reeds. His skin is thin and pale but shows toned muscles beneath. He wears the simple robes and adornments of a priest with a medallion in the shape of a sunburst hangs from a leather cord around his neck. His eyes, which were at some point a bright blue, are now heavily clouded over and unfocused with bags underneath. They show years of both learned wisdom and tiring battles.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Gregory is a man of simple wants with a heart that yearns to help those in need. He often speaks softly, dispensing aged wisdom to those who take the time to listen. He does his best to be honest and direct with others but is fond of adding humor and telling stories during a conversation as long as it is appropriate for the situation. Even when faced with an aggressive visitor or moderating a heated debate, Gregory always speaks evenly and tries his best to bridge the divide between viewpoints with sound diplomacy. Although his condition has prevented him from taking up arms directly against the forces of evil as he once did, he still finds a simple fulfillment giving direction and advice to those who can do more.

BACKGROUND

Even from an early age, Gregory LaTav had a strong connection to the gods. Born into a simple home, Gregory's family watched as the divine spark inside him grew as he did. His light hair, dreams of angels, and natural healing abilities led the village clergy to

the conclusion Gregory had been born as an Aasimar, a child with the blood of the higher planes coursing through him. When he came of age, his family scraped together what they had to send him off to the monastery, where he could study scripture and deepen his connection to his god.

Through many years of study and prayer, Gregory became an accomplished cleric of a deity of light and set out to do great deeds for the weak and helpless. He quickly became well known as a skilled diplomat, a friend to the weary, and a paragon of good and justice everywhere he traveled. After a long career of going where he was needed, Gregory made the decision to settle in a land blessed by his god where he would watch over his people while training the next generation of priests.

As word of Gregory's pseudo-retirement spread, the news reached the ears of a vengeful evil. An enraged vampire who Gregory had scorned in the past turned its ire towards the holy man, hell-bent on destroying the favored servant of a hated deity. The vampire sent out his dark servants to capture Gregory and bring him back alive. After his capture, Gregory was subjected to horrible torture to break his spirit and warp his mind, culminating in being transformed into the vampiric spawn of his enemy.

As the transformation was underway, Gregory reached out to the heavens and gave one last prayer to his god, thanking him for the life he lived and to ask for the protection of his people. In that moment, the light of the divine came down and filled Gregory, his entire form shining with holy radiance. The rays of pure divine energy instantly obliterated Gregory's captors and halted his transformation, saving him from a horrible fate. Gregory weakly made his escape from his imprisonment and was rescued by other agents of the church who were searching fervently for the lost priest.

ST. GREGORY LATAV

Medium humanoid (Aasimar), Lawful Good

Armor Class 8

Hit Points 123 (15d8 + 45)

Speed 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	6 (-2)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Wis +10, Cha +7

Skills Religion +6, Insight +10, Persuasion +7

Damage Resistances Necrotic

Conditions Blinded

Languages common, celestial, dwarven, elvish, infernal

Spellcasting. St. Gregory LaTav is a 15th level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is wisdom (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *sacred flame*, *mending*, *guidance*, *light*, *spare the dying*

1st Level (4 slots): *bless*, *burning hands*, *cure wounds*, *detect evil and good*, *sanctuary*

2nd Level (3 slots): *aid*, *flaming sphere*, *prayer of healing*, *zone of truth*

3rd Level (3 slots): *fireball*, *protection from energy*, *remove curse*, *tongues*

4th Level (3 slots): *death ward*, *divination*, *guardian of faith*, *wall of fire*

5th level (2 slots): *commune*, *flame strike*, *greater restoration*

6th level (1 slot): *heal*, *hero's feast*

7th level (1 slot): *divine word*, *resurrection*

8th level (1 slot): *holy aura*

Sunlight Hypersensitivity. While in direct sunlight, St. Gregory LaTav takes 10 Radiant damage at the beginning of each turn.

Undead Form. St. Gregory LaTav is considered undead in regards to spells and special abilities that affect undead.

ACTIONS

Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage.

Radiant Soul. St. Gregory LaTav unleashes divine energy, causing his eyes to glimmer and two luminous, incorporeal wings to sprout from his back for one minute. He gains a 30ft. fly speed and deals an extra 15 radiant damage with an attack or spell once per turn.

REACTIONS

Warding Flare. When a creature attacks St. Gregory or another creature while within 30ft of him, he can use his reaction to cause a flare of light to burst in front of the creature, imposing disadvantage on the attack roll. He can use this ability 5 times. He regains uses of this ability after completing a long rest.



Gregory's recovery from his ordeal was slow as the administrations by his fellow clergymen seemed to have a diminished effect. His morphed physique by the vampires and his close encounter with the divine had several detrimental effects. Gregory had become blind and was unable to move his legs, even though his strength had increased from the vampiric curse. He was burned by bright light and seemed to recover from wounds and decreased his hunger by drinking fresh blood.

Unsure if he could be cured of his various afflictions, Gregory decided he would continue his mission of protecting others through different means and to make the most of the second chance his god had given him. He decided to work from the shadows as an advisor to others and ensure those with power used it for good and avoid the temptations of corruption. Wishing to honor Gregory's wishes but still acknowledge his legacy, the church announced Gregory had perished during his capture to the public and immediately announced his canonization, declaring him a martyr and protector of the people. Now, St. Gregory looks after his people through counseling the few kings, priests, and heroes who know of his condition and seek his wisdom.

INTERACTIONS

When meeting with new people, Gregory does his best to make them feel comfortable and presents a calm, friendly front since, more often than not, people come to Gregory seeking answers to their difficult problems or advice on dire situations. No matter what the topic of their meeting, Gregory always does his best to listen carefully to his guests and gives his advice with equal reverence. If asked about his condition, Gregory is forthcoming about it but does so with a more somber tone.

CREDITS

Written by Jay Davidson.

TERRAZZU DUNEBREAKER

A water genasi born to a clan of desert elves, Terrazzu Dunebreaker is a nomadic wanderer, both by nurture and by nature. Warm and friendly, he seems to have a story for every situation and know a route to any destination.

The dark skin, white hair and pointed ears would make even a drow take a second glance. But a closer inspection reveals a deep seaweed green complexion rather than the black obsidian of a dark elf. The man's whole demeanor is one of easy grace and good humor, and his eyes, full of twinkle and mischief, are bluish-green orbs of pure ocean.

"Ah, the more the merrier, no?" he says amicably as he beckons you to join him. You notice his pale hair shift and sway, almost as if submerged in water. "Come, sit, drink!"



TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Sunny, With a Chance of Flood

Charismatic and personable, Terrazzu likes to spin tales of his adventurous travels. It doesn't matter that they seem far too outrageous to be even halfway true, his stories always seem to draw a captive audience.

Not just a genasi, but a water genasi raised in the desert, Terrazzu knows he's a bit of an enigma. He plays up that fact, sometimes as a way to poke fun at those who don't know what to make of him, but often just as an icebreaker to meet new and interesting people. He has a buoyant and jovial personality, but those that take the time to get to know him realize his mixed nature is a double-edged sword and one that has caused at least as much grief as it has solace over the years.

While he is generally even-keeled and often the voice of reason, there are times when turbulent emotions get the better of him (such as an irrational fear, oppressive guilt, or injured pride), and anger is his go-to vent for expressing these emotions. These outbursts are usually accompanied by a physical change as well; as he drops his tightly wound self-

control, his body's water content increases, softening the sharp lines of his typically gaunt features and giving his skin a slick sheen of moisture. A tempest dances in his eyes, and it's best to steer clear of that storm until it passes.

BACKGROUND

Two Worlds, One Life

Whether through some divine irony or random act of passion in generations past, Terrazzu was born a water genasi in a tribe of desert elves. Due to his unique heritage and circumstance, Terrazzu was

TERRAZZU DUNEBREAKER

Medium humanoid (Water Genasi), Chaotic Good

Armor Class 17 (desert leather)

Hit Points 132 (24d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Dex +8, Str +6

Skills Athletics +6, Insight +4, Nature +4, Perception +4, Survival +4

Damage Resistances acid, fire (desert leather)

Languages Common, Elvish, Primordial

Amphibious. Terrazzu can breathe air and water.

Innate Spellcasting. Terrazzu's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). Terrazzu can cast the following spells without the need for material components:

At will: *shape water*, *vicious mockery*

3/day: *hunter's mark*, *longstrider*

1/day: *create or destroy water* (2nd level casting), *locate animals or plants*

Inspiring Storyteller. During a short rest, Terrazzu can inspire allies with tales of bravery and adventure. Terrazzu and any friendly creatures who can hear him gain 12 (1d6 + 9) temporary hit points at the end of the short rest.

ACTIONS

Multiaction. Terrazzu makes three melee attacks or two ranged attacks.

Tulwar (finesse, light). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 7 (1d6 + 4) slashing damage plus 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Kukri (light, thrown). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage plus 7 (3d4) acid damage. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 20/60, one creature. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage plus 7 (3d4) acid damage.

Longbow +1. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, range 150/600, one creature. Hit: 9 (1d8 + 5) piercing damage.

Whirlpool Dervish (3/day). Terrazzu targets up to five hostile creatures he can see within 10 feet of him. Each target must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw, taking 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage plus 3 (1d6) fire damage plus 5 (2d4) acid damage on a failure or half as much damage on a success. In addition, Terrazzu's movement does not provoke attacks of opportunity until the start of his next round.

EQUIPMENT

Tulwar of the Burning Sun

Weapon, rare (requires attunement)

This magical curved blade feels warm to the touch regardless of environmental temperature. On a successful hit, the tulwar does an additional 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Kukri of Swirling Waters

Weapon, rare (requires attunement)

This magical weapon feels even more blade-heavy than a typical kukri. On a successful hit, the kukri does an additional 7 (3d4) acid damage.

Desert Leather

Armor, rare (requires attunement)

This leather armor provides magical protection and relief from the desert sun. While wearing this armor, you gain a +1 bonus to AC and have resistance to fire damage. In addition, you and everything you wear and carry are unharmed by temperatures as high as 150 degrees Fahrenheit.

both celebrated and envied by his peers. Growing up, what liquids he drank never seemed to quench the pangs of thirst he felt more acutely than the rest of his kin. Yet even when the clan wells ran dry during a particularly extended drought, he never suffered physical dehydration. It was as if an internal wellspring sustained him from within. Many died that season, and there are still times when Terrazzu keenly feels the sting of survivor's guilt.

Because he never quite fit in, Terrazzu worked extra hard when learning the ways of the desert, especially with regard to water conservation. For this reason he has learned to suppress his naturally water rich skin, allowing it to appear slightly desiccated like that of his kinsmen.

When he came into his elemental inheritance more fully, the tribe found they had the most extraordinary



waterseeker in their midst. However, Terrazzu began to feel a wanderlust he could not sate, even traveling the breadth of the vast desert sands. At first, he denied this primal urge, ignoring it just as he did his ever-present thirst for water. He spent several years dutifully fulfilling his role as the tribe's waterseeker, but at last he petitioned the elders to take his leave. The elders, recognizing the brevity of Terrazzu's lifespan compared with others of his tribe, granted his request to join the ranks of the Outriders, those who traveled beyond the edge of the desert.

Desert Nomads

Like their woodland cousins, desert elves live in harmony with their natural environment. They are attuned to the daily cycle of heat and cold, resting in the day, active at night. They have mobile settlements, moving in rotation to allow the deep wells time to refill with the infrequent rains. With their dark skin and sun bleached hair, they are often mistaken for drow by those unfamiliar with the region.

INTERACTIONS

Have Water, Will Travel

Terrazzu is an expert traveler and can serve as a guide in quite a wide variety of locations and terrains, but he is clearly most familiar with the desert.

Over the years he also gravitated towards rivers, boats, sailing and the like, and though he is a natural seaman and swimmer, he has a harder time allowing himself to enjoy these ventures.

As needed, he can and will produce water for those with whom he is traveling, but he prefers finding natural sources whenever possible.

He is no stranger to fending for his life or for the lives of his traveling companions. In combat, he wields a tulwar in one hand and a kukri in the other.

He carries a small vial of sand strung on a cord around his neck, "to be buried with me, in case I die far from home."

CREDITS

Written by Anthony Alipio.

Art by David Markiwsky.

ANTHEIA

Antheia is a human ranger who spends her time exploring woodlands and mountainous regions. She is adept at survival and hunting and enjoys making hidden makeshift tents in the wilderness and hunting for large game and bandits. She is a successful ranger in the area despite having issues with sleep walking (REM sleep disorder).

Lying on the crisp snow bank, Antheia silently knocks her bow and focuses on a tree behind a giant elk. Her freezing arrow strikes a tree sending an avalanche of snow down. The elk sprints down the hill, followed by her heard, the stampede sending a troop of Kobolds scurrying from their makeshift tents. Antheia's knocked arrow ready to stop the small town ambushes.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Antheia is a good aligned, human ranger. She earns her living hunting monsters that threaten small towns and homesteads, perching in trees, or blending into cliffs to snipe with her longbow. Antheia enjoys going on long camping adventures and accompanying adventuring parties on their quests.

Antheia is introverted and tends to keep her distance. She has a group of close friends who feed her intellectual side back home, but when it comes to strangers, she tends to keep to herself. However, after a couple of ales, she will tell adventuring stories around the campfire that everyone enjoys. Antheia regularly volunteers to take watch at night, preferring to do so from the branches of tall trees or cliff faces. She brings game meat back to camp and is happy to help build fires and put up tents. In her pack, Antheia carries a small collection of books on survival and supplies to sketch things she sees in nature or to map out new locations.

Antheia is a quiet and talented hunter and chops and collects wood and venison for local priestesses. She tans leather and tracks animals in her free time. She lives in a rustic cabin at the edge of town and helps out traveling adventurers in distress to get away from town for a while. When she is with a group, she tends to quietly listen. She can keenly recall conversations and situations.



REM sleep behavior disorder: a disorder where the paralysis that normally occurs during REM sleep is incomplete or absent, allowing the person to "act out" his or her dreams. RBD is characterized by the acting out of dreams that are vivid or intense.

BACKGROUND

Antheia grew up in the woodlands and has been using a bow since childhood. She had seasoned ranger parents who regularly took up tasks for the fighter's guild, so she traveled often and spent many nights in the family tents with her parent's adventuring party. While in the field, her parent's friends challenged her to shoot targets swinging on ropes from trees and other archery challenges which helped her perfect her skills into adulthood.

INTERACTIONS

Antheia is not much of a conversationalist. She tends to sit toward the back of any social situation and watch everyone's interactions while making mental notes of anything she sees out of the ordinary. She is polite, but does not share much and may become bored if folks don't get to the point. She is capable of quick thinking and reacting with stealth and prowess in tough situations.

Antheia's Sleep Walking. Roll a D20. On a 10 or lower, Antheia will sleep walk after going to sleep. Based on the roll, use the table below to determine what she does when she sleepwalks:

1d10	Item from Allison
1	She will begin sleep talking about lore.
2	She will wander off in the woods and wake up with scrapes and bruises.
3	She will put on random gear from the party and walk around camp before going back to sleep.
4	She will climb into a bed or sleeping bag by another adventurer or creature and continue sleeping.
5	She will laugh loudly in her sleep.
6	She will bolt out of bed and sleep run.
7	She will sleep eat something out of someone else's pack.
8	She will wander off and be asleep 10ft from camp.
9	She will have insomnia and be up drawing or reading.
10	She will have trouble getting out of bed the next morning and tough to wake up.

ANTHEIA

Medium humanoid (Human), Neutral Good

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)
Hit Points 78 (12d8+24)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	19 (+4)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dex +8, Int +5
Skills Athletics +4, Survival +5, Stealth +8, Cartographer's tools +5
Senses Passive Perception 11
Languages Common and any two languages

Archery. Gain a +2 bonus to attacks with ranged weapons.
Escape the Hoard. Opportunity attacks against Antheia are made with disadvantage.
Multiattack Defense. If hit by an enemy, Atheia gains a +4 AC against any further attacks from that same enemy during that round.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Antheia can make three attacks.
Longbow. Attack: +10 to hit one target, range of 150–600 ft. Hit: 9 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.
Freezing Arrow. Attack: +10 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage and an additional 8 (1d6+4) cold damage.
Dagger. Attack: +10 to hit one target, 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft. Hit: 7 (1d4 +4) piercing damage.

CREDITS

Written by Elise Cretel.
Art by Kari Kawachi.

DAERON SULASSON

Daeron Sulasson is a terse half-orc scout, a quiet and serious man dedicated to guiding travelers through the harsh land he calls home.

Emerging from the grass is a tall, dark-skinned man with a shock of red hair wearing pale leather armor and holding an elaborate double-recurve bow. As he walks closer, his orcish features become more pronounced: his ears pointed and his mouth curled around small, sharp tusks. His yellow-green eyes are unblinking as he approaches, almost unnerving in their intensity. At his side stalks a tawny female lion, who is pressed against his legs as they walk.



TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Daeron is a quiet and reserved man who prefers to be silent and observe those around him rather than participate in a conversation. When pressed, he is terse but eloquent never using more words when less are adequate; he speaks slowly, in a deep voice that almost resembles the sound of rocks grinding against each other, and he tends toward single statements and answers forgoing elaboration on most subjects. His demeanor is hard to read, not because he is skilled in social interaction but rather because he is not. He tends to watch others and mimic their inflections and intonation as a way to blend in and has trouble maintaining eye contact for long periods of time.

Some might mistake his slow speech for lack of intelligence, but that couldn't be further from the truth. Daeron is far more intelligent than he seems and has almost perfect recall of his many conversations and interactions throughout his lifetime. He is unafraid to point out when someone contradicts something they have said to him previously, which leads him to be surprisingly good at discovering lies.

BACKGROUND

Daeron's mother Sula is a powerful mage and his father Ujarak was the shaman of his orcish tribe until they met and fell in love. Knowing that each could never be fully accepted into the other's world, they instead chose to build a homestead in the empty badlands, far from the civilization that might judge their bond.

Daeron was raised in this harsh landscape, learning from an early age how to find his way through the trackless land and survive where others cannot. He is embarrassed by his complete lack of magical ability

and sees himself as a disappointment to his parents despite their insistence that he is anything but that. However, his natural talent for pathfinding and his almost obsessive love of the wilds from an early age were both encouraged by his family, which led him to spend long hours out in the savannah exploring the grasslands and learning how to survive.

It was on one of these treks that he came across the dead body of a lioness. The wounds in her body were clearly made by some man-made weapon. Three tiny cubs lay beside her; two were already dead, but the third still struggled to nurse from her mother's body. Daeron gathered up the cub and took her back with him, calling her 'Nuca' after his father's word for 'little sister.' Now four years old, Nuca is a constant companion to Daeron, spending most of her time at his side whether they are ranging the savannah or relaxing on the homestead.

INTERACTIONS

Daeron readily agrees to guide travelers through the badlands, considering it his duty to ensure safe passage to visitors of his homeland. He approaches his job with gravity and seriousness and expects whoever he travels with to do the same. He keeps himself on a very strict schedule waking at sunrise and getting on the road not long after. If something delays him, he gets unusually agitated and becomes, if possible, even more terse with his charges, unable to calm himself until he is back on schedule. Nuca is the only thing that calms him in this case; she is unafraid of his outbursts and will go so far as to climb onto his lap and use her weight to her advantage to settle him down.

If he witnesses any sort of disrespect for his craft or the landscape, he reacts with anger, raising his voice uncharacteristically loud. Likewise, if his charges treat the landscape and its inhabitants with respect, or profess interest or knowledge of them, Daeron becomes much more personable and speaks at length about the various flora and fauna he has come across in his travels. He may even smile which transforms him into a more approachable man. Anyone who expresses admiration toward Nuca gains his instant trust, and, similarly, any creature that reacts with hostility to his friend earns his enmity.

His eidetic memory can lead him to be stubborn when it comes to deceit - he is unafraid to point out contradictions and can get pedantic when faced with someone who will not admit to their lies. Often he will shut down a conversation completely when faced with a charlatan, digging his heels in and refusing to let the deceit continue.

STATISTICS

Daeron uses the statistics of an **archer** (Volo's Guide to Monsters, pg. 210) and Nuca uses the statistics of a **lion** (Monster Manual, pg. 331).

CREDITS

Written by Ally Sulentic.

Art by Alldrya Blue.

GLORIOUS PURPOSE

An expert hunter, there are few people who know the local flora, fauna, and geography as well as this raven-like kenku. The only thing more solid than his word, are his magically animated stone hands and feet.

With a clattering grind, stone footsteps thump down the hall. The kenku throws back the sides of his long jacket as he enters room, making sure everyone sees the saber and crossbow at his hips. His bright silver eyes dart rapidly around the room. He tips his tricorn hat off and runs a stone hand over the black feathers on his head before re-seating the hat. His fingers, which look like they'd be more appropriate on a statue, move slowly as he grasps the lapels of his jacket and trudges deeper into the tavern on stone feet.

His sharp eyes and hunter instincts make him an excellent haggler.

Glorious has a remarkably large vocabulary for a kenku. Many of the words he knows clearly came from stories told around a campfire and he often uses hunting words in place of common phrases, such as “Snare some ale. Then talk.”

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Glorious Purpose is an expert hunter. Despite his advancing age (for a kenku) and his stone hands and feet likely slow him a bit, he is still one of the best in the land. Perhaps as a vestige of kenku animosity toward other avian creatures, Glorious particularly enjoys hunting anything that flies, though he claims it is because they are more challenging to track.

While he does enjoy hunting, Glorious never hunts for fun or the “sport” of it. He hunts for food, for pelts or horns he can sell or barter for other necessities, or if hired to rid an area of a particularly dangerous or violent creature.

When hunters and guides have questions about their trade, they ask Glorious. His knowledge of the surrounding area is unmatched and in addition to knowing of the animals and the land itself, he has significant knowledge of herbs and their uses in poultices and potions. He is happy to share his knowledge — for a price. The only thing Glorious enjoys more than hunting is haggling.



BACKGROUND

Glorious's earliest memories are of life in a castle, where he was a ward of the master of hounds for a preeminent noble family. It was not a charmed life. He was made to sleep and eat with the hunting dogs and the people of the castle—including his “father”—treated him as an animal only slightly smarter than the dogs. His formative years were spent learning the hunting methods of hounds, falcons, and humanoids and mimicking the traits of the various creatures he was made to hunt.

His castle life came to an end when Glorious helped a group of nobles corner a stag in a box canyon. The stag turned and revealed himself to be an archdruid. Sensing that Glorious didn't have the bloodlust or hubris of the nobles, she sent him away saying “Whatever life you make on your own could hardly be less glorious than the purpose you are made to serve now.” The kenku took those words to heart and started calling himself Glorious Purpose.

His newly found independent streak along with his nearly unmatched survival skills lead to a fairly solitary nomadic life punctuated by stretches in hunting camps, guild halls, and taverns filled with old men bragging about past conquests. During a particularly disastrous basilisk hunt, Glorious fell under the creature's petrifying gaze. He only survived thanks to the quick application of an anti-petrification ointment he was developing. However, he was not fast enough to save his hands and feet. There are almost certainly magics that could reverse the condition, but Glorious is not interested in them. He only begrudgingly allowed his petrified limbs to be enchanted so they could move like his old appendages did, though not quite as nimbly.

INTERACTIONS

What's in a Name. If asked—or a comment is made—about his name, he will freely admit he gave it to himself. He is clearly proud of it.

Just ask for Directions. Most people approach Glorious asking about the best path through a dangerous region, or where to find a rare herb or creature. He is happy to provide such information for a price. Glorious is also very open to being hired as a guide or to help with a particularly dangerous hunt.

Better Living Through Alchemy. Glorious frequently uses and even makes potions and poultices—many are of his own secret recipe. He almost always has a few extra highly specialized or rare potions on him that he would be happy to barter with.

There is a Price. Rarely will he give advice or information for free. While not particularly interested in or in need of money, he likes gems, but his preferred payment is unique or unusual items—a locket engraved with the silhouette of someone's beloved, a mostly filled diary, a compass that has traveled across the great sea, all are exciting and interesting to Glorious. For bigger jobs, something like a sword that's been a family heirloom for five generations, or a rope that was used to hang three different thieves, might each be an acceptable payment.

Let's Make a Deal. Glorious thoroughly enjoys haggling and making deals. He has clearly spent some time with fey and has a keen eye for finding loopholes and technicalities in deals, especially if they benefit him. He is not above using these to take advantage of people. “You said one emerald for bottle. I accept. Now what for potion in bottle?”

STATISTICS

Glorious uses the statistics of a **master thief** (Volo's Guide to Monsters, pg. 216), with the following additions:

- For contested rolls on persuasion or intimidation pertaining to haggling, Glorious gets +10 to his rolls instead of his normal bonus.

CREDITS

Written by Thomas Marcetti.

Art by Jennifer Peig.

BREEZE

An air genasi spy, information broker, and courtesan, Breeze can be found wherever the rich and the powerful gather, listening to gossip and looking for locked doors that may hide information he can exploit.

A handsome man weaves through the crowds as smoothly as the wind weaving through the trees. He has a lithe, athletic figure, with pale blue skin the colour of the spring sky and hair as white as clouds. Tattoos of white clouds spiralling into dark shadows coil across the skin of his right arm and disappear beneath his sleeveless silk shirt. Around his neck, he wears a collar of oiled leather and soft blue velvet. The slightest smile tugs at the corners of his lips.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Breeze is flirtatious and lighthearted, taking joy in everything he does. He relies on his charm and good looks to put up a non-threatening front that masks his keen intellect and uncanny insight.

Breeze has become a permanent fixture at the galas, balls, and gatherings of the nobility. He is a courtesan, serving as a hired companion to nobles of any gender who have the coin to pay his fees. He uses his position as a courtesan to gather information about the nobility and rich merchants that he can leverage against them if the need arises or sell to the right customers. Trade secrets, salacious rumors, gossip, and dark truths are all fodder for Breeze. His information dealing has made Breeze a tidy fortune of his own, giving him the means to support his own household, complete with a small retinue of servants, and allowing him to live the life of a minor noble.

Breeze is committed to his partner, a water genasi man named Marrin, but maintains other relationships as his work requires or as his whim takes him.



BACKGROUND

Breeze spent his early years living in a temple on the Elemental Plane of Air, learning the ways of fist, staff, and sword, though by the time he reached his teenage years, he knew that such a path was not for him. Breeze left his monastery at the age of 16 and began to wander, not only through the elemental plane of

air, but into the planes of fire, earth and water. On his travels through the Elemental Plane of Water, he met Marrin, a bookish water genasi writer with a love of stories and folklore. After much effort and the recounting of many of his own adventures, Breeze convinced the insular water genasi to travel with him to discover the folklore of the other planes.

The pair of genasi spent the next 5 years travelling together, living off meagre coins earned from odd jobs while Marrin scraped together forgotten folktales and wrote volume after volume of folklore-inspired tales that no one but Breeze would read. The rejections grated on Marrin until he threw down his quill, vowing never to write again. Breeze would not stand by and watch Marrin’s dreams shatter; he waited until Marrin was asleep and recovered a volume of stories Marrin had discarded in a rage. With Marrin’s volume in hand, Breeze fled through the nighttime streets, towards the offices of the local broadsheets guild. With monk-trained skills, Breeze leapt to the second floor balcony and picked the locks. He slipped into the editors office, placing Marrin’s volume on her desk and scrawling a note about where she might find this bright new talent. In doing so, Breeze noticed a sheaf of papers on the editor’s desk—broadsheet stories with redactions and edits, alongside a letter from a local noble offering a sizable amount of gold to ensure that the edits made their way into the broadsheets. Breeze pocketed the letter and got his first taste of blackmail.

One week later, one of Marrin’s stories appeared in the broadsheets and a courier carrying a sizable payment of gold arrived for Marrin. “A few more successful stories like these,” Breeze said to Marrin, “And we won’t need to work useless jobs anymore.”

INTERACTIONS

Breeze is quick to flirt with anyone he meets if he thinks that it might provide him with some leverage or advantage over them. He won’t reveal his true role as an information broker, but most underworld figures know him and can point adventurers in his direction.

In addition to knowing all of the gossip and scandalous secrets of the nobility, Breeze keeps an inventory of the most damaging information he has learned that can be easily turned towards blackmail. He is willing to sell any of his information for a hefty price and will work as a spy to seek out specific secrets for an even steeper price.

BREEZE

Medium humanoid (Air genasi), Chaotic Good

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 42
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Cha +6
Skills Deception +6, Insight +5, Persuasion +6, Stealth +6
Languages Common, Elvish, Primordial

Unarmored Defense. While Breeze is wearing no armor and wielding no shield, his AC includes his wisdom modifier.

Wall Running. Breeze can move up to 20 feet on a vertical or horizontal surfaces as though it were a horizontal surface.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Breeze makes two attacks on his turn.

Unarmed Attack. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 7 (1d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

CREDITS

Written by David Markiowsky.
Art by David Markiowsky.

SOLMA

This turtle broadsheet reporter and information broker loves meeting new adventurers, but it's clear he's hiding something under his shell. Maybe it's a plot to bring down the hierarchy!

A large, turtle-like humanoid walks up to you with surprising grace for someone with such a heavy shell. He pulls his favorite aquamarine-tipped quill and a worn leather journal from inside the shell, where he seems to keep all his possessions like a natural bag of holding.

the hierarchy. It's a bit easier to justify if the leaders are corrupt, but anyone in charge of a hierarchy for long enough will inevitably use their power to hurt the innocent. For someone who cares so much about protecting the innocent, Solma is awfully eager to work with villains to learn their secrets, often protecting them from reprisals in exchange for information. He insists this is a necessary sacrifice, but it is also a self-destructive streak. Solma is always in trouble up to the top of his shell!

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Solma is a busybody who writes about new merchant caravan arrivals to fund more meaningful investigations. He's always looking to meet interesting new arrivals in town and goes out of his way to try and promote novice adventurers. Hopefully, he can help them avoid some of the early mistakes he made, going on monster hunts and dungeon crawls just for the coin. Besides, it's fun to gently mock adventurers who aren't as sly or subtle as they think they are. Perceptive adventurers will notice that Solma never finishes his drinks when he meets them in the tavern. He drinks slowly or swaps mugs to ensure he's the most sober person in the conversation.

There's always a secret under Solma's shell. He has relationships with most of the major factions, houses, and guilds in town. It's hard not to walk away from a conversation with the feeling that the sly turtle isn't sharing everything. Solma thinks this is the best way to prove he's good at his job. If Solma overshares before he publishes the final story, why should anyone read it?

If adventures get to know Solma, they will inevitably see his more serious and judgmental side. This muckraker always has his sights set on taking down



BACKGROUND

Some people plan their whole lives to become storytellers. For Solma, it was more of an accident. He never wanted to become a “bard” or anything close to it. He’s an investigator! An adventuring party hired him to be the trap finder in their dungeon crawls. One quest gave more loot than Solma could possibly fit in his shell. Why keep questing for more stuff?

The most frustrating thing was how Passion, the party’s tiefling bard, told the group’s story over drinks. Why make up a story about killing a black dragon when you risked life and limb saving the town from an army of 30 ghosts? Sure, killing undead hordes is a waste of the truly talented, but Passion was charming enough to enrapture audiences with a story based on the truth! Solma knew this better than anyone, as the pair ended each of the party’s quests with a more intimate adventure for two.

After two years, Solma realized he needed to pursue truth and justice, not loot, so he ended the relationship and settled down. He’d still be able to mix business and pleasure! However, in a world of dragons and magic, there wasn’t much interest in someone whose stories contained nothing but the facts. Solma retreated into his shell for a week, afraid to face the harsh reality of what readers wanted. Eventually, he launched a new broadsheet called The Turtle’s Tribune. He wouldn’t lie or slander people. Claims can be verified or debunked. However, he’d learned that the only way to get people to pay attention to the real villains was to add a bit of dramatic flavor to the story.

INTERACTIONS

You can introduce Solma a few different ways. Adventurers could try meeting him for information, or he could seek them out.

Anyone looking for an information broker could hear Solma’s name. He loves win-win situations! Sometimes you have to share a secret to get another one back. However, Solma knows that if he shares all his secrets, others could cut him out of the loop or kill him. Other people should understand why the turtle likes keeping things under his shell, acting like a cipher and tease with expertise in deception. Solma also keeps a comically large amount of items in his shell (with a well-disguised bag of holding).

If adventurers are just starting out, Solma is more likely to approach them. He’s an enthusiastic

cheerleader for new adventurers in town, offering jobs and contacts that may help him down the line. Of all the day jobs Solma takes to pay the bills, writing profiles of new adventurers are his favorite.

Depending on your party, Solma could become a rival or antagonist in short order. He’s always a man on a mission and more than willing to pump adventurers for information or start investigating parties who are too loyal to a crown. If adventurers pull a sword on him, he reaches for his pen, completely unimpressed. They aren’t the first to threaten his life. He’s handy with a shortsword if absolutely necessary, relying on nonlethal poisons to help escape.

SOLMA

Medium humanoid (Turtle), Chaotic Good

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 57 (13d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Int +4

Skills Deception +8, Insight +10, Investigation +7, Perception +7, Persuasion +5, Stealth +7, Survival +7

Languages Common, Aquan, Thieves Cant; any two additional

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

Ear for Deceit. Whenever you make a Wisdom (Insight) check to determine whether a creature is lying, treat a roll of 7 or lower on the d20 as an 8.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Solma makes two attacks on his turn.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage and 3d6 poison damage. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, they are stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points. It is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

CREDITS

Written by Noah Grand.

Art by Liz Gist.

EDWARD OTHERLIGHT

A community leader and mysterious scholar, Edward Otherlight is a seemingly stern quest-giver who softens his demeanor after adventurers have proven themselves as trustworthy. He helps any adventurer along their path as long as they are willing to get their hands dirty in making life better for the people of his village.

Candlelight dances across the man's face; his skin is a deep and rich dark brown umber and tight locs dance just above his eyes. He looks up from a dusty tome with an archaic language scrawled across its cover and smiles. His shadow, cast upon the wall, flows briefly with eldritch energy. With a gentle nod of acknowledgment he returns to his book.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Edward is quick-witted in any situation; few can out think him. He keeps most of his locs in a bun, out of his way for reading, but there are always a few that hang in front of his face. He is a lover of playing games with friends after meals to cap off an evening.

Edward comes off as a reticent man to those who he doesn't immediately find a connection. When he does find a like-minded person or someone with similar experiences, Edward quickly changes his demeanor and excitedly engages on common ground.

Edward always brims with pride at the progress and solidarity of his community. He approaches familiar folk with warm embraces and a rapid stream of adventure stories, his own or stories he has heard, before sitting down for a home-cooked meal.

BACKGROUND

Edward grew up in this remote farming village and, as a child, despaired at the treatment his neighbors received at the hands of outsiders. Food was scarce, or of low quality, water needed purification, and hateful, robber barons build poorly constructed homes. Since the moment he first could, Edward dedicated his life to helping his neighbors improve their community. Edward made relationships with farmers, mages, and builders from prosperous regions to help his neighbors nurture their fields, heal their water supplies, and build new homes. Many of the barons' agents threatened their village in an attempt to maintain power. Recently the barons hired orcish sellswords to raid the village's trade lines, and they conjured a dark curse beneath farms, souring the land. Despite the hateful campaign of the barons, Edward and his neighbors conquer each challenge and continue to improve their dear homeland.

Several years ago Glowthenkys, Elder Deity of the Depths and a forgotten eldritch god, first visited Edward's dreams. Ever since then, Edward and Glowthenkys, "Glow," explore existence, strife, emotions, and, most importantly, a growing love. Unable to connect outside Edward's dreams, Edward's heart aches; he diligently strives to bring Glow to this plane. Glowthenkys, valuing their beloved's passion for his community, gave Edward the gift of magic unknown to much of his world, thus beginning Edward's journey as a warlock.



INTERACTIONS:

Edward meets strangers, and those he deems a potential danger, curtly. But he happily hires fledgling adventurers to deal with small monstrous incursions or to protect caravans bound for distant markets. Orcs and bandits ambush, attack, and attempt to steal goods. They are aggressive toward those who interfere.

He greets proven adventurers warmly, inquiring about their adventures and backgrounds. If the adventurers invest their time in Edward's community, he trusts them enough to ask them for one last mission. To help the community adventurers can venture into the wilderness and defeat the orcish marauders or venture beneath the various farmlands and break the various curses that have invited Slaads to settle and spread beneath the ground.

Edward's beloved Glowthenkys, longs to be released so they may be united. Edward asks the adventurers for their help in a dangerous ritual. Edward reads from an ancient tome, pressing his soul into the pages to break the seal. Several Deva (Monster Manual p. 16) spill from the ethe, attacking those who work to free Glowthenkys from their prison.

Once Glowthenkys is freed from their prison an uncomfortable, chilling wave of air buffets the adventurers. Glow's unknowable visage is difficult to look upon but has a strange, enchanting beauty and Edward beams with pride and thanks towards the adventurers. Edward will endlessly shower the adventurers with praise and gifts them tertiary fruit of the ritual, a well of many worlds. The moment Glow crosses into this plane the fabric of reality shifts. The villages crops grow more fruitful, trade flourishes, and the barons steer all of their endeavors away from the village. With Glow in humanoid form amongst the mortal villagers life's challenges seem to fade away in front of them, paving the way for exponential growth while the surrounding areas suffer. All areas surrounding the village are afflicted by the same trials that once plagued Edwards home. In addition, individuals who would have ill intentions towards the village are suddenly stricken with an inexplicable madness that eventually drives them into a catatonic shock they will never awake from.

EDWARD OTHERLIGHT

Medium humanoid, Chaotic Good

Armor Class 14 (leather)

Hit Points 91 (14d8 + 28)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Wis +6, Cha +8

Skills Insight +6, Religion +6, History +6

Senses Passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Abyssal, Aquan

Spellcasting. Edward is a 10th level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is charisma (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). Edward knows the following spells:

Cantrips (at will): *eldritch blast*, *prestidigitation*, *minor illusion*, *chill touch*

1st– 5thLevel (2 slots): *armor of agathys*, *arms of hadar*, *enthrall*, *counterspell*, *dispel magic*, *hunger of hadar*, *blight*, *dimension door*, *spider climb*, *dream*, *contact other plane*

Awakened Mind. Edward can speak telepathically with any creature he can see within 30 feet of him. He does not need to share a language for the creature to understand him.

Agonizing Blast. When Edward casts *eldritch blast*, he adds his Charisma modifier to the damage it deals on a hit.

Eyes of the Rune Keeper. Edward can read all writing.

Eldritch Spear. When Edward casts *eldritch blast*, its range is 300 ft.

ACTIONS

Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 11 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage and 4d6 poison damage.

Call of Glowthenkys. All creatures within a 30ft. radius of Edward must succeed a DC 18 Charisma save or be affected by the hold monster spell.

CREDITS

Written by Cameron Blair.

Art by David Markiwsy.

GRANDPA YARICK

Grandpa Yarick is a disarmingly genial town leader; a bit of a folk hero who has been a staple of the land for as long as anyone can remember.

A tall and round, gray-skinned Firbolg with eyes of silver that glint as the light catches them. His warm smile appears to be a permanent feature given the well-worn creases on his face.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Grandpa Yarick is known to some outside the town as Mayor Yarick: a good-natured old Firbolg, prone to laughter and quick to offer help. He will most likely be found on the porch of his home, a modest and rather bare structure with little more than a cot, simple dresser, and wood-burning stove. He conducts all his business, both personal and municipal from his porch. On his porch is a little table where he occasionally drafts up letters and documents. He plays his lute and sings tunes in a language known to few people anywhere and none among the quiet town, but they occupy the empty chairs that line the porch and listen nonetheless. On occasion he gathers other townspeople inclined towards music and together they perform short little concerts.

On account of his left knee being inflamed most days, Grandpa Yarick walks with the assistance of a sturdy yet ornate cane which prominently features a dragon's head. If someone were to intrude on his personal living space to search thoroughly, they'd find loose floorboards beneath his cot that conceal a large contraption which provides some support in his ancient dragon form. None of the townspeople know of his true identity as an ancient dragon nor does he discuss it with anyone casually.

BACKGROUND

Long before Grandpa Yarick was mayor of the town, he engaged in aerial combat with a black dragon over an ideological difference. The opposing dragon destroyed the town with its breath weapon simply because it could. After defeating his enemy, Grandpa Yarick enlisted a group of nomadic Firbolgs to assist in reclaiming and rebuilding the area so that farms could be restarted and people might return. Since then he has dedicated himself to protecting and observing the smaller creatures.



When a plague struck the town, Grandpa Yarick contemplated revealing his true draconic self in order to use magic that would have otherwise been uncharacteristic for him. He instead enlisted the help of elves whose magic was sufficient for the task. In exchange for saving the town, he paid the elves in long-lost archives of codices and artifacts that would further their knowledge of the arcane, history, and the world. The townspeople may not have understood exactly what he was offering the elves, but those given to gossiping did not miss the fact that he promised all he had to save the town.

INTERACTIONS

Anyone who refers to Grandpa Yarick as Mayor or Mayor Yarick will be politely rebuffed and asked to call him “Grandpa Yarick” or “Yarick” if his preferred honorific is beneath their sensibilities. All visitors are offered tea, though Grandpa Yarick will apologize for his slow movement on account of his knee which is “as rusty as the hinges on my front door.”

Grandpa Yarick is patient and nothing seems to faze him. New adventurers who regale him with tales of their accomplishments will not truly impress him, but he will always feign awe, while those who try to rile him or offend him will be ignored.

Grandpa Yarick believes humanoids to be incredible creatures and as such encourages their passions so long as they are not destructive to themselves or others. He will often ask newcomers to the town—especially if they are new to their chosen profession as adventurers—to assist with small tasks such as looking into reports of bandits camping just outside of town or of a mischievous individual soiling the well. If there is an established relationship of mutual trust and good will, Grandpa Yarick may be persuaded to reveal his true form and assist powerful adventurers in their most dire need or against impossibly powerful enemies.

STATISTICS

When Grandpa Yarick reveals his true form, he uses the statistics of an **ancient silver dragon** (Monster Manual, pg. 116), with the following additions:

- Grandpa Yarick’s languages known are Common, Draconic, Elvish, Gnomish, Halfling, Giant and Orc.
- Grandpa Yarick’s walking speed is 20 ft.

CREDITS

Written by Jamie O’Duibhir.

Art by Jennifer Peig and David Markiwsky.

CASTELLA VALOURE

Princess Castella Valoure is a headstrong and determined half-elf princess, currently travelling as a political envoy with her personal guard. Pansexual and Aromantic, she has no desire for romantic partners, though her parents aren't aware of this.

The chubby half-elf woman standing before you is dressed in fine blue clothes of various shades, that complement her pale blue skin. If the numerous guards surrounding her didn't give away her status, the golden circlet, complete with gemstone, perched on top of her blonde hair indicates she is a princess.

When in more formal situations, she acts more serious. She is an excellent strategist, and calm under pressure. Princess Castella prefers not to fight, preferring diplomacy where possible. If she is under attack, she acts as a commander, directing her guards to defend her. In desperate times however, she will use her sun blade.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

When interacting with civilians, Princess Castella is confident and outgoing. This should not be mistaken for naivety as she is very aware that not everyone has the best of intentions. She tries her best to be both genuine, and also on her guard. Though she is polite, she won't let anyone take it for granted. She is not afraid to ask someone to leave.

As she is a political envoy, she presents herself in a nonthreatening way. But as she is also a princess, she understands that her life may be at risk at any time. Because of this, plate armour is concealed within her outfits, and her weapon of choice is a sun blade, which resembles just a scepter when not in use. Only perceptive eyes (Passive Perception 15) will notice them.

BACKGROUND

As the second child born to the Royal Family, Princess Castella grew up with the expectation that she would never have to take the throne. Regardless, she was tutored in many subjects ranging from art to politics to swordfighting.

Her people saw her positively, as she interacted with them frequently. This was in part due to her kindness, and partly due to her dislike for being stuck within the castle for long periods of time. When she became of age, she became a political envoy, travelling to other lands when the Royal Family needed to send someone.

When an assassination attempt was made against her older sibling, the whole

Royal Family was reminded of its mortality. However, at the same time, the Family was against the idea of arranged marriages. So, Princess



Castella’s parents encouraged her to find a partner during her travels.

Princess Castella agreed, but did not tell her parents that their definition of partner most likely didn’t match hers. As she is royalty, she would be expected to marry her partner, which she has no desire to. Pansexual Aromantic, she lacks romantic attraction. She doesn’t find having children too big of a deal, provided one of the friends she is attracted to consents to it, but she cannot in good conscience marry them.

Not wanting to deal with the whole topic, Princess Castella has continued her role as a political envoy, this time with a few more galas on the itinerary.

PRINCESS CASTELLA VALOURE

Medium humanoid (Human), Lawful Good

Armor Class 18 (plate)
Hit Points 113 (15d8 + 45)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Str +7, Con +6
Skills Athletics +7, Insight +5, Performance +7, Perception +5, Persuasion +7
Senses darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 15
Languages Common, Elvish

Special Equipment. Princess Castella wields a sun blade longsword.
Fey Ancestry. Princess Castella has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can’t put her to sleep.
Indomitable (2/Day). Princess Castella can reroll a saving throw she fails. She must use the new roll.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Princess Castella makes two melee attacks.
Sun Blade. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 10 (1d8 + 6) radiant damage, or 11 (1d10 + 6) radiant damage if wielded in two hands, plus 4 (1d8) radiant damage if the target is undead.

CREDITS

Written by Alison Huang. Art by Alison Huang.

INTERACTIONS

Princess Castella is friendly if approached in public, greeting people humbly as if she were not royalty.
She is open to being flirted with, but will most likely not reciprocate until she knows someone well. As a princess she knows that many people want to be with her simply because of her position. She detests romantic proclamations and attempts to court her. Ultimately she is looking for friends.

She is much more serious and commanding when discussing politics and battle plans, as well as in combat.

Princess Castella Valoure is accompanied by four **Knights** (Monster Manual, pg.347).

Leadership (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). For 1 minute, Princess Castella can utter a special command or warning whenever a nonhostile creature that she can see within 30 feet of her makes an attack roll or a saving throw. The creature can add a d4 to its roll provided it can hear and understand Princess Castella. A creature can benefit from only one Leadership die at a time. This effect ends if Princess Castella is incapacitated.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Princess Castella 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. Princess Castella regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

Weapon Attack. Princess Castella makes a weapon attack.
Command Ally. Princess Castella targets one ally she can see within 30 feet of her. If the target can see and hear Princess Castella, the target can make one weapon attack as a reaction and gains advantage on the attack roll.
Maneuver Ally. Princess Castella targets one ally she can see within 30 feet of her. If the target can see and hear Princess Castella, the target can use its reaction to move up to half its speed without provoking opportunity attacks.



RENAULT MALDOVA SERENIA IV

Renault is a self-exiled prince, hiding from an arranged marriage and the ire of his betrothed. Most nights he can be found in the tavern, spinning tales of tragic heroes and love lost.

Draped over the tavern's bar is a man, just over six feet tall, clad in elegant, but worn, light armor made of flamboyant copper-toned silks and softly tanned gray leather. His eyes swirl with a smooth mixture of green and brown, vibrant against his sun-kissed caramel skin. Woven throughout his tightly curled brown hair dangle beaded jewels in a mock rattail, and he twirls a ring adorned finger around the sparkling piece of twine. He could be the very vision of royalty were it not for the grime on his clothing and melancholy in his eyes.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Renault is keen for an adventure whenever the opportunity arises, though he has become more selective with those he trusts. He is quick with a retort, often vaguely cynical, and it seems as though a shroud separates him from the warmth and laughter of others.

Though he is morose, kindness often bleeds through the fog of grief that dominates him. Despite his loss, Renault is still very much a showman. Both his clothing and personality remain flamboyant, though he can come across as quite jaded if approached harshly. He does not quickly trust anyone and goes by the name “Renny, the Masterless Minstrel” until he truly trusts an individual.

BACKGROUND

While Renault always knew he would one day be arranged in marriage, he had hoped to come to a mutually beneficial understanding with his betrothed, freeing them both to pursue their own romantic interests. His future queen, however, bristled at the idea of so unconventional an arrangement and abhorred even further the idea of sharing her future husband with a man. Before consenting to the marriage, terms were set that barred Renault from the company of his true love, the leader of his royal guard and ardent protector, Rutherford.

Rather than risk harm to his beloved, Renault sent him away, accepting the burden of his royal obligations at the cost of his own happiness. For some years, Renault lived in relative peace with his betrothed, though her bitterness towards his preference in companions never truly faded. With each passing day, Renault busied himself in the governance of his people, taking on more responsibility from his father. The King saw the misery in his son's eyes, yet felt incapable of taking any true action. Their kingdom was in desperate need of an



alliance, and it seemed Renault's hand in marriage was the only currency of value.

On the eve of Renault's wedding, Rutherford returned to the kingdom in guise to bid his dearest friend a joyous life. However, he truly returned by the word of the King to spirit Renault away as if by force, and to disappear into the world. Renault left the kingdom, hurriedly and without protest, with orders from his father to seek out alternative methods and alliances to strengthen their kingdom.

For a time, all was well for Renault and Rutherford. They enjoyed their new lives as adventurers, seeking out magical artefacts and treasures, longing to return home, hailed as heroes for the riches they carried with them.

Yet this was not to be their fate, for the young queen was wroth at the escape of her intended and she spared no expense in securing his return. Eventually, her agents managed to track Renault and Rutherford to a nearby city, confronting them immediately and slaying Rutherford in the fray.

Renault escaped the fighting but was overcome with grief at the loss of Rutherford. He fled from the wreckage of his new life, a passion for song his only comfort on the now desolate and lonely road before him. He pined, his once happy tunes turning dark. Rife with his own sadness, Renault unintentionally made a bit of a name for himself through his traveling performances.

INTERACTIONS

Renault can be found directly through word of mouth advertising. Any city he has performed in will have a town crier declaring: "The Masterless Minstrel puts on a show that any bereft of grief or love lost must flock to attend! With dulcet tones, mysteriously poignant lyrics, and just a bit of magical essence, The Masterless Minstrel can soothe any soul, if only for a short while!"

Usually, he is in a tavern, singing melancholia and vaguely retelling his own tale. He can be approached for quests, as he and Rutherford collected a list of well-known artefacts, dungeons, and lost treasures. He has been known to act as a liaison for interested parties seeking adventures, provided that they are willing to split the take.

Renault will reveal his plight to those who prove they are worthy of his trust. While his desire to return home still smoulders beneath the surface, he believes that only truly distinguished heroes could aid him in reclaiming his throne.

He travels a fair amount, never staying in one place for too long unless he has reason to do so. Rumors of distinguished warriors, grand battles, or powerful magicians push him onward, with each new lead a veiled promise of returning home. From battlefield to ruined city, Renault spends more time soothing those left behind than pursuing his own agenda, but despite it all, he moves forward.

STATISTICS

Renault uses the statistics of a **bard** (Volo's Guide to Monsters, pg. 211), with the following changes:

- Remove the **Taunt** ability
- **Cutting Words (2/day)**. When a creature within 60 ft. of Renault that he can see makes an attack roll, an ability check, or a damage roll, Renault can use his reaction to roll 1d8, subtracting the number rolled from the creature's roll.

CREDITS

Written by Grant Sparks.

Art by David Markiwsky.

SAN'GE JUWAN

San'ge has dedicated himself to the betterment of the world and the spread of information, through diplomacy where possible, and conquest when necessary. Driven by a desire to see the common people armed with the most deadly of weapons, knowledge, San'ge marches against the oppressors of the world, offering freedom through wisdom or death.

Surrounded by the brute strength of hundreds of soldiers, the slender man standing at the fore draws your eye. Light fades against his smoothly bald head, absorbed by the darkness of his skin. Taller than most, San'ge moves with the grace of a feline, each step a calculated measure of finesse. Flowing from his hips, sparkling gold and vibrant red silks hide the glint of battle worn steel. His chest is exposed, gilded with the spoils of war. A jagged mace, bracers made of precious metals and gemstones, and a single shoulder pauldron announce that you stand in the presence of a formidable warrior. Crescent shaped scars, inlaid with gold filigree, outline San'ge's muscular chest, hinting that this warrior is far more than he seems. In his eyes, a fire burns, a flame that will not be easily extinguished, as evidenced by the dried blood purposefully left to rust on San'ge's weapon.

That being said, San'ge has thrown himself into the study of all things, including war, and has been quite successful in bringing his vision to life through force, where necessary. While he strives to be kind in all of his doings, San'ge will never back down from his mission and has the capacity for brutality, but strives ever to regard it as a last resort. San'ge believes the majority of people are inherently good, however he is merciless in the face of true evil.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

San'ge is ultimately a kind ruler. He has a large and loyal following, and while he insists upon democratic rulership, many default to his word. He seeks to empower people with knowledge and understanding, in the hopes that conflict can be avoided if people are willing to learn about each other. San'ge has toppled many smaller kingdoms through the spread of information and education of the populace. The introduction of basic reading and mathematical skills has empowered the peasantry to demand fair and equitable treatment from oppressive governors, while education concerning tolerance has lead San'ge to usher in a new era of cooperation between the differing people in his small realm.



BACKGROUND

San'ge Juwan was born of fire and pain. The name given to him by his family has long been forgotten, resting beneath the dirt of the pauper's grave afforded to him and his family. The history of the person that came before San'ge is largely a mystery. Many believe that he was born purely from the will of the Gods; others whisper rumors of a darker origin in the darkest hours of the night.

Sange, however, gladly recounts the story of his "rebirth". The tale itself has swayed many a doubter to San'ge's cause.

Rebirth

San'ge stirred from darkness, his memories hazy and unsure. The taste of copper filled his mouth and his chest was racked with a searing pain that invaded his very being. But, he was somehow comforted. Soft down wrapped him closely, wings of fiery gold enveloping his broken limbs, as a soft voice whispered in his mind.

"As you have sought, so you have received, my child. Many and more are my children who seek to know themselves as you now do. I have taken from you the greatest pain, and in return I charge you to bring such salvation to all those whom you can." San'ge could not see the figure speaking. Dancing white light, embedded with a thousand, thousand, colors obscured them.

"Take up your wings, my beloved, and bring forth understanding to those in need, and justice to those due it." A hand reached towards San'ge, and liquid gold spilled across his chest. The brutal wounds upon his chest filled with the warm liquid, and his heart was flooded with newfound pride and vigor. Standing now of his own strength, he looked upon the being before him and knew them for one of the gods. Arms outstretched, the liquid gold poured from the hands of the god, forming a darkened steel mace and a small book. The god placed these implements at San'ge's feet.

"These instruments will guide your way. Give justice to those deserving, and spread tolerance throughout the world. Lean not on this weapon, yet let it protect you where it must. True power lies in understanding."

And with that, San'ge was alone. He looked through the book, though he could not read it. And as if inspired, he understood. To the people of his village he must have seemed just as this book: foreign, unknowable, a threat of mystery and secrets. He clenched his left hand around the pommel of the mace and turned towards his home. First, he would learn to read the book. Then, he would bring understanding to them all, one way or the other.

INTERACTIONS

San'ge loves to debate. He is soft and slow to respond, purposefully deliberate when choosing his words. His courtiers often joke that it is impossible to disturb their leader's calm. He spends much of his time personally educating people, teaching them how to read, write, and perform basic sums. He often gathers strangers to his home for days on end to argue philosophy, compare political concerns, and lecture on the many natures of existence. He makes friends easily, judging a person by their capacity for growth, rather than their current being.

He can often be found wandering the streets of the cities he controls, learning about the cultures of those now in his care. For every city that he takes by force, three are brought into the fold through peaceful means. San'ge sends agents well before his armies, set to the task of teaching and nourishing those in the greatest need. When his army finally arrives, it is often to open gates and praise. Always, he puts out a call for those with love in their hearts to surrender peaceably. Those that do are given the opportunity to retain their homes, livelihoods, and keep their families safe. Some even join his forces. San'ge knows the horrors of war, and does everything in his power to avoid unnecessary bloodshed.

STATISTICS

San'ge uses the statistics of a **war priest** (Volo's Guide to Monsters, pg. 218).

CREDITS

Written by Grant Sparks.

Art by Luciella Elisabeth Scarlett.

TEMERITY, THE ARBITER

“The Arbiter” has quickly gained a reputation for fairly resolving conflicts between humanoids and making the most problematic criminals simply disappear. Few know the mysterious cloaked figure is actually a mind flayer arcanist who fled their tyrannical colony. Now going by “Temerity,” they use games and disguises to learn humanoid intimacy, hopefully sharing close bonds and a name of their own one day.

A purple skinned androgynous figure in long, flowing robes sits on an ornate chair as you approach. They give a warm smile, but their eyes dart back and forth, belying true feelings. A subtle flash of dread and then curiosity threatens to overwhelm your senses. Whoever you are about to meet may be more scared of you than you are of them.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

After years of living independently, Temerity came to realize they would rather settle among humanoids than rejoin a mind flayer hive. Humanoids are much wiser. Even the most ordinary human seems capable of sustaining themselves by the look on each others' faces and an occasional passionate embrace, instead of building an entire society around harvesting psychic energy from unwilling victims. The illithid has built a new life for themselves in a human city, arbitrating conflicts between humanoids by day and playing games with close friends at night. They quickly gained a reputation for bringing rule-breakers to heel and putting the law above anyone but a single absolute sovereign. Vaguely working for both the authorities and the underworld ensures just enough malcontents to consume, along with a world of interesting people to meet.

But how do you explain to that human over there that you don't want to eat them, you just kind of have to from time to time? The illithid spends most of their time in magical disguise as a purple-skinned androgynous Tiefling named “Temerity,” whether in their underground home or walking amongst humanoids. They are deathly afraid of physical contact, which tends

to shatter the disguise. However, the mind flayer is fascinated with humanoids' capacity to form emotional intimacy. A few empathetic and courageous souls get to see a tentacled smile other humanoids could never imagine. Gendered patterns of intimacy and physical romance are completely foreign though.

Temerity is both curious and extremely nervous around adventurers. Bands of reckless adventurers are among mind flayers' biggest threats. Sure, most hives deserve to be wiped out, but adventurers may try to kill an illithid instead of submitting to a perfectly just and reasonable ruling. Meeting adventurers

outside of work is much safer! They see so much of the world that a mind flayer who just wants to roll dice and share stories may not be the most shocking thing in the world. Several nights a week, Temerity can be found hosting games in the back rooms of various taverns or caves. Costumes are encouraged, so they don't feel singled out with *disguise self*.



BACKGROUND

They were tasked with putting intellect devourers into a drow house, using the puppets to infiltrate and spy on them. Once cut off from the elder brain, they were able to consider being an individual for the first time, instead of just another unit of their colony. So much expansion felt extreme. Shouldn't the drow have to prove they are evil before starting hostile action? While lost in thought, a *lightning bolt* killed the intellect devourers and forced the mind flayer to finally kill.

Separated from the rest of the hive, the illithid looked down at the drow mage's spellbook and *ring of mind shielding*. They would be killed for rejecting the infiltration mission, so why not double down on heresy and start learning arcane magic? After a couple of years living beneath the city's large academy and surviving on the brains of selfish humanoids looking to loot the area, the mind flayer started missing the sound of hearing others' thoughts on a regular basis.

One *disguise self* later, "Temerity the Tiefling" entered the city's largest gambling hall. Over the next few months, every suspected cheat mysteriously "disappeared" while "Temerity" earned a small fortune. When an elf who had lost everything hugged the "Tiefling" for solving the problem, the disguise was shattered. The mind flayer stood in stunned silence for what felt like minutes, staring down at their tentacles, but was only a moment before the elf continued his embrace and invited their new friend to a more cooperative story-based game the next day. Temerity had finally found a loving home.

INTERACTIONS

"Temerity the Arbiter" would prefer to communicate vocally when speaking to groups of humans, but all of their practice and arcane power only goes so far. Interaction for more than a few minutes at a time is physically painful unless they cast *tongues*. At work, The Arbiter tries to listen as much as possible, asking a few probing questions with extreme formality in a magically amplified, booming voice. When

playing games, Temerity gets much more excited and occasionally breaks into bursts of telepathy without realizing it. The more intimate a relationship with a humanoid, the more they try to use telepathy instead of vocalization.

Names are complicated and painful for this illithid. Both "The Arbiter" and "Temerity" are assumed names as part of disguises – ideally separate disguises for work and play. They are getting more comfortable with using Temerity full time but still don't quite consider it their "real" name. Adventurers who are accepting and supportive will be surprised with thoughtful yet bizarre gifts for their next meeting. Anyone asking for the mind flayer's "real" or "thought" name gets a headache.

After months of using gambling and other competitive games to try and get comfortable around humanoids, Temerity has grown fond of more cooperative storytelling games that are less reminiscent of life in the mind flayer colony. They carry a bag of holding stuffed with board games, dice, miniature figurines, and writing implements.

STATISTICS

Temerity uses the statistics of a **mind flayer arcanist** (Monster Manual, pg. 222), with the following additions:

- Temerity's alignment is lawful neutral
- Temerity speaks common and Infernal
- Temerity has the *tongues* spell prepared in addition to their other spells
- Temerity has a *ring of mind shielding* and a cloak which acts as a *hat of disguise*

CREDITS

Written by Noah Grand.

Art by Nichole Wilkinson.

ARIANA STORMSCALE

A beautiful half-blue dragon woman who exudes both fine grace and deadly cunning. She has built her own massive merchant empire from the ground up as revenge against the men who paid for the assassination of her dragon father.

A tall, tan-skinned woman with black hair that hangs past her shoulders. A pair of jagged, yellow horns curving from the top of her head, patches of blue scales showing from her exposed skin, and slitted, yellow eyes denote her draconic heritage. She wears a cobalt blue dress which exposes her arms and back and is adorned with several pieces of gold jewelry including rings, bracelets, and earrings.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

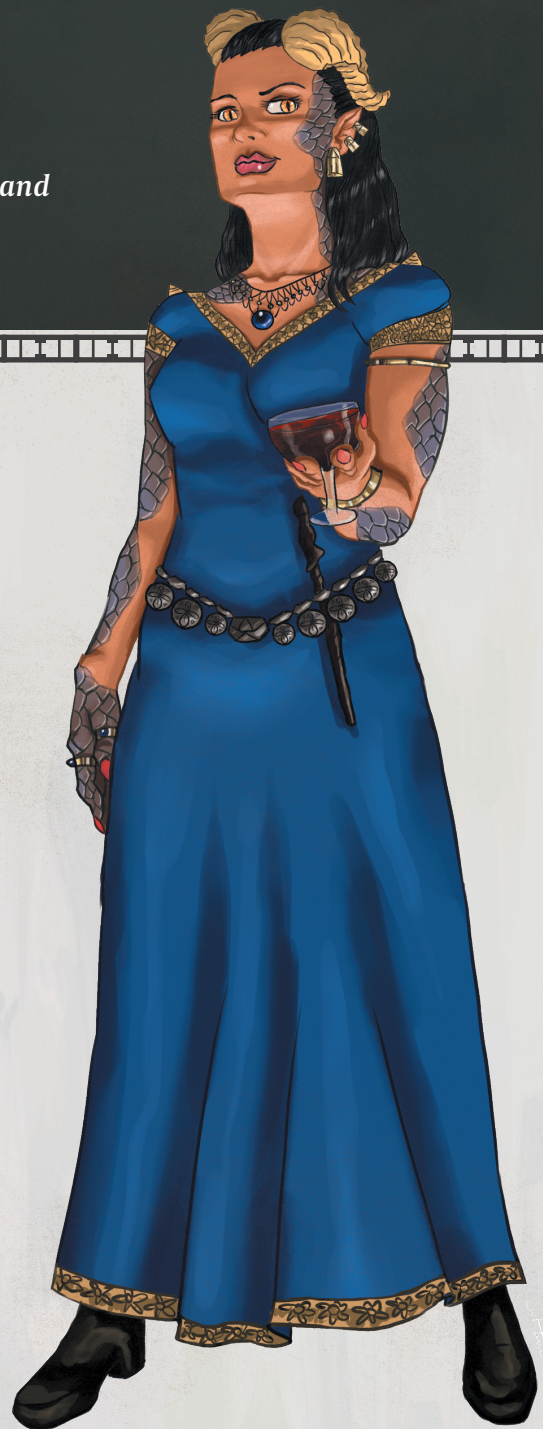
Ariana is a cunning and beautiful woman who isn't impressed easily. She speaks plainly and to the point, not wasting time on pleasantries or metaphor. In her rare less serious moments, she expresses dry wit and sense of humor. Being a prideful person, she rarely allows herself to suffer through the words of a fool, unless they have been proven useful or necessary to her plans. Despite her callous nature and icy stare, Ariana rarely shows her temper. She often keeps an even head, constantly evaluating her situation and keeps her expression even.

BACKGROUND

Ariana Stormscale was born from the unusual union of a human mother and a blue dragon father. Being born of two different worlds, Ariana constantly wrestled with her dueling natures growing up. Her father's blood spurred her to lash out at others while constantly striving to achieve more for herself while her mother's nature gave her a sense of empathy and the ability to understand others on a deep level. This duality was not limited to her emotions, however. Her looks caused others to keep their distance and

prevented her from having deeper relations with anyone outside her family. Despite these challenges, Ariana grew into a strong, intelligent young woman her parents were proud of.

The fragile peace Ariana had was shattered when a band of powerful mercenaries, hired by merchant lords, slew her father for his hoard of treasures. The chaotic drive inside Ariana was solidified in that moment, and she set out on a clear path for the first



time in her life. Over the next decade, Ariana used her sharp intellect and ruthless nature to make her name as a powerful merchant who brought many under her control. Eventually, Ariana attained her ultimate goal by combining her forces and resources under a single banner and established her own merchant's guild. In no time at all, the half-dragon obtained a level of wealth her father only dreamed of and made the men who paid his assassins bow to her influence.

INTERACTIONS

Staying true to her business roots, Ariana will entertain a proposal so long as she believes the other party is useful to her or can provide something she wants. She is unafraid to negotiate but never lets herself be on the losing end of a deal. When someone has proven themselves a useful ally or worthy adversary, Ariana regards them with calm respect when interacting with them. If ever pressed into conflict with an aggressive business rival or attacked by physical threats like thieves or bandits, Ariana uses her full force to bring them low and regret ever crossing the daughter of a dragon.

When insulted, Ariana does her best to keep her draconic nature under control and not lash out. She prefers to use insults and repartee if she feels the person is beneath her or match their strategic blows if she feels they are an equal. If someone comments on her looks or questions her about her heritage, Ariana is usually forthcoming about her lineage, because facing the offspring of a true dragon often puts people on edge during both social interactions and business negotiations.

STATISTICS

Ariana Stormscale uses the statistics of a **noble** (Monster Manual, pg. 348), with the following additions:

- Ariana's Intelligence score is 19
- Ariana has resistance to lightning damage

CREDITS

Written by Jay Davidson.

Art by Fernando Salvaterra.

BEANS & TERAS SANDYROW

A striking couple, Beans & Teras Sandyrow give truth to the phrase “opposites attract.” Beans, the meticulous tabaxi runs an extraordinary magic shop while the contemplative tiefling, Teras, prefers to meditate in their garden.



The small tabaxi straightens her pince-nez while rifling through shelves of magic items. Her left ear is missing and burn marks streak the left side of her face. Behind her, the tiefling watches while wheezing slightly, their stag-like horns intertwined with ivy. Where the tabaxi is tightly-wound, the tiefling radiates a calm energy.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Beans is a scrupulous owner of a magic shop, obsessed with finding the perfect item for a paying customer. She has a knack for finding items that may seem inconsequential at the time, but prove essential down the road to their owners. Beans has a well-honed sense for discerning who is in her shop to buy vs browse, and has no patience for loiterers. She is constantly on the move, eager to find or create the next big thing and is always in the market for the newest exciting thing. Her one constant in life is her partner, Teras.

Teras is a nonbinary tiefling with a severe breathing condition that requires them to carry a magical breathing apparatus to use when they exercise or become overly emotional. They have dealt with their physical difficulties by pursuing a life of meditation and balance among the local druids and gardeners. They attempt to remain calm at all times, and radiate a peaceful energy about them that helps to ground Beans' energy. Perfectly happy sitting alone among trees, Teras is deeply connected to nature and takes a long time to warm up to anyone who isn't a druid or a fellow nature-lover.

BACKGROUND

Beans began life as an orphan in a wizarding tower, where she had a penchant for creating magical items but could never quite master the basics of



spell-casting. The wizards were unsure what to do with her, for while she was clearly talented, they had no use for a wizard who couldn't cast spells. She was allowed to study enchanting until her attempts to create an Earring of Fire went disastrously wrong and burned down a wing of the academy. Missing an ear, and with her face permanently burned from the fire, Beans was asked to leave her home before another of her experiments went wrong. While disheartened to leave the only family she had known, she was eager to meet new people and promptly invested in a wagon to begin selling her wares on the road.

Teras was raised in an elven communal living farm. Their looks were seen as a gift by their family, and instead of being feared, Teras was regarded as a sign that the gods had blessed them. More suspicious members of the commune spread rumors that one of Teras' mothers had slept with a satyr, but those rumors didn't go far. Teras began to have breathing difficulties as a toddler, and was unable to help in a meaningful way on the farm. While their family never shamed them and instead offered less physically taxing work, Teras was always keenly aware of their differences from everyone else. They felt awkward about their antlers and tail, and hated that they were set apart from the other elves their age.

When Beans brought her traveling magic shop to Teras' compound, everything changed for the both of them. Beans had met many tieflings on her travels and saw Teras as just another person. She immediately began to work making a breathing apparatus for Teras, and during the time spent together crafting the device, the two fell deeply in love. They traveled together for years, Teras learning meditation from druids they encountered and Beans buying, crafting, and selling every magical device that caught her eye or her imagination. Eventually, the two stopped traveling and opened a permanent shop together with a large meditation garden in the back.

INTERACTIONS

Beans has a knack for business, and knows the exact value of everything in her shop. She will become furious with thieves, utilizing magical objects to trap or disable them until the local guard can be called. She may haggle, but knows when she's being offered a bad deal and will eventually ask the haggler to stop wasting her time and leave.

Beans will buy and sell anything magical or interesting. She loves crafting magical items and frequently sells things that look like junk but are essential to an adventurer's life later down the road.

Teras may be found meditating in the garden behind the shop or with the local druids. They do not enjoy their meditation being disturbed, but will not show aggression to anyone. They occasionally bring herbs or other natural items to Beans, and may be able to provide adventurers with hard to find natural resources. They may also give adventurers some advice on how best to haggle or trade with Beans.

Teras is a friend to every druid they have ever met, and knows several druid spells, though they don't use them personally. They are able to teach these spells to anyone with the time and interest.

STATISTICS

Beans and Teras both use the statistics of a **commoner** (Monster Manual, pg. 345), with the following additions:

- Beans has +7 to Insight and Arcana checks
- Teras has +7 to Nature and Survival checks and can speak Druidic

CREDITS

Written by Jessica Marcrum.

Art by Gwen Bassett.

LENA BRIGHT

Lena Bright describes herself as an “exotic items” vendor, when in actuality she sells only exotic fruits. She travels all over the multiverse, selling her fresh fruits to anyone interested, humanoid or demon alike.

At a makeshift stall, there is a small, purple-skinned tiefling. Her horns peak out and spiral around her messy black hair. She wears simple forest green and white clothes with a large butcher's cleaver strapped to her hip. She is meticulously cleaning and organizing various exotic looking fruits.

BACKGROUND

The tiefling grew up on a tropical island full of luscious plants and warm weather. Like her parents and family before her, she was a farmer, growing various fruits and vegetables on the island. She and her siblings—all 4 of them—were trained to take over the farm when they came of age. Being the middle of the 4, she was expected to take part in keeping the farm going. Her idea of keeping the farm going is selling their fruit throughout the multiverse. It wasn't something the family was expecting, but Lena insisted that it was going to be good for the business.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Lena is very proud of her business and fruits. She lights up with excitement when asked about them. At the same time, she frequently takes offense when someone critiques her work. She has a vast knowledge of fruits; how they're cultivated, where to find them, and how to cook them.

She also has an adventurous streak, ready to travel to the most remote areas of the material plane or the deepest circle of the Nine Hells. She has met many friends and foes in her travel. If her exotic wares don't win them over, she has a sharp tongue that will put anyone in their place.

She has basic magic training, which she uses for farming and planar transportation. While teleportation is a large feat, she uses it with relative ease thanks to years of training, and a bit of help from some friends in the other planes. In exchange for some fruit, her friends offered her passage into their realms and a boost to her magic. Unfortunately, she can only transport herself and her cart.

The butcher's cleaver she has is her “swiss army knife.” She uses it to peel and cut fruit and as a weapon against would be ruffians.



So with a small cart, she set off to sell her family’s fruit. It was a rough start to get a system working. Lena has to learn on the job—not only about selling fruit, but also how to defend her stall from thieves or other troublemakers, and how to deal with would-be hagglers.

She was labeled herself an “exotic items” vendor, despite only selling exotic fruits. She thought it would attract all types of customers who would never approach her if she simply said she sold fruit.

Her shop ventured to various planes of existence. Surprisingly, the Nine Hells really enjoy when she is in the area, with many of the denizens waiting to get some fruit. Whether it is infernal heritage or the fruit itself, she’ll never know why they enjoy her presence.

INTERACTIONS

Lena sells only fruit. Whenever anyone asks about the name, she says she simply hasn’t gotten the time to rebrand herself from “exotic items vendor” to “fruit seller”. Plus, it attracts adventurers. According to her, they come for the fake promise of magical items but stay for the exotic fruit. She does not haggle, stating that it takes a lot of time and work to cultivate all the fruit.

Despite her magic abilities, she can’t use it for combat. If asked, she’ll say, “Sure, if you want me to conjure up some rotten fruit. Durian really smells when it goes bad.”

Below is a vendor table. She can have all of the fruits in stock or particular ones.

Fruit	Description	Price
Durian	"A large spiky fruit with a pungent smell to some. A tasty fruit and a great blunt weapon."	5 gp
Lychee	"A popular treat at her stall. These fruits come in bunches, making it easy to snack on"	3 sp/bundle
Mangosteen	"It looks like a plum but inside the flesh is white with a large purple rind that stains the hands and clothes"	3 gp/bundle
Cherimoya/ Custard Apple	"An odd looking green fruit..."	2 gp/bundle
Buddha’s Hand	"This fruit looks like the eye stalks of a beholder...or a mindflayer...strange. Buddha? I don’t know who that is"	1 gp/bundle
Dragonfruit	"An oval pink fruit with green scale-like leaves, resembling a dragon’s egg. Disclaimer: These dragonfruit don’t have magical properties and are not related to dragons."	4 gp/bundle
Rambutan	"It’s kind of like an angry lychee."	3 sp/bundle

LENA BRIGHT

Medium humanoid (Tiefling), Neutral Good

Armor Class 10 (cloth)
Hit Points 25
Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Dex +4, Cha +5
Skills Insight +3, Persuasion +5
Languages Common, Infernal, Abyssal

Arcane Traveler. Lena mastered the art of teleportation magic. She has access to spells that move herself from one place to another or one plane to another. Her spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). Lena has the following spells she can cast per day:

At will: Dimension Door
3/day: Teleportation Circle, Teleport
1/day: Plane Shift

ACTIONS

Cleaver. Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 4 (1d4 + 1) slashing damage

CREDITS

Written by Collette Quach.
Art by Nichole Wilkinson.

MAIREAD ROSS

Mairead's body language appears relaxed at first glance, giving little else away. The faint scent of burning hair surrounds her, and you see patches where spells gone awry have caught the tips of her long, tangled red hair. Looking more closely you see signs of chaos in the form of ink stains on freckled fingers, tangled key chains at her belt, and a robe that appears red, but looking more closely you see orange mended patches, tears, and repairs done in mismatched thread.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Mairead usually interacts on her terms, or not at all. She prefers to happen upon opportunities by chance, and if she gets the sense that she's being manipulated she will disappear. She has the wily, crafty certainty of someone who's lived two, almost three, centuries playing the best in the game at everything from organized crime to petty theft. Experience has taught her that if you can get away with it, you should. This lends a spark of certainty to even her most sudden impulse. She is not easily manipulated or fooled.

Having lived a long time, Mairead knows a lot. Anything she doesn't know, she knows someone who does.

Mairead's main game is a string of taverns dotted about the continent. They're excellent sources of income, information, and a steady stream of willing adventurers or travellers to swindle. The barkeeps she employs are impeccable, however, and the daily business of the taverns beyond reproach. Any trouble is easily dismissed as a one off occurrence, surely nothing to do with the establishment itself. If you peer closely at the deeds and records of the town guard, you might find a

Mairead is a wild magic sorcerer who maintains a number of shady taverns and crime rackets across the continent. She has a string of lovers of all genders, some of whom know her true identity and some of whom do not. Long life and an inability to focus on one plan for too long mean she has an impressive list of contacts, should you need them.

paper trail leading back to one trouble maker and owner, but nobody yet has.

Mairead is forgetful. Very forgetful. It's not for a lack of intelligence, but rather schemes and thoughts and half-forged plans from a decade ago spew themselves forth into her brain without much notice or pattern, a symptom, she has long assumed, of the wild magic that lends her its power. People who have had lengthy conversations with Mairead often find her blinking with confusion when they reference something said just two sentences before. Often this is genuine, and has cost her dearly, but Mairead uses this reputation to her advantage. More than once has used this uncertainty to confuse and bewilder a business partner, leaving them several thousand gold short.

BACKGROUND

Mairead began life with very little. Loving parents and no money taught her everything she needed to know about what she did not want from life. So often her parents suffered for lack of coin that was abundant in the taverns and inns where they all scrubbed pots and washed floors to get by. It was not, of course, that she objected to the work, but the lack of reward was galling.

It did not take long before Mairead, intelligent and increasingly powerful as her wild magic developed, was able to trick her way into ownership of her very first tavern,



The Hung Man. She changed it from The Hanged Man, because it was funnier. People who complained about the poor grammar gave her a quick and easy way to sort her targets for the night.

It began with simple pick pocketing or quick-money scams, but then long-term prospects began to present themselves. Spells to confuse, deceive, or make wood pulp in weak broth taste like the best stew in the empire presented very compelling opportunities for long-term trade.

Mairead’s heart lies at The Hung Man, which is now more a concept than a true location. A wizard, dancer, and sometimes lover of Mairead, Siora Elfaren, a beautiful elven woman, helped her enchant it to become an invisible, travelling pocket dimension. The Hung Man is always open, always ready to serve as respite, trade hub, or drinking hole for those who can find it. Its peculiar, ever shifting location and means of operation mean the gossip is second to none, something of which Mairead is very proud. For all her trade in other wares, she truly believes that information is the most valuable resource.

Mairead broke Siora’s heart, more than once, after she was discovered with other lovers. Their bond is strong and withstood the betrayal, but not what it was. Siora keeps Mairead at bay now. Keelan Finoran, Mairead’s other main lover, a beautiful male half-orc, is the barkeep for The Hung Man.

Mairead is always looking for rare and strange items to sell, trade or simply brag about at The Hung Man.

INTERACTIONS

Random encounter. Mairead’s wild magic teleports her to places she doesn’t mean to be, at the most inopportune moments. She will be defensive but apologetic, immediately seeking a way to turn the situation to her advantage. If she catches the scent of gold, magic items, or a pretty face, her interest in the party will increase threefold.

The Hung Man. Adventurers perceptive enough, or well versed enough in the arcane to find The Hung Man are met with Mairead’s immediate respect and suspicion. Newcomers to The Hung Man’s secretive pocket dimension are almost always powerful, and sometimes looking for trouble. Once she has ascertained their purpose however, she makes no bones about turning new talents to her advantage.

Seeker of (half) truths. Mairead occasionally puts out calls for information or “lost” items on job boards. Sometimes they’re tests to weed out informants or thieves. Sometimes they’re things she has misplaced and forgotten.

MAIREAD ROSS

Medium humanoid (Elf), Chaotic Neutral

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)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Wis +4, Cha +6
Skills Deception +6, Insight +4, Persuasion +6
Languages Common, Elvish

Spellcasting. Mairead is a 9th level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is charisma (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks. Mairead has the following spells prepared:

- Cantrips (at will): *firebolt*, *light*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*
- 1st Level (4 slots): *detect magic*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *shield*
- 2nd Level (3 slots): *misty step*, *suggestion*
- 3rd Level (3 slots): *counterspell*, *fireball*, *fly*
- 4th Level (3 slots): *greater invisibility*, *ice storm*
- 5th Level (1 slots): *cone of cold*

Wild Magic Surge. When Mairead casts a spell of 1st level or higher, roll a d20. If you roll a 1, roll on the Wild Magic Surge table (Players Handbook, pg. 104) to create a random magical effect.

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 7 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

CREDITS

Written by Mellanie Black.
Art by Liz Gist.

GARTH

Garth is an archfey who usually appears as a green, peacock-tailed fox. They have an affinity for mortals, prophecy, and jokes; it's not Garth's fault if you don't get the joke.

A green fox the size of a golden retriever is sitting on a branch, covering its mouth with one paw as it giggles at you. Its green fur has an almost iridescent gleam to it, growing longer and more featherlike near its middle and down its back. This continues until where the fox's tail should be there is an array of 4-foot-long peacock-like feathers splashed with dazzling blues and reds.

Optional: *On closer inspection, it's hard to look away from Garth's eyes. At first, they appear to be jet black. After a moment of looking into them you begin to see tiny specks of light, like stars winking into existence in the evening sky. The longer you look, the more specks of light appear and the deeper Garth's eyes seem to become. After just a few seconds their eyes seem more like windows into an infinite space lit by those pin pricks of light.*

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Garth is a being of mirth. They find the lives of mortals to be entertaining and often laugh at things that do not appear to be funny in any way. Even their name—Garth—is a joke that will elicit a flurry of giggles from them. If asked about these jokes, Garth will usually respond that it would take centuries to explain in a way mortals could understand, though they say it in the nicest way possible.

Garth is often friendly, good-natured, and helpful to mortals and it's clear they know far more about the past, present, and future than most beings have a right to. However, they will not share their knowledge outright, but may offer hints of grim omens.

If Garth has chosen to appear to mortals, Garth has already decided there is something they like about them so even on first encounter, Garth often greets people by saying "Hello, friends!"

BACKGROUND

Though their involvement has not been well documented, Garth has appeared countless times in the mortal realms during world changing events—and also those that seem mundane.



Garth has made a pact with a higher power to not directly interfere with the dealings of mortals. As a fey, Garth is physically incapable of breaking that pact, but they are great at finding loopholes and is constantly finding ways to guide mortals into situations that can seem random, though Garth is able to see how mortals' actions ripple and change the world in unexpected ways. Garth's apparent omniscience makes it possible that they are weaving a tapestry and pursuing a goal beyond the comprehension of mortals—or maybe they are just playing pranks.

Garth has almost certainly been involved in major events in the world. While these events usually end well, it is not always the case and although Garth is usually found smiling and laughing, hints of melancholy creep in from time to time, especially during discussions of great catastrophes. The very astute might come to believe that Garth blames themselves for some of the darker moments of the world's history. They would only reveal such involvement if doing so might aid or offer guidance to the adventurers.

When telling tales of happier times, Garth might share they once were a crystal dragon in a faerie queen's court, the shadow of a floating mountain, and an air whale. Details may be sparse.

If Garth feels particularly fond of a group, they may offer a hint at their true name: "My name is ... ah ... well this is embarrassing. What is the word in your tongue? ... ah ... What is the word for the 'Sound of Cleansing Waves of Hope Crashing Through Fleeting Nightmares of the Eternal Dream'?" Of course, no known mortal tongue has such a word and it is more likely that a mortal would themselves become an archfey than learn Garth's true name.

INTERACTIONS

If encountered outside the Feywild, Garth's appearance is usually preceded by a gentle breeze that carries the smell of mulled wine on a summer evening, fruit ripening after a rainstorm, and cold lemons covered in sugar.

Garth has a light, gentle voice and from time to time adopts a sing-song cadence. They think that the names mortals use are silly, though enjoyable. Garth often offers suggestions for new names that carry hints of a person's secrets or grim portents of their

future. For example, to a war cleric they might say "Why be Ellamin? Surely there is a better way to say war god's lackey full of the beastlord's corruption and covered in the tears of a radiant woman", followed by a giggle.

Almost everything Garth says is followed by a giggle.

Garth enjoys giving gifts, usually of the restorative type. One of their favorites is blue strawberries the size of watermelons. These berries, if fully consumed, will restore all but the most severe of bodily harm.

If asked what they are, Garth will respond either "That's a rude question," or "I'm Garth." They will gently, but firmly correct anyone who uses gendered pronouns. "I'm not a he. I'm a Garth." They are also very particular about who they let pet them. In all of history, there has perhaps been only one — a halfling named Aurum.

Garth is a pacifist. If accosted or threatened, they will simply vanish.

STATISTICS

At even the slightest sign of violence—physical or verbal—Garth will remove themselves or the offending party from the area or even that plane of existence.

Spellcasting. Garth is a 21st level spellcaster. Charisma is their spellcasting modifier (spell save DC 24, +16 to hit with spell attacks).

They can cast the following spells innately:

At will: counterspell, dimension door

2/day: gate, mass polymorph, time stop

1/day: wish

Legendary Resistance (3/day). If Garth fails a saving throw, they can choose to succeed instead.

CREDITS

Written by Thomas Marcetti.

Art by Gretchen Meinzen.

KATLANA SILVERBROOK

A rusalka bound to a magical pool within a twisted forest. She fights her natural urges to drown people in order to trade the magical water and stones from her pool for items that might trigger even the briefest memories of her mortal past.

The young woman is half submerged in a shimmering pool of silvery water, wreathed in gossamer white fabric and a profusion of flame-colored curls. Seeing you approach, her emerald eyes fill briefly with a malicious hunger before she turns her gaze down towards the water's surface, avoiding eye contact.



TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Katlana is a Rusalka - a woman who died and became bound to a magical body of water called the Fatebinder's Pool. Her transformation robbed her of the memories of the girl she once was and filled her with the desire to lure hapless wanderers to a watery death. However, Katlana battles her supernatural urges to drown those she meets in order to offer the magical stones and water from her pool in trade to those who visit her. She seeks seemingly random, mundane items in trade, hoping that they might trigger a memory of her mortal life.

Items that trigger Katlana's memories might be a food she tasted in life, a perfume she smelled, a gown of a similar style to one she wore, or a book she once read. When she encounters these items, Katlana's memories associated with that item return to her in a violent and sometimes painful flash, leaving her shaken and disoriented, but filled with strong emotions. Unfortunately, these memories and their corresponding emotions do not linger. Once experienced, they quickly begin to fade over the course of the next day, and once an object has triggered her memories once, it is incapable of doing so again. Her rusalka nature blocks out the memories and emotions of her past, slowly bending her towards its deadly design, one stolen memory at a time.

Katlana keeps a small flooded cave beneath the roots of an oak tree growing on the shore of her pool, where she stores all the items she has traded for, though they no longer trigger her memories. She often visits the cave to gaze on these items and wonder what link they might have had to her past and her stolen memories.

Fatebinder's Pool. A large, silvery pool in a secluded forest grove, the Fatebinder's Pool is legendary for the magical properties of its water and the stones that lie

along its bottom. Drinking the water cleanses diseases and returns a year of vitality to those who imbibe it. Additionally, any wish made while holding a stone taken from the bottom of the pool is destined to come true, though often in unexpected or less than ideal ways.

Some legends say that the pool was formed when an immortal ice giant travelling across the world stopped to rest in a valley, fell asleep and was melted by the morning sun. Others say that the pool formed when a goddess, mourning the death of her eternal husband, fled into the woods and sat down to cry beneath an oak tree. Where her tears fell, the magical pool formed.

Fatebinder's Stones. Stones taken from the bottom of the Fatebinder's Pool are imbued with the powers of fate. When held, an adventurer can use an action the stone to cast the wish spell. A stone may be used in this way only once before it's magic is expended, at which point it turns into a regular stone. Additionally, each person may only make a single wish in this way using a Fatebinder Stone. If someone attempts to make a second wish using a another stone, the stone's magic does not activate.

BACKGROUND

Long before Katlana became the Rusalka she is today, she was a young woman betrothed to a man she had never met. Their union was a political alliance between two families of noble rank seeking to strengthen their houses through the marriage. Willful Katlana resented her father for forcing her to agree to the marriage and hated her betrothed without ever having met him.

The day of Katlana's engagement finally came, and she met the man that was destined to be her husband. Daelan was a man of fine features and thin bones, pale and sickly, who kept his hands clasped together to prevent them from shaking uncontrollably. Despite being the same age as Katlana, he looked like he might not live out the year. "You see," Katlana's father said, "Marry him now and you will be rid of him soon enough - and our family will reap the rewards of the marriage."

Katlana, infuriated by the arranged marriage and disgusted by her father's uncaring attitude stalked away, only to find her husband-to-be sitting quietly in the gardens. He offered her a place beside him. "I'm sorry for all this," he said. "I can't blame you for being

angry, being tied to an invalid like me, but I'll try to be the best husband I can be for whatever time I have left." The sadness in his eyes and the grim reality of his situation broke through her anger.

Months went by, and Katlana came to know Daelan. She saw the kindness in his heart and the brightness of his smile, but she also saw the disease rapidly advancing through his body. And as the day of their marriage neared, though she did not love him, it became harder to bear the thought that someone so kind would be taken so soon from the world. Katlana resolved to cure him. She had heard stories of the Fatebinder's Pool, deep within a forested valley, whose waters could cure any ailment. She stole a bow and a sword from her father's armory and set off into the night.

Stories abound of the many trials Katlana braved in her quest to find the Fatebinder's Pool. Stories of bandits and trolls, ogres and fey, dark shadows and evil sorcerers. But eventually, bruised, half-starved and exhausted, she found the pool and drew a flask of silvery water from it, when a single, poisoned arrow struck her from behind. It was loosed by a common bandit who had been stalking her through the forest, waiting for the opportune moment to strike. The man walked over to Katlana, who was bleeding out on the ground and paralyzed by poison, and unhooked her coin purse from her belt. "See boy," he said to a young boy hiding in the bushes. "This noble's gold will keep us fed for weeks." Then he pushed Katlana's limp form into the pool with one booted foot.

INTERACTIONS

When adventurers meet Katlana, whenever possible, she averts her eyes, saying avoiding eye contact helps her control her instinct to drown those who come close to her pool. She actively seeks to trade for items that might trigger the return of one of her memories, though she doesn't know what items might trigger a memory until she has seen one. Once she lays eyes on such an item, she becomes very insistent that the adventurers trade it to her quickly.

As Katlana finds more items that help her recall memories, and those memories fade, it becomes increasingly difficult to find items that trigger new memories - something that makes Katlana more and more frustrated. Additionally, the longer Katlana goes without having experienced memories and emotions of her mortal life, the harder it is for her to resist her rusalka nature.

KATLANA SILVERBROOK

Medium Fey, Chaotic Neutral

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 52 (8d10+8)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Cha +8

Skills Insight +6, Persuasion +8

Languages Common

Fatebinder's Resurrection. When Katlana drops to 0 hit points, she dissolves into water, merging with the Fatebinder's Pool. She reforms at full hit points at the next moon rise.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Katlana makes two attacks on her turn.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage and 3d6 poison damage. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, they are stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points. It is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 11 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Constrict. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 15 ft., one creature. Hit: 11 (2d10 + 3) bludgeoning damage and a large or smaller creature becomes entangled in Katlana's hair and is grappled (escape DC 14). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained.

Luring Song. Katlana begins to sing a magical melody. All creatures, excluding beasts and undead, within 300 feet must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or become charmed until the song ends. A charmed creature is incapacitated (can't take actions or reactions) and must use its turn to move towards Katlana by the most direct route possible. The charm ends when Katlana stops singing or is incapacitated. Additionally, when a charmed creature takes damage, they can repeat the saving throw to end the effect. On her turn, Katlana may use a bonus action to continue the song.

CREDITS

Written by David Markiwsky.

Art by David Markiwsky.





MUK'DUK

Once the bane of common folk everywhere, this mild-mannered Troll now helps build the same bridges and roads he once stalked, his diet consists of bandits unwise enough to prey on innocent travellers

A creature emerges out from the muck beneath the bridge, hulking and huge. Long grey limbs still dripping with mud help haul the thing to its feet, its stringy hair slick with slime. Towering over you, watching with black eyes. Its cavernous mouth opens, unleashing a carrion stink and it gurgles, "...Hi, nice to meet you."

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Muk'Duk is exceedingly unusual for a Troll. Although his appetite is just as prodigious as those of his kin, he has been taught to curb his impulses, allowing him to maintain a degree of civility when dealing with individuals he meets on the road or passing over his bridge. When conversing with such people, he still shows signs of his ever present hunger and adventurers may find him staring at them a bit too intently, fetid drool dripping from his lips while listening to them speak.

His manner of speaking is slow and measured, as if each word requires careful evaluation before being spoken. He is not intelligent, but will still strive to be as polite as possible when dealing with adventurers, always remembering his 'please' and 'thank you's.

He takes great joy in sharing his work as a builder of roads and bridges, and will proudly display the freshly smoothed roads and sturdy bridges that he tends to. More often than not, he can be found carrying around a massive 'shovel', little more than an old rusted shield tied to a tree branch, or hauling a load of stone for his next project.

Perhaps the strangest thing about Muk'Duk is the second face that is growing out of his gut. The face is ugly, its features shrunk and covered with warts. It is far less pleasant than its host, hissing and gurgling at those who get too close, all while furiously gnashing its teeth in helpless rage.

BACKGROUND

Not so long ago, the Troll known as Muk'Duk was much like the rest of his kind, haunting the forests and rivers of his territory and preying on unwary travellers. One such traveller, a Dwarf by the name of Hogarth, took it upon himself to show the Troll that there was more to life than eating peasants and haunting bridges.

When Muk'duk attempted to ambush the Dwarf on the road, instead of running away or attempting to battle the troll, as everyone else had, Hogarth asked him a question. A question that no one had bothered to ask before. Why was he doing this? Muk'Duk, wrong-footed by the question, told him that it was because he was hungry, always so hungry, and that the travellers on this road were his prey. Hogarth himself was a devout cleric of the God of Commerce and bartering was in his blood. To him, the solution was obvious. Offering up a prayer to his god, Hogarth conjured a great feast for Muk'Duk to eat, a bountiful gift that a Troll could never ignore.

In the weeks that followed, the Dwarf taught Muk'Duk the basic principles of trade, using his seemingly endless supply of food to hold the Troll's attention. The rules were simple enough that even Muk'Duk could remember them: offer honest work for equivalent pay, have a reputation for reliability, and always be polite. Before Hogarth departed, he acted as

the Troll's representative to the nearby populace and arranged a deal between the two parties: Muk'Duk would guard the roads and maintain the bridges in the area and in return would be provided with ample food. The fact that the villagers no longer needed to worry about bandits was just an added bonus.

These days, the roads are safe and Muk'Duk is happy. Recently however, a new problem has presented itself. Muk'Duk hunted and killed another Troll that tried to encroach on his territory, then consumed its corpse, his hunger winning out over common sense. The regenerative flesh has altered Muk'Duk's body and now the dead troll's face rests on his stomach, semi-sentient and ravenous. As the face continues to grow, Muk'duk's hunger grows along with it, and he struggles to keep the urges of his unwelcome companion in check. If these changes continues, it will only be a matter of time before Muk'Duk becomes something new altogether.

INTERACTIONS

Muk'Duk is eager to greet those who travel through his territory. Despite his terrifying appearance, he is generally polite and willing to share information about the area, as he picks up a great deal of information and gossip from the people passing over his bridge and roads. For a Troll, he is surprisingly insightful, and will be sure to mention anything of interest, from hidden treasures to lurking dangers, without prompting.

Muk'Duk carries a bizarre assortment of knick-knacks, trophies, and baubles on his person at any given time, collected over the years from those who stop to talk with him and from bandits and thieves who no longer needed them. He enjoys offering these oddities in exchange for new treasures, some of which may be useful to adventurers. They can be any number of things, from useless pieces of junk to surprisingly potent magical artifacts that have no business being in the hands of a Troll.

The second face on his stomach constantly scowls at adventurers and will not hesitate to insult, threaten, or even bite them if they get too close. If asked, Muk'Duk does not know how it got there, but will explain that it looks like the other troll he ate' and wishes it would go away.

STATISTICS

Muk Duk uses the statistics of a troll (Monster Manual, pg. 291).

CREDITS

Written by Allen Johnson.

WYTHERSPOON

Holed up in an abandoned watchtower, the nothic Wytherspoon collects anything and everything she possibly can, from spindles to bedframes to ancient magical items, and all the stories that cross her path, from the smallest anecdote about a goat to the most riveting of myths. For a price, she'll share them with you.

The creature takes up both more and less space than she seems like she should - her body is a twisted facsimile of something once more familiar, now oddly muscled and mottled with transformation. Imbedded into her greyish skin are various coins and gems, with scarred lines connecting them: long-healed attempts at something arcane, maybe, or otherwise the activities of a creature tormented with possibility. The single eye that takes up most of her face is dark blue and opened wide, taking in anything and everything it can see. She scrambles forward at the sight of you. Sharp claws dig into dirt and rock until she stops inches away, and her breath is hot and rancid as she speaks in a strained, discomforting whisper: "What's you got?"

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Wytherspoon means well for the most part; the only time she's prone to violence is if her horde is threatened. She will defend it to the death, doing whatever she can to keep her items safe. She's not averse to being social, but values the safety of her collection over being near civilization. She values knowledge only slightly less, and will pry for any scrap of information that she can glean from anyone, regardless of how useful that information might be to her. While she finds it difficult to remember anything from her own history, her recollection for stories told to her is almost faultless.

Her speech is complicated; she was well spoken before, and this habit persists when she is calm. As soon as there's the lure of treasure or the stress of danger, she loses this edge and slips into more simple language.



BACKGROUND

Lydeen Wytherspoon was once an elven professor of obscure ancient history and myth and collector of antique magical items, known for being unsettling at the best of times and entirely unnerving at the worst. There was concern when she vanished suddenly, but it wasn't entirely unlike her to go running off across the continent on the strength of some thin rumor of something rare, so no one did much to find her at first. Even half a year later, it took a strange burgling of her home before people paid any mind to her disappearance beyond gossip.

The place was haphazardly destroyed, but the only things really missing were from her collection room, which was picked clean. No official investigation into her disappearance was ever done, but some students who had been fond of her tried to get to the bottom of it - but that never amounted to anything much. Her vanishing has become the root of a lot of urban legends around the area, mostly used to scare children, tourists, and students who spend too much time lost in the ancient history section of the library.

This history, as well as most of her name, is now mostly forgotten by Wytherspoon as she picks her way across the landscape, entirely transformed into the one-eyed creature she is now.

In the past few months, she's found safety in an abandoned watchtower in a copse of trees along a trade road. The tower is incredibly overgrown; whatever threat it was built to keep track of is long gone. A tree has split through the broken stone walls, growing taller than the tower itself now, but between the wood and the stone, the tower offers protection to Wytherspoon and her ever-growing collection of items - magic items she's hoarded, trinkets fallen from carts along the road, or treasures scrounged from the lands beyond the tower.

She's striving to find a way to return herself to before, but it's a venture made probably in vain; she doesn't remember enough about herself to even know what she's striving for. She just knows that she's looking for information about something, hoping that she'll know it when she finds it- and if she collects a lot of information about other things along the way, that's all the better.

INTERACTIONS

Wytherspoon is always in the search of new stories, or new sources of magic, and is willing to trade for things she deems worthy. She'll tell the characters bits of stories she remembers from before she was transformed - stories about old gods, old kings and queens, old anything, really - in exchange for magical items.

She will also trade non-magical items from her horde in exchange for stories of the party's own; they have to be things that aren't common knowledge, but other than that, she's content with any tale.

Wytherspoon will accept interesting non-magical items from the party, and will tell them rumors that she's heard or answer small questions in exchange.

STATISTICS

Wytherspoon uses the statistics of a **nothic** (Monster Manual, pg. 236).

CREDITS

Written by Annamyriah de Jong.

Art by Nichole Wilkinson.

DIRK

Dirk is a young gay half-orc trying to find a way to bridge both his worlds. His human heart wants nothing more than to use art to form bonds with his fellow townspeople, but his orcish rage keeps surfacing and ruining it for him.

As you enter the town, loud yelling catches your attention. A young man with a punk hairstyle is being roughly escorted from the tavern. Judging from his work overalls and gloves, he's a local tradesman and judging from his gleaming tusks, bulging muscles and the green-gray tinge to his brown skin, he's a half-orc.

The bouncer closes the door on him, and with a roar he punches it, splintering the wood. When he turns to you, you can see the feral rage simmering over as he bares his teeth at you, and for a moment you feel like he's about to attack. With visible effort, he forces it back down, looking embarrassed.

"Sorry you had to see that," he mutters, before stomping off towards the outskirts of town.

Dirk likes art, although so far he has only expressed it through whittling. His current apprenticeship as a carpenter is showing him a practical application for his art - if only he can stick with it. Unfortunately, he also likes alcohol and other intoxicants, and it wouldn't be the first time it ruined a career path for him.



TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Dirk has serious anger problems. He struggles with all of his emotions - feeling everything very strongly - and is bad at handling them and talking about them. He tends to act first and think never, with the consequences of his actions always coming as a surprise.

He deeply wants to settle down in his town and make his human father proud, and he knows he's failing at it. Dirk finds it easier to go along with his bad-news friends, drinking and causing trouble, than to work hard. Even though he knows his friends are leading him down a dark path, Dirk is loyal to them. He wants them all to turn their lives around, but doesn't know how. He worries that they will all end up as real criminals in jail one day.

BACKGROUND

In one very lean year, an orc clan was forced to trade with a human town, and a merchant named Cyrus Greenhearth spent a lot of time with a tough and gorgeous orc lady named Yevelda Raging-Bloodlust-In-Battle. The next year the clan came back, and Yevelda the orc lady had a surprise for Cyrus the merchant - a little bundle of joy.

They decided the child should be raised in the town so he could fit in with humans, as he was too small and weak to flourish in the orc clan. However, every year the clan came back so Yevelda could spend time with her new human family. One year, she brought another child along; Myev, a young half-orc girl. Unlike Dirk, Myev has stayed with the clan, as her orcish nature was too strong for her to fit in with humans.

By this time, Dirk was flourishing in town, making friends with all the human children his age. He already felt emotions very strongly, but they were mainly positive ones.

As a teenager, Dirk and his friends engaged in some classic teen rebellion - drinking, graffiti, petty theft. The town had always supported Dirk regardless of his orcish heritage before this, but now people began whispering that he would never make anything of himself; that he would end up as another feral, dangerous orc.

Cyrus has arranged a series of apprenticeships and jobs for Dirk. They always start well, and then Dirk winds up skipping work to drink with his friends, whittle in the forest, or start fights in the tavern. When in trouble, he doubles down and becoming aggressive instead of apologising. Every single job has ended in disaster - if not with Dirk spending a night in lockup for causing trouble.

Dirk hasn't had any partners. He's only recently figured out that he's gay, and although it's one of the few things he feels positive about, he's too shy to pursue anyone.

For the last few years, Yevelda's clan hasn't been in the area, and she hasn't contacted Dirk and Cyrus. Dirk doesn't know what happened to Yevelda and Myev, and this worry has led him to even worse behavior. Cyrus doesn't know what's happened either, but he trusts Yevelda can take care of herself and Myev.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Dirk will ask any travellers he meets them if they've run into any orc clans, trying to find information about Yevelda and Myev. If they become friends, he'll directly ask them to investigate.

If adventurers are friendly, Dirk will happily make friends. He's fairly outgoing and talkative, although clams up when it comes to his personal life or feelings. He's happiest with light, easy banter and instinctively feels a kinship with non-human or scarier looking adventurers, opening up to them more readily.

If adventurers are aggressive with him, Dirk will return that aggression. He's quick to fly into a rage, even if he doesn't have the skills to back it up. He won't pick fights with adventurers who don't provoke him, though.

STATISTICS

Dirk uses the statistics of a **thug** (Monster Manual, pg. 350).

CREDITS

Written by Megan Irving.

Art by Jennifer Peig and David Markiowsky.

IMANA SANBELE

Imana is an intimidating headstrong mercenary animal trainer with a powerful oaken arm.

A powerfully built human woman with brown skin and a surly expression stands before you. From the shoulder, her left arm appears wooden as if expertly carved from oak and her right sports a tangled tattoo of chains from bicep to wrist.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

For most of Imana's life, she has cultivated a reputation of infamy in civilized lands. She often acts thuggish and rude using her size as a weapon to get what she wants. Oftentimes she is short in conversation, preferring to cut to the heart of the matter. Imana is not one to suffer an insult and will go to great lengths to repay such unkindness tenfold. However, those who share her soft spot for animals or the downtrodden are sure to earn her respect. For those to whom she is loyal, she will go to great lengths to provide aid often putting herself in dangerous or uncomfortable situations in their stead.

Imana enjoys the company of other women; however, she has had very little experience with romance and her few intimate relations are generally transactional and brief.

Imana is driven by her fervent desire to improve the quality of life for all oppressed people and to remove those who abuse their power from the world. She hopes to one day reunite her scattered and enslaved tribe of her birth, but as the years have passed she has grown less optimistic that she could actually succeed. Though she may appear to be merely physically intimidating she has a strong affinity for animals and is adept at winning their loyalty and training them to perform complex tricks.

BACKGROUND

Imana was born to a tribe of nomadic savanna-dwelling storytellers. From a young age, she was raised on folk stories of fey spirits, valiant heroes and wise animals. They lived in relative peace, passing on tales that inspired many visiting travelers to become



courageous druids and rangers who walked in step with the natural world and its creatures.. Though Imana was never much of a performer, she spent much of her youth enchanted with animals of all sizes and had a knack for understanding them far better than she ever understood other people. When she was eleven, her village was attacked by slavers who torched her home and sold the survivors as laborers to foreign colonists.

The foreigners wielded terrible magic and their slaves were bound by an insidious curse. Runic chains were tattooed on the workers magically compelling them to do as their masters command; any resistance was met with blinding pain as the chains around their arms constricted. A decade of performing forced labor for wealthy colonists honed her body and her growing hatred at the indignity fanned the flames of her rage.

She began acting out slowly at first winning the trust of farm animals and using them to engineer small disasters for her masters. This eventually graduated to greater and greater feats of sabotage and culminated in setting a pair of dogs on one of her masters, which bought her time to secure their swords and kill them.

Once free, Imana lived on the border of the colonized lands in search of a way to be rid of her cursed tattoos and reunite her lost people. For many years she scraped together work as a hired mercenary, taking great pains to save others from captivity and end the lives of any slavers that dared cross her path. In one of these exploits, she was horribly wounded by a thrown beartrap that mangled her left arm. Barely retreating with her life, she found the trap jammed shut and was forced to cut off her own arm to free herself. A kindly dryad who recognized Imana's fighting spirit and affinity for nature appeared and offered aid. The dryad staunchly Imana's bleeding and planted an enchanted oak seed in her stump. In mere hours, Imana had a newly grown wooden arm.

It took Imana many years and much practice to grow used to her new arm, but now it is nearly as articulate as her main hand. The chains that remain on her right arm still squeeze and burn when she defies orders to this day, but have lost the potency to disable her. The pain reminds her of both her past as a slave and those still suffering bondage magical or otherwise.

INTERACTIONS

Imana prefers action to honeyed words. Adventurers that have freed captive people and those who are kind to animals will easily gain her trust, doubly so if she witnessed either act personally. She is willing to work for most people unless they engage in the slave trade.

She often haggles for mercenary services always pushing for more money than offered to test the limits of her intimidation tactics. However, she always offers a fair price for animal training services as she takes great joy spending time with any animal. Occasionally owners of animals trained by Imana find that she has secretly taught an animal a few extra tricks in case her patrons don't pay. She has no shop or official place of business but can be found in most taverns looking to offer her services to travelers for coin. A particularly attractive female adventurer could find Imana flustered when speaking privately.

Imana has no qualms about engaging in violence but would prefer to only do so after attempting to scare the enemy into retreating. If a fight is deemed

unavoidable, she uses her oak arm to crack her left knuckles and wades into combat goading enemies to attack her while nonverbally encouraging her trained animals to attack from behind.

IMANA SANBELE

Medium humanoid (Human), Chaotic Neutral

Armor Class 13 (hide armor)
Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)

Skills Animal Handling +8, Athletics +7, Intimidate +7
Senses Passive Perception 12
Languages Common

Animal Whisperer. Imana adds double her proficiency bonus on Wisdom (Animal Handling) checks.

Intimidating. Imana adds double her proficiency bonus on Charisma (Intimidation) checks.

Reckless. At the start of her turn, Imana 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.

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). Imana deals an extra 7 (2d6) 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 Imana doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Imana makes two attacks on her turn.

Oaken fist. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 8 (1d6+4) bludgeoning damage

Alchemist's Flask. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 20ft., one creature. Hit 3 (1d4) fire damage and the target must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity check or catch fire taking an additional 3 (1d4) fire damage at the start of each turn. The creature can end this damage by using its action to succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity check to extinguish the flames.

CREDITS

Written by Tule Woodson.
Art by Gwen Bassett.

LAIRD

Laird is an intimidating orc who works as a bouncer, debt-collector, and bone-breaker for anyone with coin. He will always prefer a drinking or arm-wrestling competition to polite conversation, but has a secret love for romance novels.

You are engulfed in darkness as the shadow of the orc covers you. He is more giant than man, with bulging muscles and a menacing gleam in his eye. His skin is completely covered with tattoos interlaced with scars, and as he leans down towards you, you notice that he has several chipped teeth including a broken-off tusk. He looks as if he could eat a full-sized human for lunch, and possibly has.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Laird loves doing what he's good at, and he's good at fighting and killing things. He derives a sense of accomplishment from a job well done and money well earned, and doesn't give much thought to the people he hurts along the way. A former military man, he will be fast friends with anyone with a militaristic bent or anyone who can beat him in a drinking or athletic contest. He is gregarious and outgoing, but speaks in short sentences with small words. Laird is also gay and not remotely shy about who he is. If an adventurer can win his heart, they will have a loyal partner for life. However, if they are merely looking for a good time, Laird is always up for some fun with a man who can understand him. Something that Laird will only reveal to a lover or dear friend is his great passion for romance novels. After a day of fighting, he loves nothing more than to go home, open a book, and be swept away by the tumultuous love of shepherds and soldiers.

BACKGROUND

Laird was raised as a lone orc among humans. He was informed by his mother that she had adopted him from an orc tribe during her mountaineering days, but Laird preferred to believe that his mother was his biological mother and his father was a troll. Tall and strong, even for an orc, Laird has always believed that



he was connected to something greater. As a child, he was both mocked and revered for his size, and learned quickly that he could easily severely injure fellow children by roughhousing with them. Throughout most of his childhood, he felt stupid and over-sized. Laird often begged his mother to take him to live with the trolls where he would belong, but she assured him that he would find his place in human society.

He found his place as a teenager when he learned to fight. Local tavern keepers quickly noticed the massive teen who could fight like a giant and hired him to

work as a bouncer. When he came of age, Laird joined the military and quickly rose through the ranks as a killing machine. He returned home with a few tattoos and battle scars, and was immediately hired by gang bosses to intimidate those with unpaid debts. Finally seeing his size as a blessing, Laird believed he had found his calling and was determined to thrive in his new career. Laird loves his job, but just because he roughs someone up for work doesn't mean he won't buy them a drink to cheer them up afterwards.

When he is not at work, Laird loves nothing more than to tell war stories and relax at the tavern, hoping to eventually meet a man who will love him for who he is. He has grown accustomed to men who want to "climb the giant" but is now at a stage in life where he wants something more. Laird wants to continue to do the work he loves with a man he loves supporting him. Ideally, one who he can sweep off their feet and carry into the sunset, just like in all of his stories.

INTERACTIONS

Laird may encounter adventurers as a hired hand of a boss, contracted to convince them to back down or frighten them away. He cannot be convinced by conversation or coin to back down from a fight, because he insists on always performing a job well. However he can usually be found at a tavern following a fight and may buy the adventurers he just beat a drink.

Alternatively, Laird may be hired by adventurers as muscle-for-hire. He is always happy to break things and scare people for coin and loves getting paid to do what he does best. He won't haggle on prices, but can be convinced to reduce his price if adventurers can outdrink him or beat him at arm-wrestling. He also offers military discounts to fellow veterans.

If a woman or non-binary adventurer flirt with Laird, he will be gracious but say that he is not interested. He will happily flirt with cis and trans men alike.

LAIRD

Large humanoid (Orc), Neutral Neutral

Armor Class 13 (hide armor)
Hit Points 67 (9d8 + 27)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	8 (-1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)

Skills Athletics +8, Intimidation +3
Senses darkvision 60 ft, passive Perception 10
Languages Common, Giant

Aggressive. As a bonus action, Laird can move up to his speed toward a hostile enemy he can see.

Troll's Regeneration. Laird regains 10 hit points at the start of his turn. If Laird takes fire or acid damage, this trait doesn't function until his next turn.

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack Pugilist. Laird makes two attacks on his turn if he is unarmed.
Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: (1d12 + 4) slashing damage.

CREDITS

Written by Jessica Marcum.
Art by Fernando Salvaterra.

DED THE FENCE

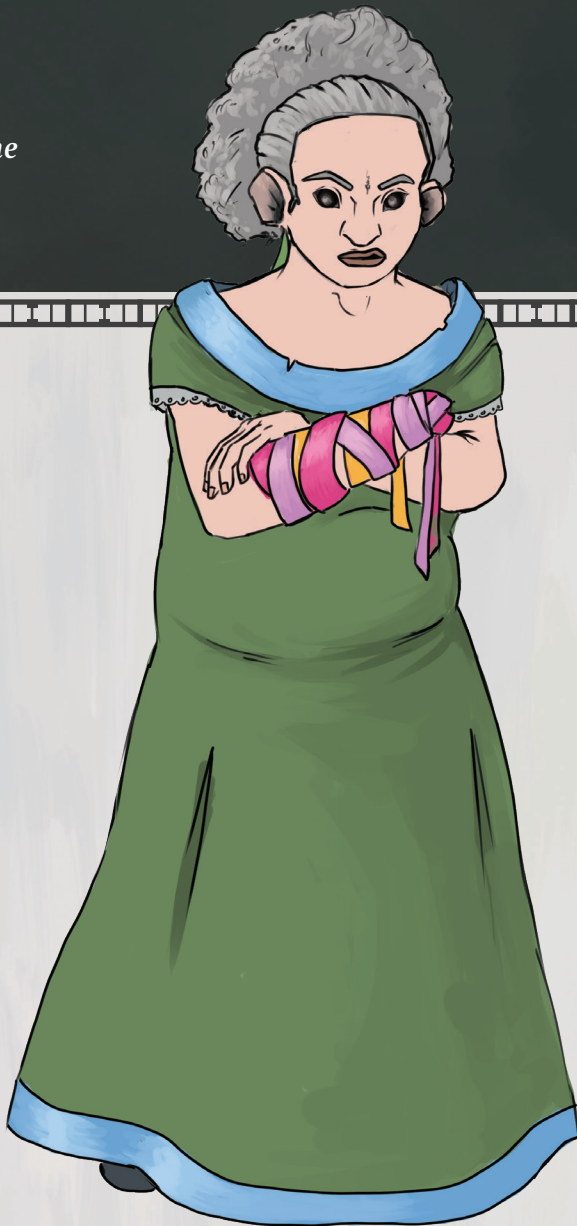
Ded is an opossum shifter who runs a candy shop in the slums, which she uses as a front for her illicit business fencing illegal and stolen goods.

The short, plump storekeeper looks you up and down with openly suspicious eyes. A bright green silk ribbon cinches back her hair, which balloons at the back of her head in a mass of thick, pale gray curls. Despite the color of her hair, her face is neither that of an elder, or that of a youth, and seems locked in a permanent frown. Somehow she has come into possession of a noblewoman's gown, which while shabby and a not a little gaudy, gives her an odd elegance right at home with the shambolic whimsy of the little store. Adding a bit of gaiety to her deportment, while she happens to be missing her right hand, she has decorated her remaining forearm with colorful ribbons.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Ded is a suspicious, paranoid person and has no interest in hiding it. The stress of a lifetime in the criminal underworld has burdened her with unshakeable fear, anxiety, and resentment. She trusts with great difficulty and always errs on the side of caution, testing the air for the slightest whiff of deception or threat. If she believes she is in danger she will flee, fighting only if cornered. If injured or truly frightened, her lycanthropic nature takes over, and she involuntarily collapses as if dead, remaining that way for several hours while emitting the stench of rotting flesh. Anyone who causes this reaction in her earns her hatred.

Despite her bitter paranoia, those few individuals who Ded counts among her friends are granted extraordinary loyalty and affection. She is a spendthrift when it comes to her favorites, showering them with random gifts of candy and sentimental



trinkets. Having been raised to expect nothing for her generosity, Ded's devotion is broken only by clear betrayal and she is fanatic in defending those she believes love her.

BACKGROUND

Ded was raised in a child gang led by a gangster called Malkin. All she knows of her parents is what Malkin told her: that they thought Ded was a fairy's changeling and sold her to him as an infant for a few silvers. She worked in pickpocketing rings and protection rackets, lured the naive into muggings and civil guards into ambushes, and discovered an early talent for negotiating deals for illegal goods.

As Ded grew older, her latent lycanthropic qualities began to make themselves more prominent and harder to hide. The uneasy alliances that pass for friendships between thieves frayed around her as she became more and more a target of suspicion and derision. She began to isolate herself even from her shadowy acquaintances, relying more and more on her own cunning and desperation to survive. Still, Malkin's affection for her, such as it was, endured, and when her need was greatest she turned to him for help, knowing it would always come at a price. Indeed, sometimes a price greater than she anticipated.

In one such case, Ded had agreed, in return for a safe night indoors, to burgle a shop in a more affluent part of town. On those better-policed streets she was caught and tossed in the bailey, where though beaten and starved she never gave up the name of the gangster who ordered the job. Her stay in that overcrowded, filthy dungeon ended after several weeks with the loss of her right hand, amputated by an axe in accordance with the legal punishment for thievery.

Ded's commitment to the criminal code of silence was met with appreciation and praise from her gang; especially from the closest person she had to a parent, Malkin. For her loyalty, and as an example to her mates of what true criminal honor can bring, Malkin took Ded off the street and set her up as an apprentice to a local fence. This brought regular meals, a roof over her head, and a steady income - things Ded had never known.

During her apprenticeship Ded met her current girlfriend, Rings, a highly skilled burglar. Though Rings developed a fondness by the end of their first encounter, Ded's wary nature kept their relationship all business for months. It was only after Ded discovered Rings was a lycanthropic racoon shifter, the only other shifter like herself she had ever met, that she came to fully trust her.

INTERACTIONS

Those who meet Ded for the first time are met with extreme distrust and suspicion. The same goes for the second time, the third time and many times after that until Ded believes that they are not a threat - then many times after that before she believes them to be trustworthy. Until adventurers have earned her trust, she won't leave them unattended in her shop, even for a moment, pointedly watching every move they make. If an adventurer gains Ded's trust, they can be sure of

a dedicated, if unscrupulous friend for the rest of their life.

As a fence, haggling is part of Deds job. However, if the customers are too pushy, causing her to feel threatened or if they try to intimidate her, she will promptly end negotiations and turn the customer away.

Although Ded always portrays herself as the lowest member of the criminal hierarchy, she has many criminal connections both inside and outside of Malkin's gang. For a small fee, she is willing to act as a go-between, passing messages and arranging meetings, so long as she trusts the person that is asking.

STATISTICS

Ded the Fence uses the statistics of a **master thief** (Volo's Guide to Monsters, pg. 216).

CREDITS

Written by Morgan Geiss.

Art by David Markiowsky.

TEMPERANCE

Temperance is a pregnant tiefling given to extremely spicy food cravings and burping small belches of fire. She's also a dead shot with a pistol and leader of a local band of thieves.

You see a heavily pregnant red tiefling with black horns sweeping away from her scalp and a pistol on her hip. Her tail whips behind her as you approach.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Temperance or “Temper” depending on her mood, (but don’t let her catch you calling her that) is the leader of a local band of thieves. She has a quick wit and a quicker trigger finger, but is loyal to a fault once you’ve earned her trust. Heavily pregnant, Temperance often rests things on top of her protruding belly, like a shelf, and is often found snacking on spicy foods. Temperance’s unborn child is an active baby and she suffers from a number of complaints related to the pregnancy, including interrupted sleep, a sore back, swollen ankles and feet, and—perhaps most alarmingly—small belches of fire resulting from the baby’s fire genasi heritage.

Temperance is extremely protective of the life inside her. She is adamant that her child will not be an outsider from society the way she has been, and grow up knowing the love and support of family. Giving her child the childhood she wishes she had will require time away from thievery and a good deal of funds.

As her pregnancy progresses, Temperance is hesitant to give up the reins of command, though she’d hardly admit it. Her second-in-command, a non-binary dwarf named Root, is a lifelong friend and mentor to Temperance who insists she take breaks, hydrate, and, most importantly, “stop shooting at things that can shoot you back!” Temperance trusts Root with her and her child’s life, but knows they don’t want the responsibility of being in charge of the operation.

Temperance’s crew is good at what they do and they trust her judgment as leader. They have become an unlikely family for her unborn child, so they have

been pulling a series of increasingly audacious heists in the area. For now, Temperance is firm in her declaration that she has a certain standard of living to maintain for her and her child, and it just requires “one last job.” There have been several such “last” jobs.

Note: If adventurers bump into Temperance, her crew’s litany of larceny may be at an end, or it may just be beginning.



Blaze.

Should characters encounter Temperance post-pregnancy, her child is a precocious, curious fire genasi named Blaze. Her pregnancy complaints have disappeared, but she still has a taste for spicy food.

BACKGROUND

Temperance didn't have a good relationship with her noble family, in part due to her obvious infernal heritage, but, equally, her fiery attitude and unwillingness to have her individuality sublimated into her family's prospects. Her virtue name is a reprimand she wears with an ironic twist of her lips.

Temperance has been running with the same gang of thieves that took her in when she was a child. Many of them are older than her, some significantly, but they are a tight-knit group that would never leave a member behind. The gang members have had scrapes with the law in the past, but have ultimately endeared themselves to many tavernkeepers and common folk in the area with generous tips and protection against the beasts—man, animal, and monstrosity—who lurk outside civilization. Those folk are happy to let the gang hide out in return for a small cut of their profits.

INTERACTIONS

Temperance will not abide those who make trouble for family—that includes her crew and her unborn child. She'd rather not resort to violence if possible, but if a fight begins, she's sure to end it.

In a fight, Temperance will prioritize taking cover over firing. Her crew will act as physical shields for her if necessary, but hurting her crew will make Temperance an enemy for life. If given over to the law, Temperance will "plead the belly" and likely escape from jail in the intervening months due to her various criminal contacts.

Because Temperance's second-in-command is not eager to take charge of the crew, Temperance might instead hand power over to someone (or a group) who earns her trust by saving her life, the lives of her crew, or otherwise completing a number of tasks that cement her respect. She will never surrender power to someone who has threatened her or any crew member, or anyone she perceives as ill-intentioned or evil.

Temperance will offer magic items in return for services rendered by an adventuring party, but saves her liquid funds for her eventual maternity leave and reentry into civilian life.

TEMPERANCE

Medium humanoid (Tiefling), Chaotic Neutral

Armor Class 18 (studded leather, shield)

Hit Points 84 (13d8 + 26)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Con +5, Wis +4

Skills Perception +4, Persuasion +6, Stealth +9

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14

Damage Resistances fire

Languages Common, Infernal

Gunslinger. Being within 5 feet of a hostile creature or attacking at long range doesn't impose disadvantage on Temperance's ranged attack rolls with a pistol. In addition, Temperance ignores half cover and three-quarters cover when making ranged attacks with a pistol.

Innate Spellcasting. Temperance's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13). She can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *thaumaturgy*, *produce flame* (only while pregnant)

1/day each: *hellish rebuke* (2nd level), *darkness*, *burning hands* (1st level, only while pregnant)

Special Equipment. Temperance wears a cape of the mountebank that activates automatically when Temperance falls below 20 hp, sending her to a safe location within range.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Temperance makes two rapier attacks.

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

Temper Tantrum (Pistol). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 30/90 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (1d10 + 4) piercing damage plus 11 (2d10) poison damage.

CREDITS

Written by Ashton Duncan.

Art by Alldrya Blue.

VARI TLIN'ORZZA

Vari Tlin'orzza is a drow trans man, and a professional show-off. A duellist-for-hire with a wit as sharp as his rapier and a fierce passion for liberty and independence.

Vari cuts an elegant figure: tall and whip-thin, with a grace and fluidity to every movement. Clad in simple, black clothes that accentuate that elegance and armed with a jet black rapier, Vari addresses the world with a confident, knowing, smirk.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Vari is competitive, extroverted, and self-assured to the point of arrogance. He hides none of these things. If he is not the center of attention when he walks into a room, he'll make sure he is within seconds of arriving. He always assumes he is the cleverest person in the vicinity and will speak up to prove it.

He can be charming when he wants to be, but there is always an undercurrent of threat as if he could turn off the smile and draw his blade in less time than it takes to blink.

Vari likes fighting. He likes winning. He likes the adrenaline rush of knowing that one bad decision could kill him. And, on some level, he likes making other people feel small and humiliated before they die.

Vari is in no way a nice person, but good and nice are not the same. He is a refugee from the Underdark, and power - in the hands of people who aren't him - scares him. He is an anarchist and a rebel and will systematically work to oppose any system that restricts the freedom of an individual: unjust laws, cruel masters, arrogant sages. They're all fair game.

BACKGROUND

Vari speaks little about his youth in the Underdark, but growing up as a trans man in the highly matriarchal drow nobility was not easy. He is from the minor noble House Tlin'orzza but he has nothing good to say about them. If he mentions his family at all, it is only to call them "a nest of vipers, who with any luck will poison one another soon enough." His most passionate contempt is reserved for his sister



Felyndiira; though he would never say anything outright, he occasionally implies that she outwitted him, or abandoned him to the mercy of a rival family – or perhaps both.

That distaste extends to drow society as a whole. He avoids other drow – males and females – as a matter of habit. There are things he misses about the Underdark, including the wine his family made from luminescent fungus, but he most certainly does not miss the people.

He also says little about the shadowy rapier that is his constant companion, except that he and the blade “saved each other from a dark place.” He and the sword found each other when they were both in captivity, deep in the dungeon-prisons of House Zauviir, and together they fought their way to the surface. He adores the weapon, which he calls “my rose”, speaks of her, and to her (though she doesn't speak back, at least in any way others can hear), as a beloved friend, and won't consider using any other

blade. His happiest hours are alone with the sword, practicing and communing with her.

Vari is much more open about his life on the surface. He has worked as a scout in mercenary companies, has had occasional associations with criminal associations (if playing in the Forgotten Realms, the Zhentarim are ideal) – which ended badly, as following orders is not one of his skills – and found his calling living in luxury as a well-paid duellist and minor celebrity for his panache, wit, and ego.

INTERACTIONS

As an opponent, Vari will lie, cheat, manipulate, and do whatever he needs in order to gain a social advantage. Once weapons are drawn, he fights completely fair. A victory by cheating is no victory at all.

VARI TLIN'ORZZA

Medium humanoid (Drow Elf), Chaotic Neutral

Armor Class 17 (mage armor)
Hit Points 67 (14d8 + 27)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Wis +4, Cha +7
Skills Deception +8, Intimidation +8, Insight +4, Perception +4
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Common, Elvish, Undercommon

Spellcasting. Vari is a 9th level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). Vari has the following Warlock spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): blade ward, eldritch blast, prestidigitation
5th level (2 slots): blink, counterspell, hex, hold monster, hold person, mirror image*, shield, sickening radiance, vampiric touch, witch bolt
At will: mage armor*

* Vari casts mage armor and mirror image on himself before combat

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

Vari is a surprisingly loyal ally. Once he has committed to doing something he will follow through to the end: he has a reputation to maintain. He'll take huge risks for people he has decided are friends.

Knowing more than other people is one of Vari's simple pleasures. If he has information someone needs, he will charge a high price for it - though he might take payment in flattery. This makes him an excellent information source for player characters.

If threatened, Vari is fairly sure he is indestructible. He doesn't scare easily and if threatened he is likely to use the excuse to draw his sword and start a fight.

CREDITS

Written by Catherine Evans.
Art by Project Nelm.

Innate Spellcasting. Vari's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15). He 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 sunlight, Vari has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Pact Weapon. At will, Vari creates a melee weapon (usually a rapier) in his hand. He is proficient with it, and it counts as a +1 magic weapon. The weapon disappears if it is more than 5 feet from Vari for more than 1 minute.

ACTIONS

Multiaction. Vari makes two rapier attacks on his turn.
Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 9 (1d8 + 5) piercing damage.

BONUS ACTIONS

Hexblade's Curse. As a bonus action, Vari curses a creature within 30 feet, for one minute. Vari adds an additional +3 to damage rolls against the cursed individual, scores a critical hit against the creature on a 19 or 20, and regains 13 hit points if the target dies while cursed.
As a bonus action, Vari can teleport up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the cursed individual.
Vari can use Hexblade's Curse once per short or long rest. The curse lasts for one minute, but ends early if the target dies, or if Vari dies or is incapacitated.

VOID

Void recently left the employ of a tiefling-run gang called The Fortune's Wives following an encounter with forces greater than himself. What was supposed to be a simple job took a dark turn into an encounter with evil gods, leading to something of a breakdown. By trade he's a thief and has been known to make persuasive use of his many blades.

Void is a grey tiefling, the colour of storm clouds. His huge black horns sweep backwards, ending with a flick. They emphasise every movement of his head and add to the intimidating effect of his heavy brow and bright red eyes, which seem to catch every movement you make.

He hides most of his body in a battered leather coat, heavily modified with patches, pouches, and handy places in which to slip daggers. A much-faded black scarf covers his throat, and leather straps wrap his arms from knuckle to elbow.

Several blades of varying lengths hang at his belt.



TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Void needs very good reason to enter into business with those unknown to him. A party is in much better standing if they are introduced by a trusted acquaintance.

Of course, despite his recent past, Void still has the business sense of a hardened gangster; a good quantity of gold does a sufficient job of simulating trust.

Void can be ruthless. He will suggest the most direct and convenient way of approaching a situation. He doesn't seek collateral damage, and takes no pleasure in it, but isn't against suggesting it if it gets the job done.

Void is willing to make an exception to any of the above points if he knows the proposed business is working against cults, religions or other magical orders whose purpose is done with evil intent. If a stranger is working to take down an evil cult, he's in. If the tedious and winding plan unknots their intent better than the straightforward attack, he's for it.

Despite his intense demeanour, Void is deeply appreciative of games and tricks, and can be won over by a sufficiently clever sleight of hand. Drinking games are also a favourite.

Void keeps details of his life private and isn't necessarily looking to make friends, but is more than happy to share personal details to manipulate and will make a strong ally to those he feels are working to his purpose.

BACKGROUND

For most of his life, Void was a key part of the Fortune's Wives. Following in the footsteps of his mother, Beauty, he became a master of the many skills useful for a thief and gangster to have in their back pocket. Having started young, it was easy for him to get a small crew of his own when he came of age. Their main dealings were protection rackets and the occasional hijack of a caravan, but there was little to which they could not turn their hand.

Void came to blows with another member of the gang, a woman named Vengeance, who disapproved of his heavy-handed way with informants. After the altercation, Void took his crew on the road, where they became unwittingly employed by a cult aiming to unleash a god of chaos and destruction. Void suffered nightmares and waking visions due to his involvement. These experiences were bad enough that they caused him to attempt to take his own life. The terror they invoked in him was simply overwhelming.

Void is intensely private, a sensible criminal habit that became heavily ingrained following his trauma. He woke to find himself heavily scarred around his neck and forearms. His attempts on his life were removed from his memory by a well-meaning cleric. He's grateful to have been spared the worst of it, but has told himself he needs to scars to remind him of the forces he now lives to defy.

The faded scarf he wears around his neck was cut from the cloak of the cleric who found him and ultimately saved his life. Lilli, a gnome cleric of the god of luck, is the only person about whom Void speaks freely and fondly. She saved Void's life and made him see the value in doing what was right, even if his efforts spared just one life.

Since then, Void has struck out more or less alone, taking the work he knows to get by. He takes particular interest in cases where he gets to tackle the forces that almost cost him his sanity and his life.

When asked about his faith, Void simply states that he believes in luck.

INTERACTIONS

Questioning Void about why he is so heavily covered up will lead to an abrupt change of topic. This will be a charming aside or an aggressive rebuff depending upon his mood and your relationship with him.

In public Void keeps to smaller, quieter more quiet streets if possible, and moves with purpose through any crowded spaces. He's careful to be aggressive enough in his movements that people get out of the way, but never enough to attract too much attention.

In a tavern Void will try to find the best vantage point to see most of the room, and will insist on sitting with his back to the wall. If this is not possible, he'll stand. It's just good sense, as far as he's concerned.

If Void is approached by the adventurers without any introduction,— for example, if they seek him by reputation— it will take good manners and even better persuasion rolls to get past his suspicions quickly. An affiliation with a god of luck, or against evil cults/ religions or other such forces, will give an advantage in such encounters.

STATISTICS

Void uses the statistics of a **master thief** (Volo's Guide to Monsters, pg. 216).

CREDITS

Written by Mellanie Black.

Art by Fernando Salvaterra.

CAPTAIN AVELA DIN RAI

Captain Avela Din Rai is a deaf human veteran military officer and battlefield elemental summoner. She's stern, efficient, by-the-book, and intensely focused on serving both justice and her country.

A lanky, tan-skinned woman in the crisp, practical uniform of a military mage appraises you. Her iron-grey hair is cut short, her face weathered, her eyes alight with focus. Insignias of rank dot her chest, and one hand grips a long white oak staff carved like a whirlwind. An attendant behind her catches her eye, and with a few efficient gestures, seems to convey something to her. She nods and turns to you.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Captain Avela Din Rai is a military intelligence and R&D officer of skill far beyond her rank. While effective as an elemental summoner on the battlefield, she prefers to stay on the sidelines to patiently analyze information and make plans. She is ferociously intelligent but can sometimes miss context by focusing too intently on her current task, and her insistence on doing things by the book can limit her effectiveness. Because she's deaf, she's almost always seen with a trusted attendant, Jarivan, who helps her communicate and informs her of things she can't hear.

Avela views war as a tragic necessity. She feels a responsibility to minimize casualties and corruption, and worries that another officer in her place would cause a bloodbath. She tries to avoid any unnecessary risk to her allies and prefers disrupting or intimidating her enemies over outright killing them.

Efficient and driven, Avela has a strong commitment to the law and its fair administration. While she's honest to the core, her faith in the law and her intense focus on her work can make her an unknowing pawn for corrupt superiors. As such, she might be an ally or an enemy, depending on the circumstances. As an ally, she can provide the players critical



information, valuable military and political contacts, and battlefield support through her subordinates and her summoned elementals. As an enemy, she can be quite dangerous as a commander or as an investigator, rooting out a covert adventuring party using a blend of mundane and magical sleuthing techniques. Wherever she stands, her allegiances may change if she sees proof that she's on the wrong side.

BACKGROUND

Avela was the child of an ambitious family of merchants. Born deaf, her family assumed she'd never be able to haggle, so they instead sent her to a prestigious boarding school from a young age, where she showed uncommon focus and a talent for magic,

particularly conjurations. Soon after she completed her studies, a war broke out, and she was conscripted to serve as a military mage.

Avela was lucky. Her family was a major supplier to the army, and without her knowledge, they leveraged this connection to get her an officer's post. What they'd hoped would be an uneventful sinecure behind a desk became a career, as Avela's surprising knack for command shot her to the rank of captain.

A few years into the war, Avela was to take part in a large battle. It should've been a fair fight, but the

unexpected, catastrophic loss devastated her — and soon after, it roused her suspicions. She quietly investigated in the following months, and found that prior to the battle, the soldiers had been complaining to indifferent officers of insufficient food and shoddy armor. She knew that if she'd been paying attention to her troops rather than her charts she might have noticed, and resolved to provide for their needs. With a bit more digging, she uncovered that through a corrupt arrangement, her family had been permitted to overcharge for inadequate supplies.

Avela soon assembled a case and presented it to the

AVELA DIN RAI

Medium humanoid (Human), Lawful Good

Armor Class 11 (14 with mage armor)
Hit Points 55 (10d8 + 10)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Int +8, Wis +5
Skills Arcana +8, Investigation +8
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages Common and any four languages

Spellcasting. Avela is a 10th level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). Avela has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *create bonfire*, *fire bolt*, *frostbite*, *gust***, *mage hand*, *mending*

1st Level (4 slots): *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *shield*, *fog cloud**

2nd Level (3 slots): *dust devil***, *flaming sphere**, *gust of wind***, *Maximilian's earthen grasp*, *warding wind***, *web**

3rd Level (3 slots): *fireball*, *sleet storm**, *wind wall***

4th Level (3 slots): *conjure minor elementals**, *dimension door**, *Evard's black tentacles**

5th level (2 slots): *conjure elemental**, *teleportation circle**

*Conjuration spell of 1st level or higher

**Cast via charges from *staff of winds*

Benign Transposition (Recharges after Avela Casts a Conjuration Spell of 1st Level or Higher). As a bonus action, Avela teleports up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space that she can see. If she instead chooses a space within range that is occupied by a willing Small or Medium creature, they both teleport, swapping places.

Focused Conjuration. While Avela is concentrating on a conjuration spell, her concentration can't be broken as a result of taking damage.

Deafness. Avela can't hear, and automatically fails any ability check that requires hearing.

ACTIONS

Staff of Winds. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage, and Avela may expend a charge of the *staff of winds*. If she does and the target is Large or smaller, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength save or be pushed backward 15 feet.

EQUIPMENT

Staff of Winds (requires attunement). This white oak staff is carved in twisting patterns that suggest a vortex of wind. It functions as a +1 *quarterstaff*, and increases your spell attack rolls and save DC by 1. It has 5 charges, and regains 1d4+1 expended charges daily at dawn. If you expend the last charge, roll a d20; on a 1, the staff becomes a nonmagical quarterstaff. When you hit with a melee attack using the staff, you may expend one charge to blast the target with winds. If the creature is Large or smaller, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength save or be pushed backward 15 feet. While attuned to the staff, if you are a cleric, druid, sorcerer, or wizard, you can use an action and expend charges to cast one of the following spells from it, using your spell save DC and spellcasting ability modifier: *gust* (at will), *dust devil* (2 charges), *gust of wind* (2 charges), *warding wind* (2 charges), *wind wall* (3 charges).

whole of Command. The evidence was damning: the army cut its ties with Avela's family, many of whom were imprisoned. But her work had made her powerful enemies, and she was soon reassigned to a remote and dangerous outpost surrounded by monsters. Burning with resentment, she still obeyed her orders and went.

For twelve years in the wilds, Avela's career languished as she learned from the outpost veterans how to hunt down monsters, find their weak points, and kill them. As her resentment cooled, her skills at investigation and combat grew. When the last of the generals with a grudge against her retired and she was called back to serve with the main army, she was reluctant to leave the tight company she'd worked with so long. Still, she followed orders, returning to command as a seasoned veteran, but with a rank no higher than before.

INTERACTIONS

Avela is stern but fair. She's happy to help those she views as being on the side of justice, but will refuse out of hand to listen to those who rouse her suspicions unless given a very compelling reason. She's bullheaded by nature, and though age has cooled her temper, it still takes effort for her not to lash out impulsively against injustice.

She communicates plainly and efficiently through her attendant, but will quickly dismiss anyone she thinks is wasting her time. Her intense focus can produce workable solutions very quickly, but it can be hard to get her to shift it to other topics.

She is scrupulously honest, and expects the same of others. Those who try to deceive her earn immediate scorn, and those who try to bribe or strongarm her earn a quick trip to a prison cell.

CREDITS

Written by Simon Diamond Cramer.

Art by Kari Kawachi.



ZARFULI GULAR

Zarfuli Gular is a kind, melancholy human caravan guard whose bond to the god of roads and horizons helps him ward off the demon in his shadow. He travels constantly out of fear he'll endanger others, and watches for clues that might help find his missing husband.

A short, stocky human man with dark skin sits contemplatively on the back of a wagon. He has patchwork splint mail, a tidy beard, and round glasses, and black dreadlocks cascade in a ponytail down his back. His arms are covered in geometric tattoos, and a large hammer rests at his side. He fiddles absently with a wooden disc around his neck, and his warm smile is slightly reserved.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Zarfuli Gular is both cursed and blessed. A demon in his shadow, Ravix, grants him power even as she strains against her bonds. His devotion to the god of roads and horizons presses him to keep going, to treasure the things that make life worth living, and to light the way for others. He travels constantly, loving the freedom of the road but fearing he might endanger those near him.

Zarfuli is warm, faithful, and kind. His faith is quiet and deep, and he shows his devotion through wonder at the world, support for those around him,

and constant forward movement. He loves freedom, seeking to preserve his own and help others find theirs. He collects music and stories, and he loves dancing even though he's awful at it. He tries to keep his companions moving toward whatever path is best for them.

Zarfuli has a dark, destructive rage that simmers below the surface, threatening to break free. Perhaps it's the influence of Ravix, or perhaps it's just his nature - whatever the reason, it makes him fear and doubt himself. He prefers to prevent conflicts when possible. He's deeply uncertain, fearing that he might lose control, that he's violent at heart, that his presence endangers others. His resulting depression can make it hard for him to take initiative, though the lessons of his god help sustain him.

BACKGROUND

When Zarfuli was eight, a demon named Ravix possessed him. His parents took him to have the demon exorcised, but rather than being banished, Ravix was bound in Zarfuli's shadow by the tattoos etched into his body. Impotent but still able to torment him,



ZARFULI GULAR

Medium humanoid (Human), Neutral Good

Armor Class 18 (splint mail and defense fighting style)

Hit Points 61

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	9 (-1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Wis +5, Cha +7

Skills Athletics +5, Insight +5, Persuasion +7, Religion +4

Senses darkvision 120 ft. (including magical darkness), passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Draconic, Abyssal

Divine Health. Zarfuli is immune to disease.

Spellcasting. Zarfuli is a 3rd level spellcaster as both a paladin and a warlock. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). He regains his expended warlock spell slots when he finishes a short or long rest. He has the following paladin and warlock spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *eldritch blast* (+4 to damage rolls), *green-flame blade*

1st level (3 paladin slots): *bless*, *command*, *cure wounds*, *compelled duel*, *ensnaring strike*, *expeditious retreat*, *shield*, *speak with animals*

2nd level (2 warlock slots): *darkness*, *misty step*

Divine Smite. When he hits with a melee attack, Zarfuli may expend a spell slot to deal an additional 2d8 radiant damage to the target. He deals an additional 1d8 radiant damage per spell level above the first. If the target is a fiend or undead, it takes an additional 1d8 radiant damage.

Great Weapon Master. When Zarfuli makes a melee attack with a two-handed weapon, he may take a -5 penalty to the attack roll to deal +10 damage on a hit.

Pact of the Blade. Zarfuli conjures a magical melee weapon in any form. He may add his Charisma modifier (+4) to attacks with it rather than his Strength or Dexterity modifier. It disappears if it is more than 5 feet away from him for a minute, if he uses this feature again, if he dismisses it (no action required), or if he dies.

ACTIONS

Maul. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d6 + 4) magical bludgeoning damage. If the target falls to 0 hit points or the attack was a critical hit, Zarfuli may make an additional maul attack as a bonus action.

Lay on Hands (Recharges after a Long Rest). Zarfuli has a pool of healing power that replenishes when he takes a long rest. With that pool, he can restore up to 15 hit points. As an action, Zarfuli can touch a creature and draw from a pool of 15 hit points to restore a number of hit points to that creature, up to the maximum amount remaining in his pool. Alternatively, he can expend 5 hit points from his pool of healing to cure the target of one disease or neutralize one poison affecting it. He can cure multiple diseases and neutralize multiple poisons with a single use of Lay on Hands, expending hit points separately for each one.

Channel Divinity (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). Zarfuli chooses one:

Nature's Wrath. One creature within 10 feet of Zarfuli must succeed on a DC 15 Strength or Dexterity saving throw (its choice) or become restrained by spectral vines. While restrained, the creature repeats the saving throw at the end of its turns, ending the effect on a success.

Turn the Faithless. Each fiend or fey within 30 feet of Zarfuli that can hear him must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be turned for 1 minute or until it takes damage. While turned, its true form is revealed, it must spend its turns trying to move as far from him as it can, it can't voluntarily move to a space within 30 feet of him, and it can't take reactions. If there is nowhere to move, it must use the Dodge action.

BONUS ACTIONS

Hexblade's Curse. As a bonus action, Zarfuli curses a creature he can see within 30 feet. The curse lasts for 1 minute or until Zarfuli dies or is incapacitated. While the target is cursed, Zarfuli gains a +3 bonus to damage rolls against the target, scores critical hits against the target on attack rolls of 19 or 20, and regains 7 hit points if the target dies.

Ravix whispered poison in his ear for the next fifteen years as he served as an acolyte at the temple which performed his failed exorcism, where he was treated well but not trusted or allowed any independence.

Zarfuli had internalized the idea that he was a danger to others until a young acolyte, Arjan, visited from another temple. Arjan spoke of things Zarfuli had

forgotten and things he'd never known: family, travel, and music. He was kind, warm, and beautiful, and Zarfuli was instantly smitten. With his infatuation came dreams of visiting Arjan, and more dangerous thoughts: dreams of hope, dreams of freedom.

Zarfuli and Arjan began a correspondence. At first, Arjan sent Zarfuli stories and songs. Then it was

poetry. Then it was love letters. After a few years, the two hatched a plan to free Zarfuli. Arjan smuggled him out and entrusted him to the care of a traveling caravan, promising to marry him on his return.

To Zarfuli, the road was wonderfully, terrifyingly free. To Ravix, it was an opportunity; the sudden shift from total discipline to total freedom allowed her to subject him to greater torments. Soon, he was having nightmares, which progressed to fits of rage or terror. The leader of the caravan understood Zarfuli's plight and gave him another option: rather than imprisoning himself or succumbing to the demon's influence, Zarfuli could learn to fight her on his own terms.

Through travel, study, and practice, Zarfuli learned of the god of horizons. He learned to move constantly, to marvel at wonders natural and artificial, to support those around him. He grew strong and hardy, and he found he could use the binding tattoos to compel Ravix to aid him, though doing so had its risks. He sent letters to Arjan every chance he got.

After years of travel, he returned to meet Arjan, who had since finished his training as a priest. The two eloped and prepared for life on the road. It went well for a few months, and for the first time in his life, Zarfuli was happy. That all ended when the caravan visited a vast city.

The members of the caravan had split up to move merchandise about town, but at the end of the day, Arjan had not returned. The travelers spent days looking for Arjan with no luck, but eventually had to keep moving or risk starvation for everyone. With no other recourse, and no idea how to find his husband, Zarfuli numbly followed. Zarfuli desperately misses his husband, but after months alone, he's started to give up on finding him.

INTERACTIONS

Zarfuli is a kind, reassuring presence. He is unfailingly honest and has a self-effacing charm that hides his lack of confidence.

Zarfuli's oath and desire to encourage others to be their best can lead him to be a busybody. He sincerely wishes to help, and he has trouble understanding when that help might be unwanted.

Zarfuli fears losing control of his anger, so he strongly prefers negotiations to battle. If forced into a fight, he deliberately suppresses his emotions, perhaps sighing when he has to attack a foe or reacting with apparent boredom when injured. This might read as cockiness, but it's a deadly serious tactic that helps him keep control over his more violent side.

Ravix whispers constantly in Zarfuli's ear. He often ignores her, but at times he'll bicker or snipe back with his own petty insults. Above all, he tries to avoid genuinely listening.

Ravix's voice is audible to those around Zarfuli as a quiet whisper, but she can speak to them if she chooses. She tries to play the tempting, taunting fiend, but her impatient nature and her imprisonment often lead her to make impotent threats instead.

CREDITS

Written by Simon Diamond Cramer.

Art by Kari Kawachi.

DANIL CARDÙN

defeated the tyrannical lich, Danil Cardùn now lives the life of a happily married man with many children and grandchildren. Quick with a smile as he is with his sword Danil has become the patriarch of his family and those he has welcomed into his heart. He welcomes strangers as quickly to his table as he does old friends. Though aging, Danil still holds much of his strength from his prime and uses it to teach and mentor the next generation of heroes.

The man's silver hair catches the sunlight as you look in his direction. His wrinkled and slightly weather worn skin stretches tight across his thick, muscled form. The strength that he carries himself with almost tricks you into thinking him a younger man. He looks to see your approach and his eyes gleam with untold stories and adventures. Finally, he smiles wide, beckoning you closer with a booming voice.

TRAITS AND PERSONALITY

Danil carries himself as if he's older than he is, hiding his true strength behind a facade of age. He still has much of the strength and endurance he had in his younger years and puts it to use when needed in his drills and teachings of the younger generation. Danil has a tendency to jokingly call those even slightly younger than him "whipper snapper" or "youngin'" as he coddles them or critiques them on their swordsmanship.

Danil still carries his heroic days with him, reflected in the pride he has in his students. He is often found with an ear to ear grin when even his youngest disciple executes a basic technique. Even more so, Danil cherishes the family he has made. A loving husband was all he asked for, but raising four children to adulthood made him prouder than when he defeated the Doom Drake that lorded over an innocent kingdom and Danil will eagerly show portraits of his children and grandchildren to anyone interested.

Even with his days of heroism behind him, Danil has set up a swordmasters ring outside his home where he invites all those interested to learn and train with him. He says that he ought to put his skill and experience to use somehow.

BACKGROUND

No matter how many times they have been put down ancient evils always rear their heads and perhaps it is because of that that so many prophecies float around about the one hero that will rise to stop them. Any everyday citizen could tell you about the storied heroes that defeated tyrannical monarchs, demonic hordes, or greedy dragons but few could tell you what happened to them after.

Danil Cardùn grew up as the son of a forester learning the ways of the forest until the night he came of age. A storm unlike any other cracked over his home village, mobs roiled with anger at a seer who predicted that Danil would be the one to stand up against the lich that ruled the lands around the village. In fear of the lich's retribution for harboring its doom, the mob turned towards Danil's home. To prevent their son from falling into any danger, Danil's mothers stood in between Danil and the mobas he escaped. Danil struck out with nothing but the clothes on his back, having had no time to gather supplies as he made his escape. He strove to become the hero the prophecy said he would be, facing many challenges, physical and emotional, that he often barely walked away from. Danil learned much about being a hero and a good man as he struggled against the evil powers arrayed against him.

The prophecy came to a sudden end, the lich felled at Danil's feet, the land free from this oppressive evil, and Danil found himself with no clear path forward. Now older than his parents were when this all began, Danil struggled to find a new place for himself in the world without a prophecy to guide him. Even though the world quickly forgot his name and what he looked like, with the aid of his companions and the friends he made along his journey, Danil found a life outside of the prophecy and fell in love. Stereotypically, Danil fell in love with the owner of the tavern he frequented when he was a hero. The man in question, Nayren

Carlen who would soon be Nayren Cardùn, had pined after Danil since the first time he came in as a patron. Their love blossomed and soon enough they married and started a family. Danil's armor and other relics of his past sit polished and cared for by the nostalgic hero, waiting for their next chance to do good.

Four children and two decades later Danil and Nayren found joy in their silver years and Danil decided to set up a service for the local townsfolk and eager adventurers to hone their martial skills. Unbeknownst to them they trained with a legendary, and already forgotten, hero.

INTERACTIONS

Danil spends most of his days at his and his husbands home at the edge of the town, training his students and taking care of the garden he and Nayren created outside their home. If adventurers inquire about training with the old hero, Danil is happy to include them with his students and welcomes them in at a deceptively cheap cost of 15 silver pieces. His invitation will eventually extend to a home cooked meal and a warm place to stay in the extra bunks he built for students who needed a place to rest after a long day of training.

If adventurers continue to visit Danil, he will begin to open up about his past and his own trials as a hero of prophecy but will avoid too many specifics. While the adventurers continue to grow and visit Danil he will always open his home to the adventurers, finding time to swap stories of quests and strange beasts. As Danil sees the adventurers grow in strength, he will begin to train them with harder tests and techniques. As an epic level fighter Danil continues to have much to teach even high level adventurers, testing their skills beyond what they could imagine a single person capable of.

STATISTICS

Danil uses the statistics of a **warlord** (Volo's Guide to Monsters, pg. 220).

CREDITS

Written by Cameron Blair.

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Friends, Foes and Other Fine Folks

contains profiles of 58 unique NPCs designed for fifth edition Dungeons and Dragons. Each entry contains a brief description of the character, read aloud description, detailed information on their personality, background and interactions they may have with adventurers, as well as in game statistics.

