

SAVAGE ENCOUNTERS **VILLAINS & LAIRS II**



Expand your game with even more villainous NPCs, lairs, and magic items for the world's greatest roleplaying game

VILLAINS & LAIRS II

A SAVAGE ENCOUNTERS SUPPLEMENT

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS:

Alan Tucker, Alex Clippinger, Alison Huang, Anne Gregersen, Cameron Blair, Catherine Evans, Christopher M. Sniezak, D.E. Chaudron, David Markiwsky, Dungeon Rollers, Emily Smith, Grant Ellis, Jacky Leung, Jeff C. Stevens, Jessica Marcum, Karl Resch, Mellanie Black, Micah Watt, Oliver Clegg, Phil Allison, Scott Bean, Tera Hooper, Troy E. Taylor

CARTOGRAPHY:

Chris Bissette, Daniel Walthall, Elven Tower, Erin Harvey, Mobral Rox

COVER ARTIST:

Luiz Prado

<https://savedra.deviantart.com/>

EDITING:

Christopher Walz
@DMChristopherW

ARTISTS:

Bob Greyvenstein, Daneil Commerci, David Markiwsky, Dean Spencer, Eric Lofgren, Forrest Imel, Gary Dupuis, Hopsy, Lawrence van der merwe, Rick Hershey, Terran Empire Publishing – Evan Rodda, Nimgyu

Expanded Version 1.1

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, Wizards of the Coast, Forgotten Realms, the dragon ampersand, Player's Handbook, Monster Manual, Dungeon Master's Guide, D&D Adventurers League, all other Wizards of the Coast product names, and their respective logos are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast in the USA and other countries. All characters and their distinctive likenesses are property of Wizards of the Coast. This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Wizards of the Coast.

©2016 Wizards of the Coast LLC, PO Box 707, Renton, WA 98057-0707, USA. Manufactured by Hasbro SA, Rue Emile-Boéchat 31, 2800 Delémont, CH. Represented by Hasbro Europe, 4 The Square, Stockley Park, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB11 1ET, UK.

All other original material in this work is copyright [2019] by Jeff C. Stevens and published under the Community Content Agreement for Dungeon Masters Guild

ABOUT THIS SUPPLEMENT

Villains & Lairs was so successful, I decided to create a second supplement, tapping the minds of even more fantastic creators to bring art images to life.

All of the villains in this supplement are original and are not featured in the original *Villains & Lairs* supplement.

I hope you enjoy what the writers have created. I know I have!

Now – go play D&D!

- Jeff C. Stevens

THE ART

All of the images in this supplement come from stock art purchased from DriveThruRPG. Each artist is credited in each of the villains in which their work appears.

- Some artwork © 2015 Dean Spencer, used with permission. All rights reserved.
- Daniel Comerci – danielcomerci.com
- Elite Design Elements © Rising Phoenix Games
- Publisher's Choice Quality Stock Art © Rick Hershey / Fat Goblin Games
- Some artwork © 2015 Eric Lofgren, used with permission. All rights reserved.

USING THIS CONTENT

Official Wizards of the Coast books referenced:

MM = 5th edition *Monster Manual*

PHB = 5th edition *Player's Handbook*

DMG = 5th edition *Dungeon Master's Guide*

VGtM = *Volo's Guide to Monsters*

MToF = *Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes*

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

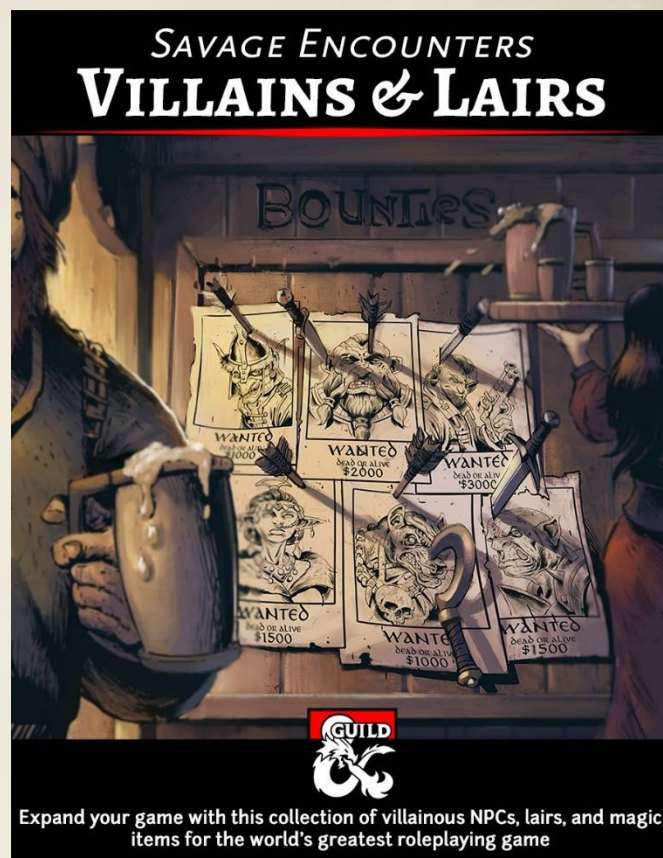
ADJUSTING THE VILLAINS

Although a stat block for most of the villains is included, you may wish to adjust them to make them fit in your

own campaign. You could accomplish this by increasing the hit points of the villain, raising their Armor Class, or by adding feats or special traits. The latter can be found in Chapter 9: *Dungeon Master's Workshop* of the *Dungeons Master's Guide* (page 280).

DON'T HAVE THE ORIGINAL?

Haven't bought the best-selling original *Villains & Lairs*? Click the image to be taken to the product page!



THOUGHTS, QUESTIONS, COMMENTS?

Love the product? Please leave a rating or review on the *Dungeon Masters Guild*!

No matter how many eyes look over a project, there's always an error or two. Also, I did the layout and may have missed some of the edits by the fantastic Christopher Walz.

You may contact me at jcorvinstevens@gmail.com or on Twitter: @jcorvinstevens.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

VILLAIN	Type	CR	Author	Page
Alianthra, the Bloodthorn*	Dryad	9	Karl Resch	5
Arcantha Liocin	Human Warlock	7	Troy E. Taylor	10
Atula Nook	Human Priestess	8	Mellanie Black	13
Auntie Alma	Half-elf	4	Anne Gregersen	15
Azouf Kerr	Bard Werewolf	3	D.E. Chaudron	18
Babar Bushbloosom*	Skeleton	5	Grant Ellis	20
Bhok'Mar*	Undead Elf	17	Oliver Clegg	23
Bruden Grimhammer (+)	Dwarf Paladin	9	Tony Petrecca	29
The Collector*	Dwarf	1/4	Alan Tucker	31
The Constable*	Human	7	Alan Tucker	36
Darkdagger Derva	Tiefling	8	Alex Clippinger	41
Ellie "Shank" Kellogg	Human	8	Alan Tucker	44
Grynne Blaid	Goblin Shaman	3	Jessica Marcrum	47
Hakug Smeltbane	Dwarf Wizard	8	Jacky Leung	49
Indris Cleftshall	Dwarf Craftsman	5	Phil L. Allison	51
Ir'thir, Master of the Archives	Human Mage	21	Tera Hooper	53
Istifell Agrevar	Tiefling	15	Micah Watt	56
Juli (+)	Grung Champion	9	Jeff C. Stevens	60
Krieger Folger	Human Alchemist	9	Christopher M. Sniezak	63
Lef Adara*	Human Druid	4	Emily Smith	65
Marelle Autumnfall	Eladrin	10	David Markiwsky	70
Markacial Sa'ville	Human Thief	5	Jeff C. Stevens	72
The Night Watchman	Undead Knight	13	Catherine Evans	75
Oriana Astraeus	Human Griffon Rider	2	Alison Huang	78
Penny "The Tinkerer" Salina (+)	Archmage	12	Dungeon Rollers	80
Vinheimar	Undead	9	Cameron Blair	82
Xul'Na'Chak*	Alien	10	Jeff C. Stevens	84
Zasheir Paahar*	Human Pirate	5	Scott Bean	89

* denotes villain with lair

(+) denotes new villain

ALIANTHRA, THE BLOODTHORN

By: Karl Resch

Artist: Dean Spencer

Map: Mobral Rox

A fey desperate to save her ancient tree, Alianthra believes the damage done to her home can only be undone with one thing—the blood of mortals.

BACKGROUND

For as long as the Feywild has existed, its magic has permeated into the Material Plane, causing wondrous and unexplainable phenomena. Such was that of the Avidane Tree.

The tree grew unlike anything else in the mortal world. Its leaves were said to bestow magical blessings, should one ever fall to the earth. Druids would stretch out their consciousness, listening to the Avidane speak to them in their meditations. The Avidane gave to all, and one gave their all to the Avidane.

The dryad Alianthra was bound to the Avidane by the archfey, becoming its guardian and protector. She interacted with mortals, fey, and all manner of beasts who sought the great tree and the magic it so generously gave. All was well, until other powers sought the Avidane for themselves.

Battles raged through once-pristine woodlands. Alliances were forged and betrayed. Ultimately, neither side could take the power of the Avidane for themselves, so they sought a new tactic: destroy it. The fires were lit, perhaps aided by magic, and the Avidane Tree was left scarred from the flames of war, its future unknown.

The carnage from the battle affected not just the great tree, but Alianthra as well. The land was tainted with the blood of the fallen, and it gave the dryad a dark nourishment. As the blood of mortals sustained her, Alianthra's relationship with the Avidane turned covetous, and as she sought the blood of mortals to protect her demesne; a new name formed on the lips of mortals: the Bloodthorn.



CURRENT MOTIVES

The Bloodthorn wishes to restore health to the tree to which she is bonded. She can hear faint whispers from the Avidane in her mind, calling from the edges of death.

The Bloodthorn can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **An Ally** – despite her fury towards the mortals who damaged the Avidane Tree, the Bloodthorn can easily direct her attention to mutual foes who threaten her existence as well. Making a dark deal with a fey could turn out poorly—once her foes are eliminated, the Bloodthorn may very well turn them into wood woads!

- **An Oracle** – the Avidane Tree is permeated with a deep fey magic. Alianthra, being bound to it, is able to channel some of that magic at various times of her own choosing. Her connection to the Avidane Tree gives her some insight into the future. Those that serve her sometimes gain benefits from these portents, and she is willing to extend this power to help those who serve her or do her bidding.
- **A Healer** – Alianthra is a fey, and, like many of the fey, she can see the true details that lie within things, such as curses and diseases. Despite her anger towards mortals, desperate individuals may seek her out for healing, convincing her they share a common enemy, or perhaps becoming indebted to her on the future plans of her enemies.
- **A Villain** – mortals damaged the Avidane, and, in the Bloodthorn's mind, their blood has the power to restore and protect it. Characters who stumble into her demesne may find themselves fighting against her followers as she seeks to use their blood to restore vigor to the Avidane Tree.

LONG TERM MOTIVES

The Bloodthorn seeks to restore the Avidane Tree, returning it from the edges of death. When she communes with it, she hears faint whispers as it speaks to her. The woodland whispers of a hermit druid who was able to commune with the Avidane, who claimed that the tree was reprimanding Alianthra for what she has become.

The Bloodthorn's motives and aggression towards mortals have drawn the interest of the Bramble Queen (*Court of Stars: The Bramble Queen, Dungeon 185* by Ari Marmell), a former Green fey twisted by betrayal and revenge. Such a relationship would lead to the Bloodthorn becoming a more active and violent threat to those beyond her demesne.

FLAWS

The thought of revenge has twisted and warped the Bloodthorn's mind, to the point that she thinks that only the blood of mortals can restore the Avidane Tree. In truth, the tree's fey magic has slowly been allowing it to regenerate. This is evidenced by the healthy leaves that occasionally appear, radiating with

magic. Enveloped in her own corruption, the Bloodthorn refuses to acknowledge this evidence. Additionally, she is unaware that the slow regeneration of the Avidane Tree may bring others looking to attempt to reclaim its magic for their own, allowing history to possibly repeat itself.

VINE STAFF

Weapon (quarterstaff), very rare

As the Avidane Tree slowly regenerates, branches, leaves, and other healthy shoots form, suffused with fey magic. These magical offshoots carry the power of the tree, giving those who carry them the harmonious blessings it was famous for in ages past.

You gain a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon.

When you hit with this magic weapon, if the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or become restrained by twisting vines for 1 minute. A target restrained in this way can use an action to make a DC 17 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check, ending the effect on itself on a success.

LEAF OF THE AVIDANE

Wonderous item, legendary

Occasionally, a healthy leaf of the Avidane forms, giving hope that the great tree may heal. Magic permeates the leaf, as it once permeated the tree in ages past.

When you consume the leaf (either by chewing it or brewing it as a tea or poultice), all diseases and curses affecting you end. Additionally, for 24 hours, you have advantage on all saving throws.

ALIANTHRA, THE BLOODTHORN

Medium fey, neutral

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 143 (22d8 + 44)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	19 (+4)	14 (+2)	19 (+4)	20 (+5)	21 (+5)

Saving Throws Int +8, Wis +9, Cha +9

Skills Arcana +8, Nature +8, Perception +9

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 19

Languages Common, Elvish, Sylvan

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. The Bloodthorn's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). The Bloodthorn can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

At will: *druidcraft*

3/day each: *dispel magic*, *entangle*, *spike growth*, *vampiric touch*

1/day each: *grasping vine*, *moonbeam*, *wall of thorns*

Lair Casting. The Bloodthorn can cast the following spells once per day while in her lair, the Avidane Tree.

1st level: *Protection from evil and good*

2nd level: *augury*, *lesser restoration*

3rd level: *remove curse*

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

Speak with Beasts and Plants. The Bloodthorn can communicate with beasts and plants as if they shared a language.

Tree Stride. Once on her turn, the Bloodthorn can use 10 feet of her movement to step magically into one living tree within her reach and emerge from a second living tree within 60 feet of the first tree, appearing in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the second tree. Both trees must be Large or larger.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Bloodthorn makes three attacks.

Vine Staff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or become restrained by twisting vines for 1 minute. A target restrained in this way can use an action to make a DC 17 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics) check, ending the effect on itself on a success.

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

Fey Charm. The Bloodthorn targets one humanoid or beast that she can see within 30 feet of her. If the target can see the Bloodthorn, it must succeed on a DC 19 Wisdom saving throw or be magically charmed. The charmed creature regards the Bloodthorn as a trusted friend to be heeded and protected. Although the target isn't under the Bloodthorn's control, it takes the Bloodthorn's request or actions in the most favorable way it can.

Each time the Bloodthorn or her allies do anything harmful to the target, it can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success. Otherwise, the effect lasts 24 hours or until the Bloodthorn dies, is on a different plane of existence from the target, or ends the effect as a bonus action. If a target's saving throw is successful, the target is immune to the Bloodthorn's Fey Charm for the next 24 hours.

The Bloodthorn can have no more than one humanoid and up to three beasts charmed at a time.

Suppress Magic (Recharge 5-6). The Bloodthorn targets one magic item she can see within 120 feet of her. If the magic item isn't an artifact, its magical properties are suppressed for 10 minutes. This effect lasts until the Bloodthorn is incapacitated, or until the Bloodthorn uses a bonus action to end the effect.

THE AVIDANE TREE

The Avidane Tree has stood for centuries, nourished by fey magic. Though its trunk is still largely blackened, hope may still exist for it to heal from the ills that befell it.

RITUAL HOLLOW

The interior of the Avidane tree is used by the Bloodthorn to create **wood woad** (CR 5; VGtM, p 198) servants. Currently, Alianthra has six wood woad servants, each born from one of the large trees she has planted. The branches of these trees rise through the central trunk of the Avidane, melding their branches into the great trunk in an attempt to channel their life into it.

If combat occurs here, the Bloodthorn teleports between these trees, allowing her servants to battle in melee while she deals with spellcasters and ranged fighters. Her favorite tactic is to charm such individuals and turn them to her side, only to sacrifice them to become wood woads when the battle is over.

HARPY NESTS

The amount of prey that the Bloodthorn brings to the Avidane Tree through her ambushes and warfare have attracted harpies, who dwell within the blackened and twisted trunk 30 feet above the ritual grove. The nests have grown large, but four **harpies** (CR 1; MM, p 181) dwell here at all times. Remains of the victims given to the harpies by the Bloodthorn are scattered through the upper nests. Aside from treasures and other mundane possessions, they may contain maps of rumored fey crossings, or messages from the various armies and warlords seeking to reignite the campaign against the Bloodthorn.

UNDERGROUND GROTTO

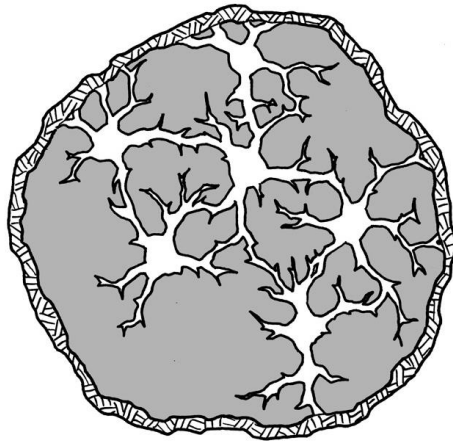
Dying roots have decayed and left several open grottos underneath the Avidane Tree. It smells of wet earth and decomposing matter.

Twelve **myconids** (CR ½; MM, p 232) and their **sovereign** (CR 2; MM, p 232) dwell here, recycling the dying plant matter in order to foster new life. They are neutral to the Bloodthorn and her motives. The fey magic of the Avidane has permeated the surrounding soil, creating all sorts of strange and wondrous fungi and lichens.

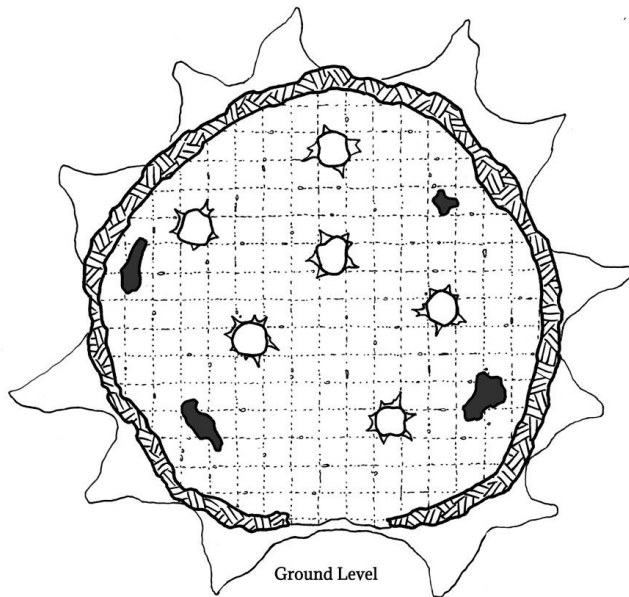
POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENTS

THE GROWING FEYDARK

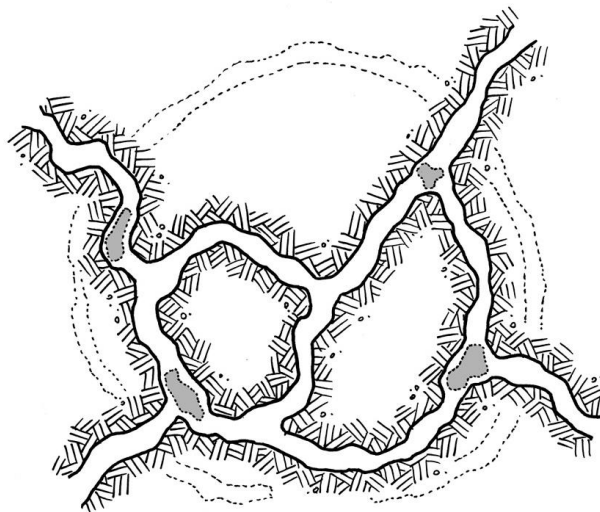
The Carrion King (*Court of Stars: The Carrion King, Dragon 420*, by Jeff LaSala), the mad of lord of mushrooms and fungi, is seeking to influence the myconids that dwell in the rotting grottoes beneath the Avidane Tree. With his influence, he seeks to grow his filaments through the tunnels, eventually reaching the Avidane's roots and taking control of the tree and its magical powers. As his influence continues to spread through the underground grotto, crossings into the Feydark are appearing more often, bringing more of his servants and spores. The Bloodthorn is currently unaware of such an influence, and may soon find that her wood woad servants are turned against her, controlled by the Carrion King and his minions.



Upper Level



Ground Level



Lower Level

ARCANTHA LIOCTIN

By: Troy E. Taylor

Artist: Forrest Imel

"I stand with the vanguard of the Raven Queen. I am her instrument. She desires the memories of the vanquished. And I deliver them."

Arcantha sees herself as a soldier in the understandably thin—but fiercely loyal—ranks of the Raven Queen. Her preferred weapon is the pact magic she wields. But her dagger is also hexed, making it a reliable instrument of retribution and death.

She is not a priestess, but she was trained as one, and as such, reveres such divine agents. Otherwise, she might do as they, acting as guide and spiritual adviser to the devoted. Despite her fierce appearance and intimidating presence, she is never unkind to those within the Raven Queen's fellowship. She respects common worshipers in the Raven Queen's flock, acting deferential to each one's own spiritual journey. Her own path has fewer certainties.

The Raven Queen's designs on this mortal coil are always a mystery to her until they are revealed, usually through the directive of a cleric, yet sometimes from a shadar-kai messenger. But, like a good soldier, she trains and prepares herself for those occasions when such orders come. When tasked, she performs her duty with diligence and confidence, regardless of the benefit or detriment to her own situation.

BACKGROUND

Arcantha was born into a large family, the middle child of seven. Her family's fortunes soured after her mother, a fortune-teller and diviner of omens, died. Her father, a common laborer, moved the family to a rundown house in a ramshackled part of the city. The family did not stay together long. As soon as each child came of age, they went into the world to make their own way.

Like her mother, Arcantha thought she could discern omens in the patterns of things. This set her apart from others her own age, so she had few friends growing up. Initially, she sought solace within the church of Kelemvor, god of the dead. She served as an acolyte and found a place among the brethren. She continued to see omens, the occurrences of which caused distress among her instructors, though they never



explained why. They encouraged her to devote herself to her studies.

That world unraveled when a high-ranking church official—the hierophant Cnaeus—visited Arcantha's congregation. After Cnaeus won her confidence, Arcantha revealed the nature and content of the omens. With a pronouncement that left even Arcantha's teachers stunned, Cnaeus labeled her a heretic! The omens, Cnaeus revealed, were the Raven Queen reaching out and offering a pact from her Fortress of Memories in the Shadowfell. As Arcantha had not rejected these overtures, Cnaeus cast her out, saying she was unworthy of balancing Kelemvor's scales.

Arcantha's lot was cast. She resolved she would never put such trust in a temple's hierarchy again, and she plotted her revenge against Cnaeus. But when the Raven Queen offered the pact, she counseled Arcantha against revenge. Whose bidding did the high priest actually do? Better, the Raven Queen advised, that Arcantha become her agent, casting hexes and wielding her dagger of retribution as commanded.

CURRENT MOTIVES

The Raven Queen placed Arcantha outside the hierarchy of even her own clerics. Arcantha's missions—some daunting, some fulfilling spiritually—have aided the Raven Queen in adding to the Bizarre Menagerie, bringing in new members to her fold, or leading contingents of shadar-kai on secret missions.

Arcantha can act independently, and often does, looking for opportunities to dispel notions about the Raven Queen, especially those that only paint the deity in a dark light.

Arcantha can be used as:

- **An Informant** - Arcantha's own contingent of "ravens"—spies she maintains in the city's various temples—provide all sorts of secrets about the religious community. She has a particular interest in the goings-on at her former temple to Kelemvor.
- **A Guide** - Few know the locations and secret entrances to the private libraries and family crypts as Arcantha does. Family histories, especially, are among the secrets the Raven Queen hungers for.
- **An Employer** - Arcantha's knowledge of the city's politics and social scene is as shallow as her understanding of the dead is deep. She sometimes needs hirelings to investigate or perform tasks in these parts of the realm her "ravens" are unable to navigate freely.
- **A Rival** - The Raven Queen often has designs on the other faiths, believing their teachings about the dead do not do her proper deference. She may have a personal vendetta against divine casters in a particular adventuring party. They are probably uncertain they have given offense—but even healing (or saving from death) a certain person may be the cause for the grudge.

LONG TERM MOTIVES

Arcantha's only goal is to serve. But she knows she serves the Raven Queen best by growing in power and influence. Let the priests trumpet her goddess' victories. Her job is to lead the vanguard of the faithful in a cruel and twisted world so the Raven Queen might be victorious in the Shadowfell.

FLAWS

Even after her experiences in the church of Kelemvor and the Raven Queen's own admonitions to be independent, Arcantha still trusts the authority figures within her own church. She should be more cautious. Many priests of the Raven Queen interpret their own directives differently and a substantial number are jealous of Arcantha's independence.

WATERDEEP SUGGESTION

Arcantha is active in Waterdeep. She knows of all the secret entrances within and near the City of the Dead. More importantly, she and her "ravens" keep close watch on the activities of all the major temples in the Castle Ward and Sea Ward. In particular, she has been directed to maintain a watch on the elven faiths centered at Temple of the Seldarine in the Castle Ward. The Raven Queen may also direct her to lead expeditions into Undermountain. Those quests will involve finding evidence of the city's ancient elven inhabitants or uncovering caches of tomes or private stashes of histories in Undermountain.

ARCANTHA LIOCTIN

Warlock of the Raven Queen (Hexblade)
Medium humanoid (human), lawful evil

Armor Class 10 (13 with Armor of the Shadows/mage armor)

Hit Points 73 (10d8+23)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Wis +6, Cha +8

Skills Arcana +5, Insight +6, Intimidation +8, Religion +5

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Elvish, Infernal, Celestial

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Invocations. The warlock's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma. It can innately use the following invocations: armor of shadows, agonizing blast, devil's sight, relentless hex, whispers of the grave.

Spellcasting. The warlock is a 10th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). It regains its expended spell slots when it finishes a short or long rest. It knows the following warlock spells:

Cantrips (at will): *blade ward, chill touch, eldritch blast, mage hand, minor illusion, prestidigitation, true strike*
1st to 5th level (2 5th-level slots): *banishing smite, blink, blur, branding smite, cone of cold, elemental weapon, phantasmal killer, shield, staggering smite, wrathful smite.*

Hexblade Curse. The warlock can cast a baleful curse on a target; attacks on the target are deemed critical hits with an attack roll of 19 or 20 on a d20. If the cursed target dies, 14 hit points are transferred to the warlock. If the target hits with an attack roll, they must roll a d6. The attack misses on rolls of 4, 5, or 6.

Hex Warrior (Recharges After a Long Rest). Once per long rest, the warlock's dagger can be infused with hex magic for one minute, so that it attacks with +8 and does 1d4 + 4 points of damage.

Accursed Specter (Recharges After a Long Rest). The soul of a person you slay can be bound to its service and does as commanded. It attacks with a +4 bonus. The spirit has the statistics of a spectre and gains 5 temporary hit points.

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee or ranged weapon attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) piercing damage.

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d8) piercing damage.

ATULA NOOK

By: Mellanie Black

Artist: Forrest Imel

Atula is a devoted priestess and skilled con artist. She worships Mask, god of thieves. Her usual method is to pose as a devotee of other gods to gain favour in their ranks, gaining access to priceless treasures, and then vanishing with them, starting afresh in a new city.

BACKGROUND

Atula began her life as the bored, youngest child of a wealthy merchant family. Easily finishing her arithmetic and reading work early in the day, she began exploring the streets of her town—and picking pockets along the way. Her talents did not go unnoticed, and soon she spent her evenings running small jobs with a thieves guild, rather than embroidering with her sisters.

From there it was easy for her ambition to cause Mask to notice her. His power combined with Atula's skill meant she grew bored with the thieves guild as quickly as her lessons. She set off for greater things.

It can take a few years to build trust among the devotees of a new god. In order to kill time, as well as keep the Lord of Shadows happy, Atula often sets up her own small thieves guild. She brings talented young people under her wing, teaching them ways to enrich themselves and avoid the noose. She is known to many urchin children, but they will not refer to her as anything other than the Shadow Lady, and will never divulge her clandestine activity. They take items to her and she sells them, but never directly. She has a small gang of trusted teenagers who pawn the items for her.

Skilled in both deception and the acrobatic feats necessary for thieving, Atula rarely relies on anything other than a new set of robes (stolen, of course) to integrate herself into a new temple. However, she keeps an unobtrusive golden chain around her neck, just in case. It allows her to cast *disguise self* at will, so that more elaborate deception is possible when needed.

Atula is genuinely amused to be caught out, which she seldom is. She applauds those with the skill to spot her deceptions. She even asks them to work with her. She can become dangerous if she feels this information



will be used against her, but would much rather come to a mutually beneficial arrangement than to blows.

Her thieves guild is usually made up of **assassins** (CR 8; MM, p 343), **thugs** (CR 1/2; MM, p 350), **bandits** (CR 1/8; MM, p 343), **bandit captains** (CR 2; MM, p 344), and **master thieves** (CR 5; VGtM, p 216) but she may occasionally employ a **mage** (CR 6; MM, p 347) or a **conjuror** (CR 6; VGtM, p 212), should the occasion call for it.

CURRENT MOTIVES

Atula usually picks the largest temple in the city as her target—the better to access larger riches. As a result, she has key connections with almost every section of society, as rich and poor all worship together.

Atula can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A Source of Information** – Atula hears things from her gang of thieves, from the worshippers that come to visit, and from

dozens of other connections. She shares what she knows, if you make her a deal.

- **A Merchant** – Atula buys and sells rare items, but she would rather trade favours. Speak to one of her thieves and you might be able to track her down to make a deal.
- **A Villain** – Atula usually makes a point to keep adventurers friendly—they come in very useful after all. But sometimes there's something she needs too badly to worry about hurt feelings. She employs her thieves guild and may occasionally hire specialists or monsters to do her dirty work for her. It could take a long time to find out she is really pulling the strings.

LONG TERM MOTIVES

Atula glories in the challenge of staying hidden, and the satisfaction of ill-gotten gains. She knows she needs a place to retire, one day. She longs for a space for her god to have a temple of his own, where she can worship without fear of arrest, or the noose. If she could find an island or a remote location to build a temple, and where thieves could be thieves, that would suit her down to the ground.

FLAWS

Atula is cocky. She knows she is exceptional at what she does and passes her skills onto the gifted few she accepts into her guild. She assumes nobody could best her. Having a god on her side does nothing to quell her ego.

Maybe her confidence will turn into hubris, one day.

Atula Nook

Medium humanoid (human) Chaotic neutral

Armor Class 16 (breastplate)

Hit Points 71 (13d8 + 13)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Con +4, Wis +5, Cha +7

Skills Acrobatics +6, Deception +7, Insight +5, Perception +5, Religion +6, Sleight of Hand +6, Stealth +6

Senses passive Perception 16

Languages Common, Elvish, Thieves Cant, Undercommon

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Atula makes two attacks.

Shadow. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 9 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage, plus 7 (2d6) poison damage and must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute.

SHADOW

Weapon (shortsword), rare

The blade of this sword has a slick, green shine to it.

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

The target takes an additional 2d6 poison damage and must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute.

CHAIN OF BECOMING

Wondrous item, rare, (requires attunement)

This chain is made of delicate gold. It's thin and fragile to look at but nigh unbreakable.

While wearing this chain, you can use an action to cast the *disguise self* spell at will. The spell ends if the chain is removed.

Once per day you can use the chain to cast darkness or invisibility. Once this property is used, it can't be used again until the next dawn

AUNTIE ALMA

By: Anne Gregersen

Artist: Gary Dupuis

"Come on, kiddies, don't be frightened. I am merely going to look at you, no more than that. Oh, by the gods, my little man! You are but skin and bones! And you, young lady, that cough sounds positively dreadful, you must be quite sick.

Tell you what, Auntie Alma is here to take care of you. Come with me and I'll make sure to put some proper food in your bellies."

To most who meet her, Auntie Alma seems a kind, albeit slightly strange, older woman with a warm smile and caring personality. She appears to be a gentle soul to hide her true nature, which is one completely opposite to the sweet grandmother persona she presents to the world.

BACKGROUND

Alma wasn't always the cruel and calculating creature she has become now, and those who are familiar with her story know it to be a tragic one.

In her younger years, Alma was a normal person like any other. The pretty half-elf was a sweet and generous soul who used what little resources she had to build and manage an orphanage. There, she housed several children, who would have been without a home otherwise, teaching them to read and write, feeding them, and taking care of any ailments they might have.

This was the life of a gentle character, but it was not meant to last. Shortly after opening her orphanage, the pact made between Alma's elven mother, who Alma hadn't seen since she was a young child, and a tricky Archfey, bound Alma to the service of a powerful hag. Alma's mother was always desiring of more power, and found that the fastest way to get it was by striking a deal with an otherworldly force. This deal was made with Granny Ulla, an ancient and powerful hag of the Feywild who agreed to give Alma's mother the power she sought in exchange for the service of her firstborn child. Alma's mother accepted the deal.



Granny Ulla, the hag who now controls each and every facet of Alma's life, had the cruelest of desires. She wanted to consume and corrupt innocence, to bring sorrow and sadness to the world of mortals, but mostly she wanted to see others suffer. Compelled by the threats and conniving nature of her mistress, Alma was forced to turn against the children she had once protected. Crying and begging did nothing to appease Granny Ulla, who merely laughed as Alma was forced to hand the children she had once protected into the service of the cruel hag.

In the years that followed, Alma grew spiteful and malicious in her contempt of what her life had become. The nature of the hag she was connected to began to influence her, and she even took the title of Auntie as a twisted way of paying respects to her mistress. As Alma grew more and more useful as a servant, Granny Ulla bestowed on her the art of magic. This way Alma would have an easier time making children trust her, thereby making them easy pickings for the hungry hag.

Despite all that Granny Ulla has given Alma, she has taken far more. Alma detests her hag mistress with a burning passion, and she acts out her feelings of hatred by inflicting pain and sorrow on the people around her. For every person she harms, a little more

of the person she was vanishes, and a little more of the wicked creature that owns her appears.

CURRENT MOTIVES

As the nature of the hag she serves has affected Alma more and more throughout the decades she has been in her service, her motivations have come to align with those of her mistress. Kidnapping and trapping innocent beings and bringing them to locations as specified by her mistress is her main objective. Because of this, she takes care to appear gentle and sweet when approached, her elderly visage only helping her sell this facade.

Alma can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A Healer** - Though her magic is usually used to trick and capture children, she also has skills of healing and restoration. Mostly, these skills are used on her victims as a way to gain their trust, but she might make an exception if properly persuaded.
- **An Informant** - Alma's knowledge of fey culture and especially the nature of hags is substantial. In her role as a caring, grandmotherly character, getting her to disclose this sort of information might be a bit tricky, but the tales and stories she tells of fairies and nymphs might have more truth than fiction to them.
- **A Contact** - Through her many years of service, Alma has become quite familiar with the comings and goings of her mistress, Granny Ulla. Familiar enough that she could set up a meeting with the powerful hag or other creatures that make their dwellings in the Feywild.

LONG TERM MOTIVES

As the kind and caring soul that Alma once was has slowly been chipped away over the years, a hard and wicked character has replaced it. During the time of her service, Alma has watched and learned from her mistress, accepting her role as a slave in silence.

Though she has come to be more powerful because of her mistress, and Auntie Alma's goals are becoming more aligned with those of Granny Ulla, Alma still despises the hag with a powerful fury. Whenever she is able, she searches for ways to break free from the

magical servitude that keeps her bound to the fey creature. She would be willing to do anything to get back her freedom.

FLAWS

Alma trusts no one, even those who are genuinely out to help her escape from her horrible situation. She hardly ever lets anyone into her life, and those she has let in always disappear under mysterious circumstances as Alma's anger got the better of her. She considers those in need to be weak. Auntie Alma's time serving Granny Ulla, preying on the weak and helpless, has made her despise people in need.

If a character appears to be in need of assistance, be it genuine or merely pretending, Alma is likely to offer it to them. She believes that by doing this the other person will be more likely to trust her, thereby making them easier to manipulate later. This can become a great hindrance to her, as she is so confident in her own beguiling abilities that she is likely to fall victim to manipulation herself.

TREASURE

Alma carries with her a *bag of treats*, which is a small leather pouch with sugary candies inside. If one of these candies is eaten, the creature must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the creature begins to feel drowsy after 1d4 minutes has passed and falls unconscious. They remain unconscious for 1 hour, until they take damage, or until someone uses an action to rouse them. The bag generates 1d6 candies every day at dawn and can never carry more than 20 candies at a time. If a candy is removed from the bag, it disappears after 1 hour.

TACTICS

Not being much of a fighter herself, Alma calls on assistance from Granny Ulla's wicked fey servants and attempts to keep her distance from anyone wanting to hurt her. She uses her spells to attempt to flee the battle if she drops below half her hit points.

AUNTIE ALMA

Medium humanoid (half-elf), chaotic evil

Armor Class 14
Hit Points 124 (19d8 + 38)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	17 (+3)

Skills Deception +7, History +5, Persuasion +7
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Common, Elvish, Sylvan
Challenge 4 (2,300 XP)

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

Innate Spellcasting. Alma's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). She can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

At will: *ice knife*, *mending*, *minor illusion*
3/day each: *cause fear*, *cure wounds*, *healing word*, *misty step*
1/day each: *darkness*, *hex*, *invisibility*

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

Protector of the Small. Alma has advantage on Charisma checks made against children.

ACTIONS

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

Calling the Courts (1/Day). Alma magically summons 1d3 quicklings (VGtM, p 157) or one meenlock (VGtM, 170) to her side. The summoned creatures act as allies to Alma and obey her spoken commands. The creatures remain for 1 hour, until Alma dies, or until Alma dismisses them as a bonus action.

Treasure. Alma carries with her a *bag of treats*, which is a small leather pouch with sugary candies inside. If one of these candies is eaten, the creature must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the creature begins to feel drowsy after 1d4 minutes has passed and falls unconscious. They remain unconscious for 1 hour, until they take damage, or until someone uses an action to rouse them. The bag generates 1d6 candies every day at dawn and can never carry more than 20 candies at a time. If a candy is removed from the bag, it disappears after 1 hour.

Tactics. Not being much of a fighter herself, Alma calls on assistance from Granny Ulla's wicked fey servants and attempts to keep her distance from anyone wanting to hurt her. She uses her spells to attempt to flee the battle if she drops below half her hit points.

AZOUF KERR | THE SINGING WOLF

By: D.E. Chaudron

Artist: Dean Spencer

By day, Azouf is a bard with a wicked wit and a broad smile. By night, he lures the unaware into the woods, transforming into a bloodthirsty wolf ready to claim his prey.

BACKGROUND

Azouf was a normal boy with a penchant for music and wandering the woods around his hometown. Often bullied by other children, he was chased out into the forest one moonlit night and attacked by a starving, near-feral werewolf. While the beast succumbed to its weakness soon after, Azouf was taken by his first transformation on the next full moon.

Stewing with rage, he began to lash out at those who had hurt him in the past, although his pranks and tricks quickly took on a violent bent. Azouf always managed to get away clean, though, and grew up to be a charismatic singer, performing for coin in the streets and local taverns.

Unfortunately, Azouf has yet to slake his thirst for vengeance. He continues to stalk villagers who wander out too far into the forests at night, and has even killed those who dare to fight back. These slayings, combined with the eerie but beautiful howls that fill the woods after a death, have started rumors of a "Singing Wolf" in the area. Azouf takes to the name with great amusement, and keeps a tally of how high the bounty on the wolf gets with each passing day.

CURRENT MOTIVES

Azouf knows everyone in town, as well as much of their private business. He's more than happy to share with the curious, as long as there's some compensation involved.

Azouf can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A Source of Information** - Azouf charms secrets out of his fellows with a smile, and can be convinced to pass this information along to interested parties.



- **A Rumormonger** - if there's someone the adventurers want defamed or provoked, Azouf can spin a saga full of mockery in their names.
- **A Quest Giver** - Azouf knows the area around his town well, and has leads on a few interesting spots—or targets—adventurers might want to go after.
- **A Source of Profit** - there is a bounty of significant size for turning in the Singing Wolf to authorities. Adventurers who want to risk burning their bridges with Azouf can capture him and receive the gold.

LONG TERM MOTIVES

While Azouf enjoys his games in the forest, he hates that his wolfish side is more famous than his human one. He seeks any chance to practice his songs before an audience, and stashes away the gold he takes from victims in hope of moving to a much larger city and making his name there.

FLAWS

Azouf is deeply arrogant. After escaping the authorities for months, he believes there is no way anyone will catch him. This makes him prone to taking risks for little gain, including sabotaging the bounty posters for the Singing Wolf plastered around town. His nighttime alibis are getting weaker and weaker, and it's only a matter of time before someone picks up on the pattern.

ALPHA'S FRIEND

Wondrous Item, uncommon

A heavy leather bracelet with a golden wolf's head charm hiding the clasp. The inside of it has a dull shine.

The inside of this bracelet is lined with enchanted silver, preventing any creature cursed with lycanthropy from wearing it.

While wearing this bracelet, you are immune to the curse of lycanthropy.

AZOUF KERR

Medium humanoid (human, shapechanger), chaotic evil

Armor Class 11 (12 in wolf or hybrid form)

Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft. (40 ft. in wolf form)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)

Skills Deception +5, Performance +5, Perception +4, Sleight of Hand +3

Damage Immunities bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons that aren't silvered

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Common (can't speak in wolf form)

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Shapechanger. Azouf can use his action to polymorph into a wolf-humanoid hybrid or into a wolf, or back into its true form, which is humanoid. His statistics, other than his AC, are the same in each form. Any equipment he is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. He reverts to his true form if he dies.

Keen Hearing and Smell. Azouf has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.

Spellcasting. Azouf is a 5th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). He can cast the following bard cantrips at-will:

- Cantrips (at will): friends, mage hand, vicious mockery
- 1st level (4): charm person, heroism, sleep, Tasha's hideous laughter
- 2nd level (3): calm emotions, suggestion
- 3rd level (2): fear, hypnotic pattern

ACTIONS

Multiattack (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only). Azouf makes two attacks: one with his bite and one with his claws or rapier.

Bite (Wolf or Hybrid Form Only). Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a humanoid, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with werewolf lycanthropy.

Claws (Hybrid Form Only). Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 7 (2d4 + 2) slashing damage.

Rapier (Humanoid Form Only). Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

BABAR BUSHBLOSSOM, WIELDER OF MARAFRIGHT

By: Grant Ellis

Artist: Eric Lofgren

Map: Mobral Rox

Babar Bushblossom is a tormented undead soul doomed to carry a malevolent sword, the enchanted blade known as Marafright.

BACKGROUND

Babar Bushblossom is infamously known as the Haunted Guardsman of Pigswillow. He is the sole survivor of the nightmare calamity known as The Grey Passing, an event that occurred two generations prior that wiped out his village.

Babar is not completely aware of the world around him, he only recalls the echoes of a different time. Babar bears the burden of an undeath curse; plagued by intense loneliness and left to wander the ruined remains of his former home. He lacks the ability to understand how the world has changed around him or the plague of undeath that sustains him.

The reason for the curse is the sentient and silent blade he carries. They are named *Marafright*, the Heather Blade, and they are the harbinger of pain and malice. *Marafright* has imprinted themselves onto Babar, sustaining the Haunted Guardsman, and manipulating him to upset the surrounding countryside.

This pair is often found in and around the ruins of Pigswillow, an unkempt ghost town of yesteryear, where *Marafright* compels Babar to misdeeds and woe. The blade is one of three magical components that make up a legendary weapon of vile origins.

CURRENT MOTIVES

Babar has no current motives. He is at the will of *Marafright*.

Babar can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A Source of Information** – Babar has been around for a long time, and while he doesn't excel at



articulating most concepts, Babar is notorious for demonstrating flashes of brilliance and explaining clues. *Marafright* might compel Babar to give misinformation as well, since they might be looking to replace Babar as keeper of the blade.

- **Comedic Relief** – Babar, though made of evil bones, is a great tension breaker. He is tragically gorgeous and beautiful in his own way, especially when he takes the role of knight-errant (a role *Marafright* likes to put him in so they can explore the area). He's like a faithful dog, but a dog that does not know how to behave.
- **A Redemption Quest** – One way to handle Babar is to use him as the subject of a redemption quest and put him to sleep. The true villain is the blade, and, if sundered from the connection that has been made, Babar's soul will be at peace. *Marafright*, too, is not whole, and would like to be combined with their missing components.

LONG TERM MOTIVES

Babar wants to be buried beside his family and enter the afterlife. *Marafright* wants to uncover where their missing components are kept. The sword will not release Babar until they find a suitable replacement. Babar is incapable of parting with the blade on his own terms.

FLAWS

Babar, being a horrifying skeleton, has no friends, no allies, and no loved ones. He has disadvantage on all Charisma checks. He is also overbearing and usually shouts because he has no concept of volume control. The idea of “sneaking” is not part of his makeup. Babar has disadvantage on all Stealth checks.

MARAFRIGHT

Wondrous item, legendary

Marafright is a sentient blade with a Wisdom score of 14, an Intelligence score of 14, and a Charisma score of 16. Their voice is operatic in quality with a hint of pathos and despair. They are the source of Babar’s torment.

Marafright has the properties of a *longsword* +2 and can be used to cast *animate dead*, *darkness*, and *fear* once per day. Marafright believes there are other magical items that will help them reach their final form, but that feeling may not be true.

BABAR BUSHBLOSSOM

Medium undead, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 13 (shield +2)

Hit Points 118

Speed 30 ft.

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

Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned

Damage Vulnerabilities bludgeoning

Damage Immunities poison

Senses darkvision 60 ft.

Languages Common

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Devil's Sight. Magical darkness doesn't impede Babar's darkvision.

Frightful Presence (1/Day) Each creature of Babar’s choice, as directed by *Marafright*, that is within 120 feet of him and aware of him must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened for 1 minute. A creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. If a creature's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the creature is immune to Babar’s Frightful Presence for the next 24 hours.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Babar makes three attacks.

Marafright. **Melee Weapon Attack:** +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. **Hit:** 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage if used with two hands (see *Marafright*).

Darkness Aura (1/Day) A 15-foot radius of magical darkness extends out from *Marafright*, moves with it, and spreads around corners. The darkness lasts as long as Babar maintains concentration, up to 10 minutes (as if concentrating on a spell). Darkvision can't penetrate this darkness, and no natural light can illuminate it. If any of the darkness overlaps with an area of light created by a spell of 2nd level or lower, the spell creating the light is dispelled.

REACTIONS

Parry. Babar adds 3 to his AC against one melee attack that would hit him. To do so, Babar must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

BABAR'S PIGSWILLOW PRISON HOUSE

Babar would never impose himself on any of the vacant homes for fear of disturbing the deceased. However, he has made a small home for himself as warden of the local prison house, since he worked there in life.

ENTRANCE

The front port leads to a small stone room with an old weathered oak desk in disarray. There is a narrow wooden staircase leading up to an office bedroom above. There is a chain hooked to a removable stone disc in the center of the room, that goes down the dark steps to the prison below.

THE TOWER STEPS

The thin, wooden, creaky steps can't stand much weight, as the wood has been badly water damaged by holes and leaks in the tower above. There is a 20 percent chance the planks will crumble and fall apart from their rot when walked across. If the planks fail, characters walking across them must make a **DC 13 Dexterity** saving throw or fall 20 feet and take 2d6 bludgeoning damage.

THE OFFICE TOWER

The office tower contains two beds, two drawers, and a small table. There is an archaic card game sitting at the table that looks as though it was in progress.

The drawers contain Babar's correspondence with his wife, Meredith, in a series of letters back and forth. Babar never sent his final letter, as he fell to the Grey Passing.

THE DUNGEON STEPS

There are roughly fifty steps leading to the circular prison hallway below, where there are four small and cramped gated cells.

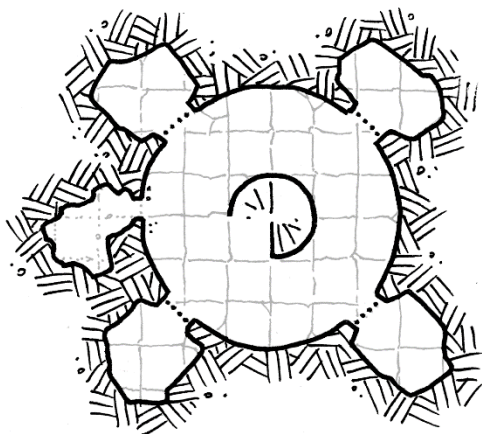
THE CELLS

The prison cells have low ceilings. They are very sparse with straw on the floor, plates, and cups. There are *runes of vulnerability* on the ceiling of each cell. Any creature who enters the room must make a **DC 13 Wisdom** saving throw or be affected by the runes. The vulnerability aura makes creatures *vulnerable to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage*.

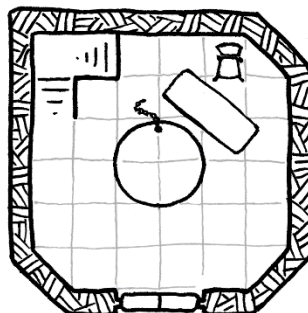
BABAR'S NOOK

Babar has removed stones from the wall and made a small, dirty room for himself. He doesn't need to sleep, but this is where he keeps all the things he likes. There is a small long-haired doll, a wooden sword, a ship in a bottle, a clockwork dragon that no longer works, a painting of a couple, three hairbrushes, and a pair of red slippers.

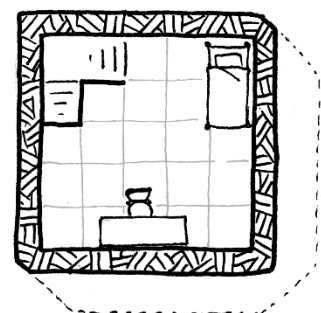
PIGSWILLOW PRISON



Prison Below



Front Room



Tower Office

1 square = 5 feet

BHOK'MAR

By: Oliver Clegg

Artist: Dean Spencer

Map: Erin Harvey

"I often wonder if perhaps I could have changed things. If I had acted differently, if I had been faster. Stronger.

You should know that these are futile questions. There is only the now, and I would free you from it. Die with what honour remains to you."

Bhok'Mar is an ancient death knight astride a hideous, skeletal dragon. Mournful and bitter, Bhok'Mar is consumed by a desire for his own death, wallowing in bitter resentment at his fate.

Bhok'Mar is a selfish and spiteful individual, condemned to eternal life by his god as punishment for audacity. He is stirred to action only by the prospect of release from his curse.

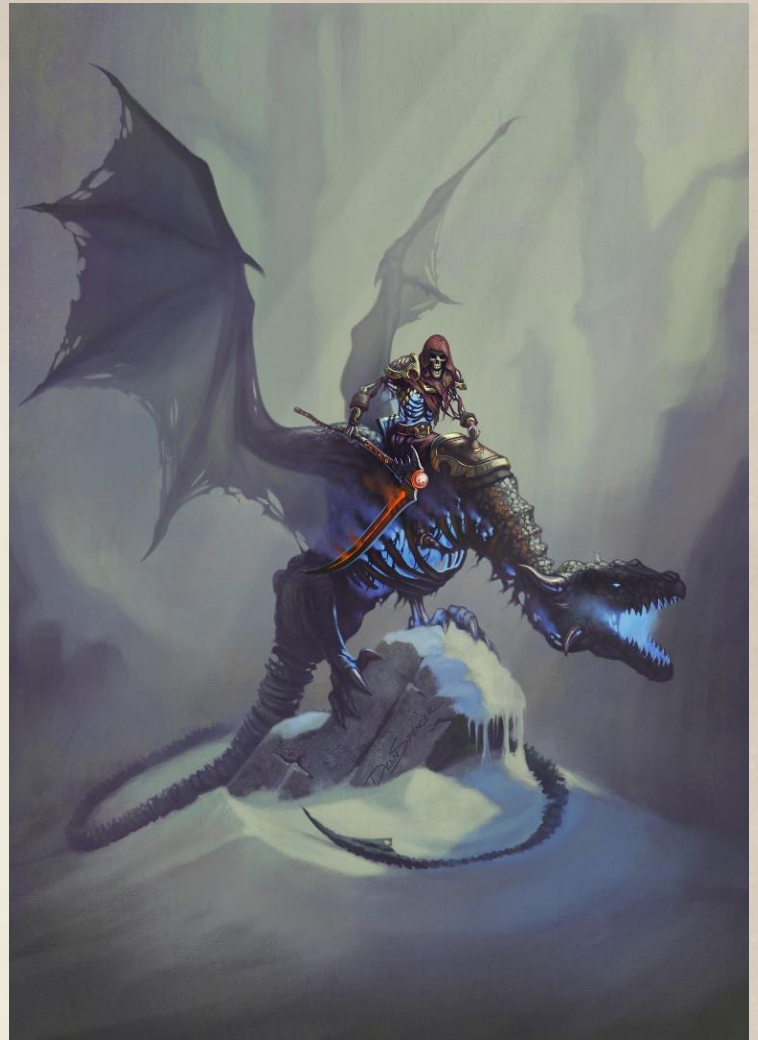
BACKGROUND

Bhok'Mar was not always evil. In his youth, he was called Aumanas, and enjoyed the luxury of Corellon's light, basking in the ever-changing mutability of his lord and master. This was not to last. When the schism fell upon the elven races, and the dark elves were cast down into the earth, Bhok'Mar was fraught with indecision. The sheer scale of the casualties shook him to the core, and he rallied his supporters to face Corellon and demand he show the dark elves clemency.

The god of light and change was not pleased. He cast Aumanas away from his light, hurling him to the Material Plane with the promise that he could only ever return to the Feywild once he knew the same pain Corellon felt at the betrayal of his children. Corellon stripped Aumanas of his name, instead branding him Bhok'Mar or "He Who Knows Not The Cost."

Bhok'Mar found himself on the Material Plane, a still, unmoving, unholy place devoid of the ever-changing magic of the Feywild. It was torture for the elf, who found himself unable to die, and branded in many places with elven runes of betrayal and cowardice.

Eventually, Bhok'Mar's grief turned to grim determination that he would never give in to



Corellon's madness, or Lolth's evil. He mastered the unholy magic of his new form and marshalled the dead to seize a sanctuary from the world in which to contemplate his future. And thus he remained, for centuries. A silent, brooding malice undisturbed by petty humanoid squabbles.

CURRENT MOTIVES

Bhok'Mar seeks a weapon of sufficient power to slay a god, and has spent centuries slowly following up false leads and rumours in the service of such a goal. This weapon might be any powerful artefact of sufficient power, including:

- **The Book of Vile Darkness**— containing a ritual with which to strike down a living god from within their domain.
- **The Ring of Winter** – with the ring in his possession, Bhok'Mar could claim dominion over the Unseelie Fey, leading them in a revolt against the pretender god.

- **The Eye and Hand of Vecna**—Bhok'Mar seeks the long-lost relics of Vecna in an attempt to banish Corellon to the Shadowfell, where the god of light and change will surely wither and die.

LONG TERM MOTIVES

Bhok'Mar seeks a release from his curse, having tried unsuccessfully to end his own existence on several occasions. As the curse is a divine fiat from Corellon himself, Bhok'Mar seeks the impossible: to bring down the elven god from his throne of lies and topple his domain into the dust. Only when Bhok'Mar stands on Corellon's broken astral corpse does he believe he will be free from the life of eternal torment inflicted upon him.

FLAWS

Bhok'Mar is ancient, and patient. He sees little point in paying attention to the lesser races with lifespans shorter than five centuries. He has paid very little attention to human history and considers halflings barely animals.

He hates elves and eladrin with a passion, and they rouse a rarely seen rage in him. He will go out of his way to inflict harm on an elf, purely out of petty spite.

LAIR

Bhok'Mar prefers to lair in the ruins of the elven village of Dawnlight, under a thick canopy. The ruined buildings and shattered transepts are balm to his fractured soul. His presence there has long since tainted the area, developing into a Shadow Crossing—a portal to the Shadowfell—over several centuries. He spends his time meditating and studying in a broken and desecrated temple to the elven gods.

MINIONS

Bhok'Mar is served by a legion of animated elven corpses. He only keeps the corpses of elves and fey for his work, considering other races to be of inferior quality. Some of the corpses have decayed into skeletons. Very occasionally, he animates a wight to perform some particular act of malice or lead a force of minions to raze an elven village to the ground. His most recent conquest is the elf wizard Illevar, who he slew in a vicious magical duel. Illevar perished in the form of a dragon, and Bhok'Mar animated the remains into a **dracolich** to serve him in death.

TREASURE

Bhok'Mar carries the *reaping scythe* a magical scythe that whispers to him of his crimes. He despises it, but finds himself unable to dispose of it. The scythe is bonded to him, and vanishes into mist if he dies, as does his armour. He carries little equipment, as he has no need for such frivolities. The real treasure is his research, which would point directly to one of the artefacts mentioned earlier. Bhok'Mar would hunt a thief of these research materials to the ends of the earth and beyond.

TACTICS

Bhok'Mar relies on his undead slaves to overwhelm lesser threats, going so far as to remain seated until the battle becomes serious. He sends in Illevar next, and waits to see the outcome, all the while assessing the capabilities of his foes. Finally, he strides in with his scythe, laying waste about him with no concern for his wellbeing—he can't die, after all. If defeated, he simply reforms the next day and continues to pursue his agenda. If he defeats his enemies, he enslaves the corpses of elves and burns the rest.

BHOK'MAR

Medium undead (elf), neutral evil

Armor Class 18 (plate)

Hit Points 180 (19d8 + 95)

Speed 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	18 (+4)	20 (+5)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +10, Wisdom +8, Charisma +10

Skills Arcana +9, Perception +8

Senses passive Perception 18

Languages Celestial, Druidic, Elven, Primordial, Sylvan

Challenge 17 (18,000 XP)

Magic Resistance. Bhok'Mar has resistance on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Marshal Undead. Unless Bhok'Mar is incapacitated, he and other undead of his choice within 60 feet of him have advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

Eternal Curse. Bhok'Mar always rises from the dead at dusk at a place of the DM's choosing.

Spellcasting. Bhok'Mar is a 19th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit). He knows the following ranger spells:

1st level (4 slots): *detect evil and good, detect magic, ray of sickness, shield*

2nd level (3 slots): *blindness/deafness*

3rd level (3 slots): *animate dead, bestow curse*

4th level (3 slot): *shadow of moil**

5th level (2 slot): *danse macabre**

* = spell found in XGtM

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Bhok'Mar makes two melee attacks.

Reaping Scythe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 10 ft. three targets within 10 feet of each other. *Hit:* 10 (1d10 + 5) slashing damage plus 18 (4d8) necrotic damage.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Bhok'Mar 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. Bhok'Mar regains spent legendary actions at the start of his turn.

Attack (Costs 2 actions) Bhok'Mar makes a melee attack.

Arise! (Costs 3 actions). Bhok'Mar casts *animate dead*. When cast in this way, the spell's casting time is one action and it does not require concentration.

Move (Costs 1 action). Bhok'Mar moves up to his speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

LAIR ACTIONS

When fighting inside his lair, Bhok'Mar can invoke the ambient magic to take lair actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), he can take one lair action to cause one of the following effects:

- A nearby corpse within 50 feet of Bhok'Mar springs to life as a zombie, making one attack against a creature within range before disintegrating
- Shadowfell despair descends on the lair. All living creatures in the lair must succeed on a DC 17 Charisma saving throw or become charmed by Bhok'mar until the end of their next turn. Whilst charmed in this way, the creature becomes hopeless and dejected.
- Bhok'Mar targets an elf or eladrin within 30 feet of him. That creature must succeed on a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened of Bhok'Mar until the end of their next turn.

LAIR: DAWNLIGHT TOWER

When Bhok'Mar slaughtered the villagers of Dawnlight and torched the earth around it, he left the temple to Corellon standing. He took the bodies of the dead archpriest and his followers from inside, burying them in profane graves under the shadow of the tower. Inside, he defaced the holy murals and defiled the sanctums, animating the scarred and mutilated corpses of the elves to serve his whims.

APPEARANCE

The tower was once a masterful work of elven design and a testament to beauty. Bhok'Mar has used his dark magic to desecrate it, warping the stone into foul hooks and barbs to better reflect his brooding temperament. In places, the stonework has crumbled away entirely, exposing the interior to the elements. The stench of death is discernible for miles around, and the tower is visibly shrouded in gloom.

THE TOWER

The tower is built in a soaring design with vaulted arches. The stone is dark grey, and statues, their faces bludgeoned off, decorate the exterior.

LIGHTING. The tower is not lit at all on the inside. It is also blanketed in a magical gloom, which turns bright light into dim light.

CEILINGS. The ceilings are 15 feet high.

DOORS. Most doors are wooden, and many have rotted away or have been broken in the long-distant past.

DESPAIR. Every time the characters enter a new area, check for Shadowfell Despair (see chapter 2 of the DMG).

A: GRAVES

The lower level of the tower was completely cleared out by Bhok'Mar, and now remains a repository for unhallowed graves. Sometimes he comes down here to stick his sword through an elf corpse out of dark whimsy.

GRAVES. There are eleven graves here, out of which three seem recently dug. The gravestones are marked in Elvish with the words for "blood traitor," "vermin" and other rather nasty epithets. The graves each contain an elven **ghast** (CR 2; MM, p 148), which remain quiet unless the graves are disturbed.

COFFINS. These two broken coffins are where Bhok'Mar's henchmen return to rest when they are not needed. The two **wights** (CR 3; MM, p 300) keep an eye for intruders, and pretend to be corpses if discovered, unless they have no other choice.

A creature succeeding on a **DC 13 Wisdom (Survival)** check notices that the earth looks very disturbed around the graves, as if someone digs them up frequently.

B: FANE OF HERESY

This small central chamber was once a place of peace, worship, and healing. Now, burned and shattered frescoes of the elven pantheon decorate the walls. Slash marks show where Bhok'Mar has driven his blade through the faces of his gods in a rage.

ARCH OF CHANGE. This holy relic of Corellon has resisted all of Bhok'Mar's attempts to remove or defile it. Walking through the arch changes something cosmetic about the creature, such as their hair or eye colour, or the shade of their clothes.

Characters with a connection to the Feywild who pass through this room feel a deep sense of loss and grief emanating from the walls.

C: ARMOURY

Bhok'Mar uses this room to experiment with his magical weapons, hoping to develop or reverse engineer a weapon powerful enough to slay a god. The floor is littered with the shattered remains of hundreds of elven artefacts, their magic spent. The sacrilege that has been committed here against each one of these priceless artefacts is unthinkable.

Darkblade. Bhok'Mar's current vanity project, the shattered blade of an elven shortsword, lies on the workbench. This item is a *vorpal shortsword* (DMG, p 209), but is cursed. A character who attunes to the blade gains the personality trait "I must slay the living," which overrides conflicting traits.

D: SPARE PARTS

This room is where Bhok'Mar keeps the remains of adventurers, explorers, and anyone else foolish enough to pay him a visit.

FIREPLACE. This is always lit and is littered with charred bones. Bhok'Mar throws corpses here to have the flesh burned off. A **fire elemental** (CR 5; MM, p 125) has found employment here and reacts negatively to being disturbed.

CRATES. This is how Bhok'Mar stores organic remains for later use. He hasn't been here recently, and one of the crates has rotted open in the years he's taken to rise from his chair.

E: HEARTSHOME

This level of the tower was once a meeting hall and place of worship. Bhok'Mar has preserved it exactly as he left it after his slaughter through the place, as it tickles his bleak sense of humour. The room is covered with vicious bloodstains faded to a dark brown from age. The room is inhabited by three **ghosts** (CR 4; MM, p 147) who eternally rage at their deaths, unable to pass on to the next life. Overturned tables and broken chairs covered in dried-out offal add to the grisly tableau.

F: THRONE ROOM

This is the room where Bhok'Mar sits the vast majority of the time, brooding on his fate. Unless he has very specific business elsewhere, he is sat here in his throne of bone. Sometimes years or decades pass with no other matters to attend to, and he sits here gathering dust.

THRONE. The throne has no magical powers. It is just a throne made of elf bones. Some people like that kind of thing.

WHISPERS. Lurking in the corners of the room, twelve **shadows** (CR ½; MM, p 269) of elven dead linger, whispering foul things to Bhok'Mar and reminding him of his failures. These shadows cannot be destroyed as long as Bhok'Mar is alive, and are a divine curse from

Corellon that, so far, the death knight has been unable to shake.

G: ILLEVAR'S ROOST

This is the roof of the tower, and is a weathered, desolate place. The light of the sun is dimmed here. Illevar the **adult blue dracolich** (CR 17; MM, p 84) rests here, enchanted and subservient to Bhok'Mar's will. Illevar can see into the forest from here, and screeches a warning to Bhok'Mar if strangers approach. Illevar has standing orders to descend and engage strangers from a distance, annihilating them if possible. If, by some chance, characters are facing Bhok'Mar in area F without yet having dealt with Illevar, there is a chance that the dracolich might come crashing through the roof from above to join the fray.

H: ENCHANTER'S ENCLAVE

This set of quarters once belonged to the clergy of the temple, and they would use it to rest after a day of worship. Bhok'Mar couldn't abide it, as he is convinced it is riddled with their pious stench. Instead, he ignored it, and hasn't been down there since taking over the tower. His benign neglect has allowed a rather pernicious squatter to seep over from the Shadowfell.

BALHANNOTH. The **balhannoth** (CR 11; MTof, p 119) lurks in the dark here, and uses its illusions to convince prey to enter, wafting the smell of fresh bread upstairs. It enchants the room to look like spacious, well-lit, and comfortable quarters. It attacks and devours anyone who falls for the trap.

SHADOW CROSSING. This place lies close to the Shadowfell, and a careless traveler could (at the DM's discretion) slip between realms into the dark mirror of the Material Plane without even realizing it.

BRUDEN GRIMHAMMER, DOOM OF THE DROW

By: Tony Petrecca

Artist: Dean Spencer

A fallen paladin once proudly serving Moradin, Bruden Grimhammer will let nothing get in the way of his quest to cleanse the world of drow.

BACKGROUND

Hailing from Grimstone, a small mining community west of Citadel Felbarr, Bruden Grimhammer served as commander of the Grimstone Guard, until catastrophe struck.

House Golissa, a lesser drow house driven from their home by demonic invasion, set upon Grimstone with a fury, determined to seize it for themselves. The Grimhammer Guard was overwhelmed, and in the chaos of battle Bruden fell into a deep crevasse. His consciousness failing him, he heard the cries of friend and family above as they were slain. One by one their bodies were tossed unceremoniously into the same crevasse, and Bruden wept.

His body was broken, his mind shattered, but death's release evaded him. For days he lay there, fading in and out of consciousness, as more bodies were tossed upon him. Soon, though, something ancient reached out to him, a formless spirit of vengeance seeping into his mind from the darkness and death. It brought to him horrible visions of the suffering his clan had endured, and brutally violent dreams of retribution. And those dreams awoke in him a seething rage.

Somehow, he rose, and as he did he felt his rage burn through his very flesh. Casting aside his armor, he found eldritch runes etched upon his skin, and felt an unspeakable power emanating from them. Bruden picked up his hammer, scaled the walls of the crevasse, and set upon the unsuspecting drow.

To this day Bruden doesn't know what it is that raised him from near death, and doesn't understand the nature of the runic etchings on his flesh. What he does know is unfettered hatred for the drow who took everything from him.



CURRENT MOTIVES

Bruden spends his days patrolling the Underdark, seeking to slay any remnants of House Golissa.

Bruden can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **An Ally** – Bruden is not at all above alliances when mutual goals align. However, adventurers entangled with the drow may find an ally of such single-minded purpose lacks certain subtleties that can be useful when squaring off against the dark elves.
- **An Underdark Guide** – Bruden has spent years prowling the Underdark, and has contacts in most of its major cities. Heroes in need of a guide could do far worse than Bruden as a travelling companion, so long as they don't mind the inevitable violence that occurs should the travelers stumble upon a drow caravan.
- **A Villain** – Bruden is a powerful adversary with a single-minded purpose. Characters who are entangled with drow interests could find themselves at odds with a powerful foe, and woe be it to any group of adventurers with drow in their ranks!

LONG TERM MOTIVES

Hatred of all things drow courses through Bruden’s being, driving all that he does. Should Bruden ever get the opportunity, he would relish the chance to raise an army of like-minded creatures, bring down the great houses of Menzoberranzan, and march into the Demonweb Pits to face Lolth herself!

FLAWS

An ancient, unnamed eldritch evil has infiltrated Bruden’s mind, body, and soul, twisting his once caring and protective personality to one filled with anger and aggression. He has channeled this rage toward the drow, but it fills all aspects of his life. Bruden is usually sullen and brooding, but he is quick to anger and holds a long grudge. As such, he is without any true friends or trusted allies.

BRUDEN GRIMHAMMER

Medium humanoid (dwarf), neutral evil

Armor Class 18 (runic armor)

Hit Points 153 (18d8 + 72)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Wis +6, Cha +6

Skills Athletics +8, Intimidation +6, Survival +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Dwarvish, Undercommon

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Spellcasting. Bruden is a 10th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). Bruden has the following paladin spells prepared:

1st level (4 slots): *command*, *protection from evil and good*, *searing smite*

2nd level (3 slots): *branding smite*, *protection from poison*

3rd level (2 slots): *daylight*, *dispel magic*

Dreadful Runes (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). The runes etched upon Bruden’s flesh glow with a burning light. Each enemy within 30 feet of Bruden must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. If a frightened target ends its turn more than 30 feet away from Bruden, the target can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Runic Armor. The eldritch runes etched into Bruden’s flesh provide protection from physical attacks. Bruden’s AC is 16.

Runic Regeneration. Bruden regains 10 hit points at the start of his turn if he has at least 1 hit point.

Vengeful Vow (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). Bruden gains advantage on attack rolls against one creature of his choice for 1 minute or until it drops to 0 hit points or falls unconscious.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Bruden makes three attacks with Grimdeath, his *dwarven thrower* warhammer.

Grimdeath – Dwarven Thrower. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d8 + 7) bludgeoning damage if used to make a melee attack or 11 (1d8 + 7) bludgeoning damage plus 4 (1d8) damage if used to make a ranged attack or 12 (1d10 + 7) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.

THE COLLECTOR

By: Alan Tucker

Artist: Hopsy; Daniel Comerci

Map: Elven Tower

Festus Silverhammer firmly believes the pen is mightier than the sword. It can help, however, to have powerful friends.

BACKGROUND

Born prematurely, Festus spent much of his childhood fighting off sicknesses brought on as a result of his underdeveloped lungs. Perseverance and healing magic eventually cured his ailments, but because he lagged behind the other children physically, his interests turned to books and imagination. He became fascinated by adventure stories and loved to read and create fantastical tales of swordplay and magic. His adoration of the written word meant he never fully fit in with his small, silver-loving dwarven clan, located in the Trielta Hills.

As soon as he was able, Festus left his clan and journeyed west, toward the coast. Like a moth drawn to a flame, he eventually found his way to Candlekeep. Not possessing the required entrance tithe of a unique book, Festus took the next several days to pen an original work from his imagination. One of the monks was taken by Festus's story and determination and allowed him entrance to Faerûn's most famous and extensive library. The allotted tenday went by in a flash for Festus and he was devastated when the monks turned him out—seemingly before he had even begun to read and absorb what the library had to offer. Bitterness and resentment forged a steel resolve within Festus to build a collection of books which would one day rival that of Candlekeep itself.

Festus turned to writing and his talents landed him a publisher in Waterdeep. His exciting tales of magical beasts and treasure-seeking adventurers soon gained him fame and fortune. While the latter enabled him to further his goals, the former proved almost equally obstructive. Seeking anonymity, he settled in a smaller town along the Sword Coast and became known to the locals as simply, the Collector.

His wealth enabled him to buy a modest mansion and fill it with his beloved books. Unfortunately, Festus's obsession has left him constantly teetering on the edge of bankruptcy, and he has lately turned to



more sinister means of obtaining funds to augment his vast collection.

CURRENT MOTIVES

Festus ran low on story ideas and began interviewing adventuring parties who happened through town. He offers a fine meal in exchange for their story. Not satisfied, however, with merely selling their stories as his own, he turned to robbing—and even murdering—the glory-seekers via an **invisible stalker** (CR 6; MM, p 192).

Festus's strategy is as follows:

- **Bribery** – Festus makes his "adoration" of adventurers well known within the town and surrounding area and pays handsomely for any information about newcomers and passersby. The local innkeeper stays in constant contact with him regarding any new clientele.
- **Flattery** – Adventurers who accept an invitation to dine with Festus are showered with fine food, wine, and praise for their

exploits. Festus will even offer to pay for stories of their deeds of daring-do.

- **Information** – Knowledge is key. While interviewing a party, Festus seeks to learn each of their roles, as well as individual strengths and weaknesses in order to determine the best targets for his extraplanar assassin. He is also keen to determine their relative wealth and what valuables they may possess.
- **The Stalker** – Festus has a magic item which enables him to summon one (or more, for higher level parties, if the DM desires) **invisible stalker**. He uses this powerful being to rob and often murder adventuring parties after finding out all he can about them.
- **The Constable** – If desired, the DM can have a working relationship between Festus and the Constable (detailed elsewhere in this book).

LONG TERM MOTIVES

Festus holds a deep resentment of Candlekeep and its practice of hoarding books and knowledge. While he is feverishly accumulating his own collection, he is also seeking any information he can about Candlekeep's methods and defenses. His ultimate goal would be to overthrow the monks and make the great library his own.

FLAWS

Books are everything to Festus. Anyone who would deface or destroy a work of literature instantly gains mortal enemy status with the reclusive dwarf. His rage is blind and unrelenting in light of such offense.

FESTUS SILVERHAMMER

Medium humanoid (dwarf), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 18 (5d8 - 5)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)

Skills Arcana +6, History +6, Persuasion +4

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Dwarven, Elvish, Gnomish

Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

ACTIONS

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

RING OF THE STALKER

Ring, legendary (requires attunement)

This delicate ring, made of silver carved into tiny swirls, is slightly cold to the touch.

While attuned to this ring, you can summon an invisible stalker by performing a simple ritual, which takes 1 minute. The stalker is bound to you as its summoner and will perform a task as described in the *Monster Manual*. You can only have one invisible stalker active at any time. If you summon a second while one is still attempting to perform a task, the first will immediately return to the Elemental Plane of Air.

After using this property, you cannot use it again until you finish a long rest.



THE COLLECTOR'S MANSION

Nearly every wall is lined with overstuffed bookshelves in this stone and brick building. The air smells of old parchment and lavender.

TABLE OF RANDOM BOOKS

D20	Title
1	<i>The Three Sons of Alagondar</i> , by Festus Silverhammer
2	<i>Three Fathoms Under the Sea of Swords</i> , by Juli Vernai
3	<i>King Brawnnavil's Mines</i> , by H'Annal Sallow
4	<i>Call of the Wildshape</i> , by Jacques Waterdeep
5	<i>The Crimson Carnation</i> , by Festus Silverhammer
6	<i>Greg of the Girallon</i> , by Ted Wheat Digs
7	<i>Captain Kree</i> , by Rolf Sabaton
8	<i>The Mark of Fox at Twilight</i> , by Aric d'Sky
9	<i>Khelben the Conquerer</i> , by Festus Silverhammer
10	<i>Lieutenant Deudermont</i> , by B. T. Ranger
11	<i>The Bows of Cormyr</i> , by Elistan Maklan
12	<i>Chult</i> , by Mik Krickton
13	<i>The Death of King Thardresk</i> , by Dom Mallay
14	<i>The Sequestering Earth</i> , by Pol Plates
15	<i>The Moonshae Family Niles</i> , by Jon Wise
16	<i>The Duke of Silverymoon</i> , by Festus Silverhammer
17	<i>Realm of the Stars</i> , by Geoff Sunbard
18	<i>Across Faerûn in Eighty Hours</i> , by K. Arunsun
19	<i>Mutiny on the Enchanter</i> , by Festus Silverhammer
20	<i>Journey to the Center of Toril</i> , by Festus Silverhammer

FIRST FLOOR:

ROOM 1: This grand entry is tiled with a light-colored marble and thin columns support a balcony above. A 10-foot-wide staircase leads to the second floor. Several doors lead out of the chamber and the owner's love of literature is evident everywhere.

ROOM 2: A stone fireplace, with a low fire, nearly spent to embers, sits on the wall opposite the double-door entry to this room. A pair of comfortable chairs face the hearth and more bookshelves stand against the north and south walls.

ROOM 3: This room appears to be used for small meetings, but is also a repository for more books.

ROOM 4: A massive pipe organ, covered with a thick layer of dust, nearly fills the far wall of this room. Bookshelves appear to have been recently installed along the south wall and are only partially full. Festus hasn't had the time or inclination to dismantle the organ and sell it or the large standing horn in the northeast corner. His growing collection will, however, soon demand the space.

A treasure stash, left there by the original owner, is hidden behind the pipe organ. The hidden compartment is opened by successfully playing the 'key' tune on the organ. A collection of dusty sheet music rests on the organ, with titles of *Sunny Day*, *Glory Dance*, *Save for a Rainy Day*, and *A Tear for My Love*. Playing the tune 'Save for a Rainy Day' opens the hidden compartment, revealing the treasure – a collection of ten gold rings valued at 50 gp each.

ROOM 5: Here you find a fully stocked, gourmet kitchen. Broth simmers in a large pot on the stove and the smell of baking bread emanates from the oven. This room and Room 7 are the most likely places to encounter members of Festus's house staff. They are human **commoners (CR 0; MM, p 344)** and consist of a cook and two maids whose main duty is to dust the bookshelves. They are well paid by Festus, but hold no extraordinary loyalty to him. They are unaware of his career as an author and only consider him to be a wealthy eccentric. The cook's name is Mabel and the two maids are Gerty and Irene.

ROOM 6: A dark stairway here leads down to a chilled cellar.

ROOM 7: Three twin beds crowd this room along with a modest wardrobe. Festus's three servants sleep here when they are not performing their household duties.

Room 8: This is the privy for the main floor. It contains two outhouse-style toilets and a table holding a large water basin, as well as a soap dish and stack of hand towels.

Room 9: The main dining area is well-appointed and relatively free of books in comparison to the rest of the house. The expansive, varnished walnut table seats up to twelve and the room is lit warmly by brass sconces mounted every five feet along each wall.

SECOND FLOOR:

Room 10: A balcony circles the main entry of the first floor. Brass wall sconces illuminate the area.

Room 11: Festus's bed chamber is everything you would expect from a reclusive bookworm. The furnishings are expensive in construction, but barely more than functional esthetically. Each nightstand contains a reading lantern and a stack of books. The two tables on either side of the room also hold multiple stacks of tomes. If the tomes are searched, there is a 25% chance the characters find one of the below magical tomes. Otherwise, they find a mundane tome from the included **Table of Random Books**.

Tome of Clear Thought (DMG, p 208)

Tome of Leadership and Influence (DMG, p 208)

Tome of the Stilled Tongue (DMG, p 208)

A glass door in the north wall is covered with heavy curtains. Single doors lead out from either side of the room.

Room 12: This room serves as Festus's private bath. Two large wardrobes stand along the south wall, opposite the privies. Even here, you see a stray book or two.

Room 13: The glass door leads out to a large balcony overlooking the edge of the modest town Festus has chosen to call home.

Room 14: Festus's office is off limits to the household staff and it shows. A layer of dust coats much of the room except for furniture and items that have seen recent use, like the desk and chair. Festus's

latest work in progress is strewn about the desktop: a story of a band of adventurers who delved deep into a haunted crypt. Under the small table in the northeastern corner is a locked chest (**DC 22 Dexterity check with thieves' tools required to open**) containing 516 gp, 753 sp, and a magic item looted from Festus's most recent victims (to be determined by the DM). The coins are portioned into pouches tied with ribbons and labeled with the names of various townsfolk, such as the innkeeper and the Constable.

Room 15: The most important room in the mansion—at least as far as Festus is concerned—the library is completely free of dust and smells strongly of parchment and binding glue. Books are everywhere. Stacks of them crowd the floor beside the overflowing shelves. How anyone would find a particular volume in the clutter is a mystery.

Room 16: This is the bedroom of Lom and Ert, Festus's personal bodyguards. He rescued the two hobgoblins as children not long after his visit to Candlekeep. Festus has raised and trained them as his protectors, and they are fiercely loyal to the eccentric dwarf. They love dice games and the table in the room has a number of dice scattered across its surface. The DM can use stats for **hobgoblin captains** (CR 3; MM, p 186), or **warlords** (CR 6; MM, p 187), depending on the party's level. A search of the room reveals small stashes of coins and a stray weapon or two, but nothing else of value.

Room 17: This space is currently being used for storage of dry goods and a number of furniture items from the previous owners of the mansion that Festus hasn't got around to selling yet. There aren't many buyers for such things locally, so it will require a trip to Baldur's Gate or Waterdeep to fetch a reasonable price for them.

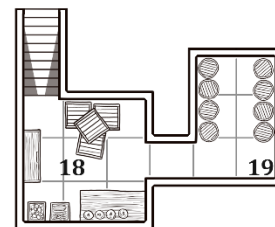
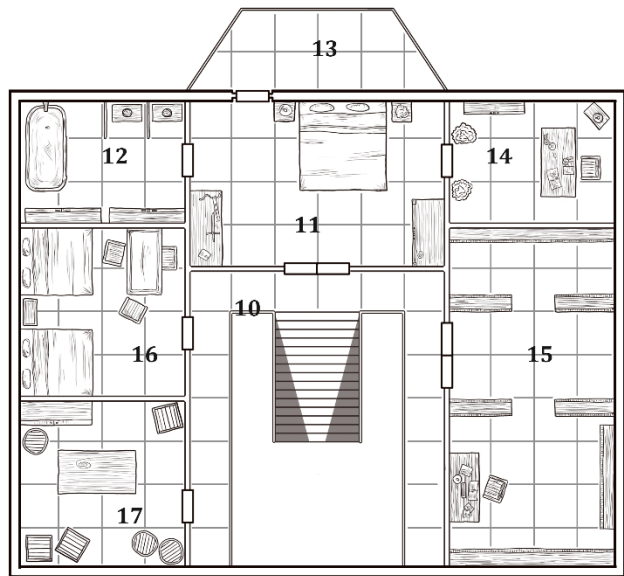
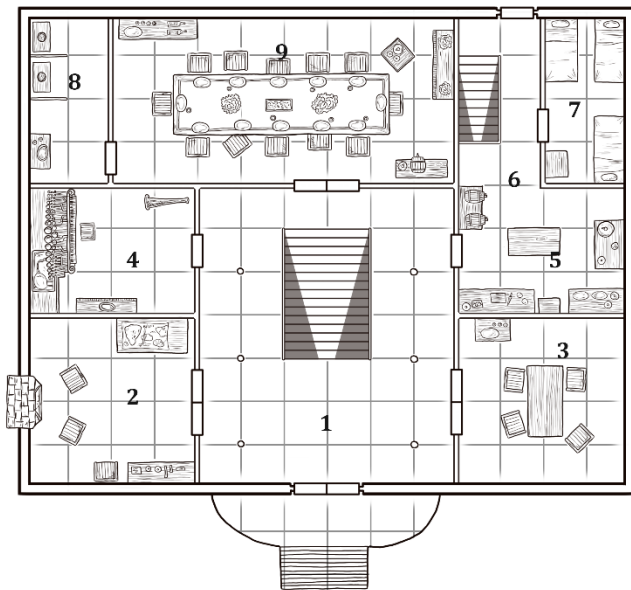
Rooms 18 & 19: The cellar contains foodstuffs that need to be kept chilled and a number of casks of ale and wine.

TACTICS FOR A SCUFFLE

Festus is no fighter. He uses the dagger at his hip as a letter opener more often than not. Lom and Ert are his main defense and he won't hesitate to sacrifice them

as a means of escape. If he can find time, Festus summons another invisible stalker to join the fray if angry adventurers enter the mansion, but Festus cuts and runs at the first opportunity. If the DM chooses to have the Constable as Festus's ally in town, he first seeks out his aid. Otherwise, Festus does his best to disappear and hire help to reclaim his home, and take revenge on the offending party.

The Collector's Mansion



1 Square = 5 ft.

THE CONSTABLE

By: Alan Tucker

Artist: Rick Hershey; Daniel Comerci

Map: Chris Bisette

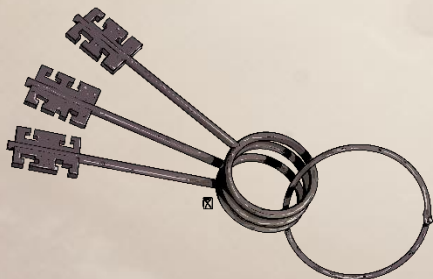
Zeb Ashbarrow is a man of the peace... but don't cross him.

BACKGROUND

Zeb began his life as the dutiful son of a farmer in the western regions of the Fields of the Dead, northeast of Baldur's Gate. One early spring day, when Zeb was in his late teens, he heard the clang of metal while plowing a new field in preparation for the year's planting. Bending down and peering into the overturned earth, Zeb spied the hilt of a sword, still clutched in a skeletal hand. Thinking he might be able to make some extra coin for his family, he reached out to grasp the weapon, only to have a powerful presence invade his mind.

The cursed blade announced itself as "Sammak" and it demanded blood, lives. Zeb fought, but couldn't overcome the strength of the sword in his mind. He did, however, gain a modicum of control over its thirst. Sammak required "Nine times ninety-nine souls," for the curse to be lifted. Zeb accepted his fate, but resolved to only feed those who'd broken the law to the weapon. Their bargain uneasily struck, Sammak vanished within Zeb, to be called upon whenever he had need of the cold, magical steel.

Zeb left home that summer and eventually found his way to the coast and a small town there in need of some law enforcement. He slew three men who had stolen a strongbox from the local inn and tried to have their way with one of the barmaids. The town asked him to stay and he's been their Constable ever since. Zeb's brand of justice is severe, but, until recently, the townsfolk have never regretted their choice and the area has enjoyed many years of peace.



Zeb has made mistakes over the decades—some he knows of and some he doesn't—and they haunt him, but now he is nearing the end of the fateful number and both Zeb and Sammak are anxious. Zeb wants to live out his few remaining years free of his lifelong curse. The sword, however, is fearful for its existence. If Zeb manages to fulfill the number before he dies, Sammak's essence will leave the sword along with Zeb's curse. As a result, Sammak has done everything it can to cause Zeb to be reckless in battle, and in other ways.

If you are using the Collector in conjunction with the Constable, Festus pays Zeb for any information regarding newcomers to the town and also tips Zeb to unusual activity regarding adventurers that Festus comes in contact with. Often, they have broken the law in some fashion and Zeb has occasionally meted his harsh justice and crawled closer to his ultimate goal. As Zeb has grown more severe, some of the townsfolk are whispering questions about the Constable's fitness.

CURRENT MOTIVES

Zeb is so close to breaking the curse, he has become ultra-vigilant regarding the law in the town. He has controlled himself and the weapon enough not to deliver lethal force for minor infractions in the past, but that control is wavering as he gets closer to the end.

Zeb's strategy is as follows:

- **Restless** – Zeb often patrols the town, even late at night, looking for crime to punish. He also uses this as an excuse to stay away from the jail and the temptation to end the lives of the few who are incarcerated for minor infractions, such as minor bar fights.
- **Unwavering** – Talk is cheap and Zeb doesn't change his mind easily once it's made. If his course of action is clear, he acts immediately and with conviction.
- **Self-Reliant** – Because of his situation, Zeb has isolated himself and rarely engages in social interactions. He has four deputies, who mostly mind the prison, but they have no idea who Zeb is as a person nor the burden he carries.
- **Divide and Conquer** – Zeb has become more reckless, but still understands odds. He won't foolishly confront a group by himself. Instead, he will observe and wait for an opportunity to engage an individual, or smaller group, in order to see justice done.

LONG TERM MOTIVES

Zeb wants to live out what life he has left in peace, free from the curse. He is afraid for his soul, but his focus has wavered as the body count has risen.

FLAWS

Zeb is losing control of Sammak and has grown more bloodthirsty during combat.

He also has morbidly kept a record of his fateful tally: he has a chest in the depths of the jail with the right index finger of all the sword's victims. It is nearly full of the grisly trophies.

ZEB ASHBARROW

Medium humanoid (human), lawful neutral

Armor Class 15 (*chain shirt*)

Hit Points 104 (19d8 + 19)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Str +4, Dex +5, Cha +6

Skills Athletics +4, Persuasion +6, Stealth +5, Survival +3

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Reckless. Zeb can choose to attack recklessly on his turn, gaining advantage on his attack rolls. This also means attack rolls against him have advantage until his next turn.

Summoned Weapon. Sammak requires no scabbard and Zeb appears unarmed unless he is in combat. As an action, Zeb can call forth the blade and it instantly appears in his right hand.

Spellcasting. Zeb is a 9th-level spellcaster. His spell casting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). He regains his expended spell slots when finishing a short or long rest and knows the following warlock spells:

Cantrips: (at will) *booming blade*, *green-flame blade*, *lightning lure*, *thunderclap*

1st-5th level: (2 5th-level slots) *armor of Agathys*, *counterspell*, *hex*, *shadow of moil*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Zeb makes three attacks with his longsword (Sammak).

Sammak. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage plus 5 (2d4) psychic damage or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage plus 5 (2d4) psychic damage if used with two hands.

REACTION

Parry. Zeb adds 3 to his AC against one melee attack that would hit him. To do so, he must see the attacker and be wielding Sammak.

SAMMAK, BLADE OF THE RECKLESS

Weapon (longsword), legendary (requires attunement)

Sammak's history is long forgotten to all but the sword itself. Most scholars believe, however, the blade originated in the Nine Hells as the result of a devilish deal gone horribly awry. Because of the weapon's overwhelming thirst for blood and vengeance, most who wield it don't live long.

Picking up this cursed blade instantly attunes you to it. You gain a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon as well as dealing an additional 2d4 psychic damage on a successful hit. You also gain the ability to parry a strike that would normally hit you. Using your reaction, once per turn, you may add 3 to your AC against one melee attack that would hit you. You must be able to see the attacker in order to use this ability.

Sammak also allows you to cast a number of warlock cantrips: *booming blade*, *green-flame blade*, *lightning lure*, and *thunderclap*, as if you were 1st-level, unless you already can cast them at a higher level.

Curse. This sword is possessed by a spirit whose bloodlust ultimately got the better of them in a profound way. Grasping the weapon extends the curse to you. Sammak becomes part of you, as if you were a Pact of the Blade warlock. You may summon the weapon as an action, and you cannot wield any other melee weapon while in possession of this blade. Sammak always appears as a long sword and you are considered proficient while wielding it. The curse can only be broken by taking nine times ninety-nine lives (sentient beings) or a *wish* spell. Every time you wield the sword in combat, you must make a DC 15 Charisma saving throw. On failure, all your attacks are made recklessly, giving you advantage on attack rolls, but also giving advantage to your opponents' attacks.

If you have not taken a life in 7 days while in possession of Sammak, you must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw each time you finish a short or long rest or immediately attack the creature nearest you until one of you is incapacitated.



THE CONSTABLE'S JAILHOUSE

This prison serves a wide area around the town where the Constable resides, yet it seems remarkably barren and underused for such a population.

GROUND FLOOR

The main floor consists of a number of cells, as well as a holding area for prisoners who have not been processed, a check-in room for visitors, and a common room for guards and deputies who are not on duty. A small room in the back contains locked chests (**DC 18 Dexterity check with thieves' tools to unlock**) for the storage of inmates' valuables. All doors with a black dot are considered locked (DC 16 Dexterity check with thieves' tools to unlock) and the cells are all open except those which are occupied (DC 20 Dexterity check with thieves' tools to unlock). All areas are well-kept and clean.

At least two deputies are in attendance at any time. You can use either **guards** (CR 1/8; MM, p 347) or **veterans** (CR 3; MM, p 350), depending on the level of your party, as stats for these deputies. The Constable himself is rarely at the jailhouse, but when he is, he usually keeps to himself in the Tower Office.

There is one prisoner in the first cell on the western side of the hallway. He is a half-elf in his late teens named, **Erias Duskton** (use an unarmed **bandit**, CR 1/8; MM, p 342 for stats). He has close-cropped light brown hair and brown eyes and was caught stealing some mundane items from the local general store. Erias is serving a sentence of two tendays for a first offense, but seems unusually nervous for someone who is simply waiting out their time. Erias has heard rumors of the Constable's swift and harsh justice and fears for his life despite his mild sentencing. If questioned alone, he whispers a rumor that the Constable has gone mad and kills anyone who violates the law. If any deputies are present, Erias declines to talk.

If the deputies are asked about the Constable's behavior, they deflect, saying that he is a strong man of the law and the innocent have nothing to fear from him. Yes, he is aloof, but has always treated them fairly and serious crimes are few and far between in the area because of his leadership over the years.

TOWER OFFICE

Zeb lives and works in this office area upstairs from the main floor of the jail. A sturdy desk and chair reside in one corner, while a meager cot sits opposite the door. Zeb has a few personal items here, but nothing of real value. His lifelong lack of social attachments has extended to his material possessions as well. There is a locked drawer in the desk (DC 15 Dexterity check with thieves' tools to unlock), which contains two pouches of coins. One holds 38 gp and 19 sp and is Zeb's personal money, while the other has 25 pp and 94 gp, which he uses for expenses and paying the deputies.

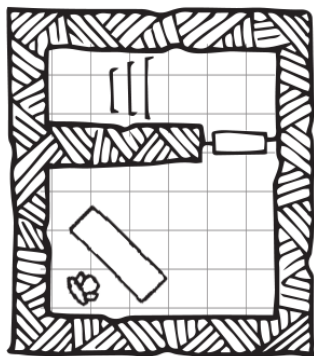
BASEMENT

The lower level of this jailhouse has a chill from its underground nature as well as lack of use. The area is free of debris and vermin, but a fine layer of dust coats most of the floors and walls. A successful **DC 16 Wisdom (Perception)** check reveals a faint path of footsteps leading to the very last cell in the row. This is where Zeb keeps his locked (DC 19 Dexterity check with thieves' tools to unlock) chest of trophy fingers, recording his kills since acquiring the cursed blade, Sammak. The bulky chest is nearly full of the morbid tokens, which become more mummified the farther down one investigates. All are humanoid, but many are of monstrous origin—orc, hobgoblin, and the like.

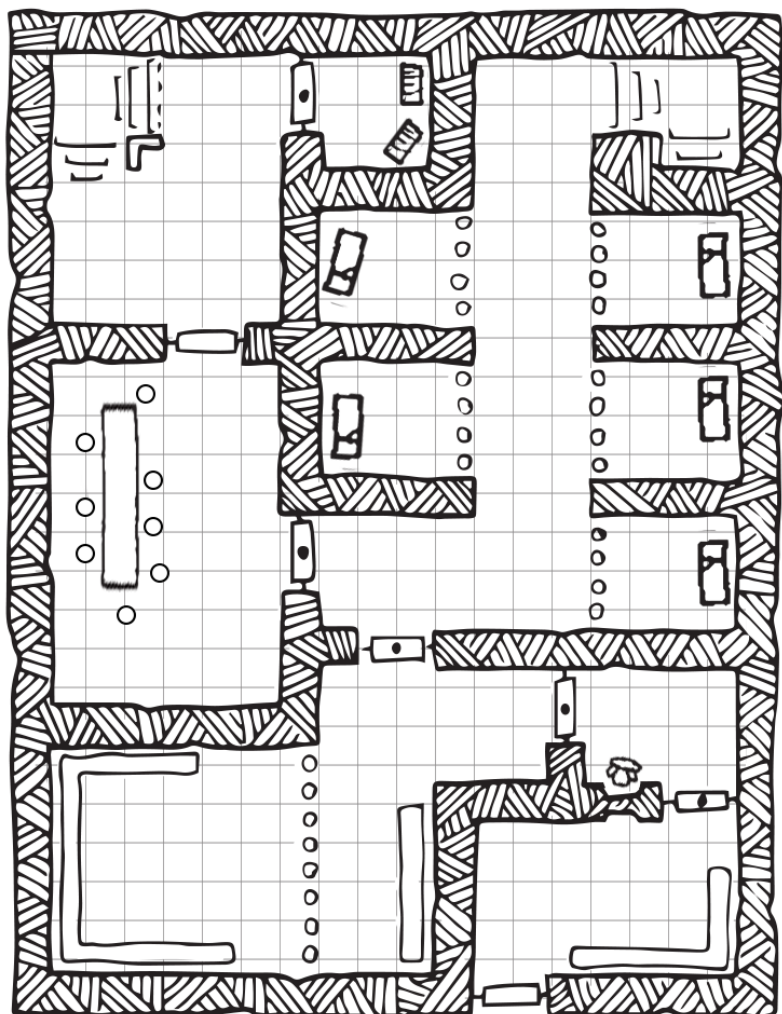
A successful **DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation)** check of the other cells reveals a few blood stains of varying age, but the cells themselves appear otherwise unremarkable and little-used.

THE CONSTABLE'S JAILHOUSE

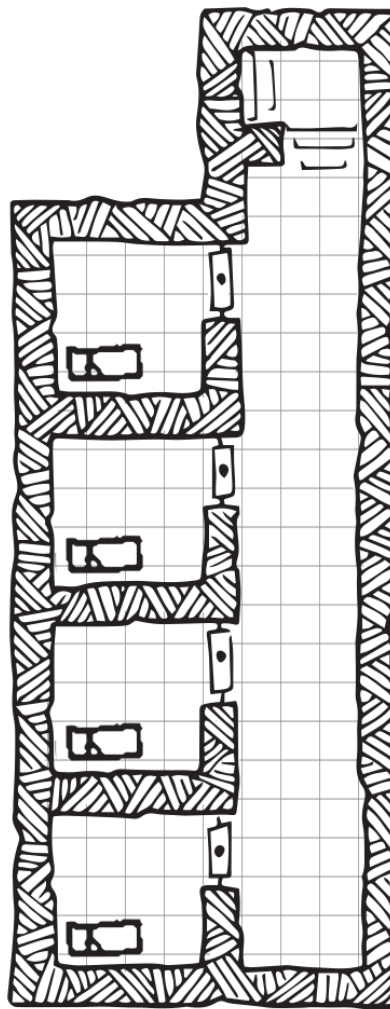
1 square = 5 feet



Tower Office



Ground Level



Basement

DARKDAGGER DERVA

By: Alex Clippinger

Artist: Forrest Imel; Rick Hershey

Derva Wheeler always had a knack for getting herself into trouble; her parents were woken up in the middle of the night by a firm knock on the door on more than one occasion, finding a sullen Derva accompanied by the city guard.

BACKGROUND

The young tiefling wasn't a thief, but a thrillseeker—climbing buildings, running amok in the sewers, finding clever ways to sneak into places where she didn't belong. By all accounts, Derva's childhood informed her parents that their child would be satisfied with nothing less than a life of adventure.

As an adult, Derva became a fearless tomb robber and dungeon delver. Her fearlessness and uncanny agility lent themselves to the plunder of many forgotten ruins, where she acquired lost treasures and valuable trinkets. It all changed when she finally plundered the wrong tomb.

Derva had paid a pretty penny for the location of this place. She had spent days locating the entrance and finding her way inside; long hours had been spent getting through maddening door locks and overcoming the tomb's guardians. How strange this place was—it was more like a prison than any moldering mausoleum.

Inside the central vault were two dark, curved daggers; according to her source, these storied weapons had been the weapons of some of the foulest murderers of ages past, passing from serial killer to assassin to brutal madman like a twisted heirloom. A storied pair of blades that would be worth a fortune to the right buyer.

But as soon as Derva's hands touched the weapons, her world twisted inside-out. These daggers weren't simply the favored blades of history's vicious killers—they had been the cause. Derva's eyes blackened, her view of the world tainted by pessimism and hate.

Derva's parents haven't seen her since that day, but they, like others, hear with horror the stories of



Darkdagger Derva. She stalks the city at night, sometimes killing pedestrians or breaking into the most secure homes to claim her victims: once, if the rumors are to be believed, she broke into a secure prison to claim one of her kills. No one can see a pattern in how victims are chosen, but it's clear that if Darkdagger Derva picks a target, they're as good as dead.

THE TWIN DARKDAGGERS

The first of many murderers to wield Derva's cursed weapons is actually the root of the curse itself; the Darkdagger Twins were a pair of serial killers who terrorized more than one city in their day. Now an imprint of their malice lives on in the weapons they carried, infecting those poor souls unfortunate enough to come into contact with them.

CURRENT MOTIVES

Derva Wheeler is still alive and well, though buried under layers of the psychosis induced by her cursed weapons. She's occasionally fully lucid, though usually

only when she's alone. Derva's day-to-day perception of the world is highly dissociated and almost dreamlike, and it's clear that she's only vaguely aware of the passage of time since she acquired the daggers, and muddled about any activities she's undertaken in the meantime.

When the daggers 'wake,' Derva's personality takes on a chilling, focused edge. She sometimes fixates on a particular target, observing them for many nights before striking. On other occasions, her murders appear wholly random; rare witnesses insist that she attacks someone just for walking down the street at night.

The characters can interact with rumors about Derva in a number of ways:

- **As a Local Urban Legend** - The rulers of the city and the city guard are careful to quash stories about an uncatchable killer on the loose. Occasional murders happen in any city; why attribute a random string of them with no pattern to some boogeyman? Local tavern-talk and the victims' families are quick to tell stories about the dreadful Darkdagger Derva, insisting that the legend is real.
- **As an Upcoming Crime** - Someone saw Darkdagger Derva watching the manor of a local lord. The rumor has spread like wildfire and the lord is seeking additional guards to protect himself, without much luck—Darkdagger Derva kills people who try to get between her and her target. Can brave adventurers keep the lord protected during a methodical assault in the dead of night? Is the lord in question even Derva's true target?
- **A Parent's Plea** - Derva's parents are shocked and saddened by the rumors about their little girl. There must be some mistake, or some foul magic at play. Are there adventurers out there who can discover the truth about their daughter and bring her home alive?

LONG TERM MOTIVES

Derva herself has no particular long-term goals unless the paradigm of her possession changes. If she becomes aware of her possession, she may actively struggle against it or seek a means of breaking the curse.

The Darkdaggers are designed to continue inducing their 'killing trances' forever; whether there is a reason for their killing is up to you. Perhaps the intelligence in the daggers is seeking out descendants of those responsible for the original twins' apprehension, or kills at the behest of a fiendish or aberrant influence as part of a greater scheme.

FLAWS

The Darkdaggers are semi-intelligent and may force Derva to violence if they feel threatened. Derva herself is kept in a dreamlike state by the daggers when she isn't actively hunting a target, making conversation somewhat one-sided.

LAIR IDEAS

Derva believes she lives in a charming townhome in a quiet neighborhood—but this is just the delusion that's been fed to her by the artifacts in her possession. Instead, she resides in an abandoned house in a decrepit part of the city. This was once the home of the Darkdagger Twins and the central location from which they set out to commit their atrocious crimes; the daggers feel drawn to this place as a result.

The townhome is a death trap, due in part to its derelict rot and more recently to the traps Derva has been prompted to craft during one of her many trances. Derva avoids these traps whether she's in a killing trance or not, though her dreamlike possession justifies whatever unusual steps she might take to do so.



DARKDAGGERS

Weapon (dagger) very rare (requires attunement)

You gain a +1 bonus to hit and damage rolls made with these magical daggers.

Once per day you may cast:

misty step

pass without trace

In addition, the daggers' blades are infused with a magical poison. On a hit, the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Curse. These daggers are cursed, and becoming attuned to them extends the curse to you. Once attuned to the daggers, you can't remove them unless you are targeted by a *remove curse* spell or similar magic.

Whenever you take a long rest, there is a 5% chance you enter a sleepwalk-like trance. While in this trance your character is considered an NPC under the DM's control. Your character seeks a seemingly random humanoid to stalk during this time. While in the trance you are only dimly aware of your actions and have only vague memories of events that took place during a trance. The trance ends early if you are knocked unconscious or are targeted by a *protection from evil and good* spell or any other effect that ends or prevents possession. You gain the benefits of a long rest even while in this state.

While in this trance, there is a 10% chance you will find a random creature and attack it.

Darkdagger Derva

Medium humanoid (tiefling), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 16 (+1 studded leather)

Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Dex +6, Int +4, Cha +6

Skills Acrobatics +6, Deception +6, Perception +3, Stealth +9

Damage Resistance fire, poison

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Elvish, Thieves Cant, Undercommon

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Assassinate. During her first turn, Derva has advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn. Any hit she scores against a surprised creature is a critical hit.

Evasion. If Derva is subjected to an effect that allows her to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, she instead takes no damage if she succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if she fails.

Innate Spellcasting. Derva's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). Derva can innately cast the following spells, requiring no components:

At will: *thaumaturgy*

1/day: *darkness*, *hellish rebuke* (2nd level)

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Derva makes two dagger attacks.

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.



ELLIE "SHANK" KELLOGG

By: Alan Tucker

Artist: Elite Design Elements © Rising Phoenix

Games: Bob Greyvenstein; Dean Spencer

Ellie Kellogg wouldn't hurt a fly... unless that fly owned something shiny.

BACKGROUND

Ellie, or Shank as she prefers to be called, is a human girl about fourteen years old, but she looks nine or ten—possibly because of some elven or fey blood in her ancestry. She is small for her age, having suffered from malnourishment in her early years, and only stands about 4 feet tall. Her light brown hair is most often pulled back in a loose ponytail and her dark brown eyes could charm a banker from his last coin.

Shank grew up on the streets of Waterdeep (or some other large city of the DM's choosing), an orphan of a butcher who met an untimely end at the hands of an adventurer who felt he had been short-shrifted during a business transaction when little Ellie was only four years old. She has lived on the streets ever since, growing in her capabilities and desire for vengeance against any who look like they partake of the adventuring life.

An accomplished rogue, over her years on the street, Shank has attracted a number of accomplices who didn't fit in, or were cast off from other criminal organizations. She, herself, has been offered to join forces with a number of criminal elements, but prefers to live an independent life to freely pursue her favorite prey: adventurers. Shank does her best to stay ingratiated with those in her neighborhood to assist in keeping a low profile. She often donates to needy families, and even helps pay the protection money for struggling business owners who fall prey to other criminal interests. She and her "gang" thrive in the shadows and abandoned alleyways.

CURRENT MOTIVES

Shank exists to make the lives of adventuring types miserable and short. Her thirst for vengeance for her father's death is insatiable. She never tires of "the game."



Shank's strategy is as follows:

- **Observe** – Shank is extremely intelligent and prefers to gain as much information as possible about her potential marks before she and her cohorts attempt to confront them. She will sometimes spend days endearing herself to newcomers—offering advice on the city, running errands for them, anything she can think of—in order to gain their trust and read their thoughts with her medallion (*Medallion of Thoughts*; DMG, p 181).
- **Professed Innocence** – Shank is a master actress and plays the role of innocent street waif flawlessly after years of perfecting the persona. She is small, unassuming, and blends into any urban background.
- **Crafty** – Her favorite ploy is to lure the target(s) into one of her alleys or an

abandoned building with the story that she and her younger sister were captured by terrible men and unspeakable things were done to them. She managed to escape, but needs help to rescue her sister. The local authorities are loathe to follow the word of a known "urchin," and so she has turned to other means of help.

- **Ruthless** – Shank keeps up the ruse even after her gang attacks by shying away from the fight initially so she can better position herself to deliver a decisive blow.

LONG TERM MOTIVES

Shank has found a purpose of sorts with her group of misfit outlaws and likes being able to help her community in times of need. She is still young and hasn't given much thought to what she might do once she gets older and might not look the part of the helpless waif anymore.

FLAWS

Adventurers are Shank's weakness. If she sees a new group enter town, she can't help but begin the cycle all over again. The memories of her father's death still burn bright and her thoughts become clouded with the desire for revenge against those who perpetrated that terrible deed.

COMPANIONS/ACCOMPLICES

Shank has gathered a small band of other misfits over the past few years and they are extremely loyal to her and each other.

Bruise is a hulking, half-orc fighter with several learning disabilities, which made life in a criminal organization difficult for him (he had a terrible time remembering passwords and protocols). He loves Shank and will protect her with his life. He got his name from the color of his skin as well as the marks he leaves on most of his opponents. Use **gladiator** stats (CR 5; MM, p 346) but reduce Int and Wis scores to 6.

Shadow is a spindly half-drow who has been shunned by both sides of his lineage, receiving the genetic drawbacks of both species and few of the benefits. Shadow, as his name implies, is excellent at hiding and sneaking around and has found a family of sorts with Shank's crew. Use **master thief** stats (CR 5; VGtM, p 216) but add *sunlight sensitivity*.

Edge is a surly duergar who served on a pirate ship for several years before leading an unsuccessful mutiny against his captain. Edge narrowly escaped death and fled to Waterdeep, where he eventually met Shank and her small band of misfits. Use **swashbuckler** stats (CR 3; VGtM, p 217) but add *sunlight sensitivity* and the *enlarge* ability (duergar, MM, p 122).

ELLIE "SHANK" KELLOGG

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 15 (leather armor)

Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	18 (+4)	14 (+1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Int +6

Skills Acrobatics +10, Deception +8, Sleight of Hand +10, Stealth +10

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Thieves' Cant

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Assassinate. During Shank's first turn, she has advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn. Any hit she scores against a surprised creature is a critical hit.

Cunning Action. Shank can use her bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Evasion. If Shank is subjected to an effect that allows a Dexterity saving throw to take half damage, she instead takes no damage on a successful save and only half damage on a failure.

Sneak Attack. Once per turn, Shank deals an extra 17 (5d6) damage when she hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when she has an ally that isn't incapacitated within 5 feet of the target and she doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Shank makes two attacks with her dagger.

Dagger. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. **Hit:** 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.

REACTION

Uncanny Dodge. Once per turn, Shank can use her reaction to halve an attack's damage against her, provided she can see the attacker.



GRYNNE BLAIDD

By: Jessica Marcrum

Artist: Dean Spencer

Grynne Blaidd is a powerful spellcaster who lives in the ruins of a temple with her pet rats, watching for unwary travelers to rob or conscript into her service.

BACKGROUND

Grynne Blaidd, a lonely and bitter goblin was once the spiritual leader of her tribe. When she was on a pilgrimage to learn her animal form, her tribe was slaughtered by a neighboring bugbear chief. Warfare to replace a chief or boss is common, but slaughter is rare. Grynne returned to a lair filled with blood, bones, and the echoes of goblin screams.

Vowing vengeance, Grynne soaked her tunic in the pooled blood of her family and fashioned a headdress of their bones before returning to her pilgrimage site: a ruined temple carved directly into a cave. Grynne utilizes her skill of evasion to rob unsuspecting relic hunters or adventurers looking for a warm place to spend the night. Over the years, she has collected quite an assortment of coins, gems, scrolls, and other magic items that can be easily pickpocketed.

Grynne frequently spies on the bugbear chief in the form of a crow or a wolf. She rarely attacks in animal form, preferring to gather information. When she isn't spying on her rival or stealing from travelers, Grynne tends to her rats and continues to improve her magical abilities, focusing on forms of evasion and animal conjuration.

The raven-skulled staff Grynne uses to focus her magic is made from the polished oak of an awakened tree and crowned with the skull of her former teacher who died in the form of a raven. Grynne named it Cigfran after him and has taken to speaking to it like a friend. She is never seen without it, even holding it close while she sleeps.

CURRENT MOTIVES

Grynne is focused on revenge and accumulates wealth to facilitate it. She plans to either hire an adventuring party to defeat her rival or become powerful enough to destroy him herself.



Grynne can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A Villain** – she robs the travelers while they sleep in her temple.
- **A Quest Giver** – if adventurers appear powerful, Grynne will gladly hire them to kill the bugbear for or with her.
- **An Informant or Spy** – Grynne knows everything that happens in her area, due to her excursions in animal form.
- **A Teacher** – Grynne is an accomplished spellcaster and can be convinced to teach a fellow druid, for the right price.

LONG TERM MOTIVES

Grynne misses being part of a tribe. She yearns for the day her vengeance is complete so she can find or start a new goblin tribe and reclaim her place as spiritual leader to the masses.

FLAWS

Grynne is wracked with guilt and self-doubt. She may be powerful enough to conquer the bugbear tribe alone, but she doesn't feel ready.

She is beginning to be fear that she will never be ready.

Grynne Blaid in the Western Heartlands

Goblins can be found nearly anywhere, but the Western Heartlands are an especially ideal location for Grynne Blaid. The Forgotten Forest, Reaching Woods, High Moor, and the Woods of Sharp Teeth are all fitting locations for her temple.

Cigfran

Weapon (quarterstaff), very rare

A strange energy pulses from the staff, as if something still lives within it.

A creature hit by this magic weapon begins sprouting black feathers from a random location on their body. The feathers offer no benefit and disappear after a long rest. The creature must also succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or be affected by the *confusion* spell for one minute.

Grynne Blaid

Small humanoid (goblinoid) neutral evil

Armor Class 12 (16 with *barkskin*)

Hit Points 21 (6d6)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Nature +4, Stealth +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft, passive Perception 9

Languages Common, Druidic, Goblin

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Nimble Escape. Grynne Blaid can take the *Disengage* or *Hide* action as a bonus action on each of her turns

Spellcasting. Grynne is a 5th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). She has the following druid spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *druidcraft*, *poison spray*, *shillelagh*

1st level (4 slots): *entangle*, *fog cloud*, *speak with animals*, *thunderwave*

2nd level (3 slots): *barkskin*, *pass without a trace*

3rd level (2 slots): *conjure animals*, *meld into stone*

Actions

Multiattack. Grynne makes two attacks with her staff. The second attack has disadvantage.

Cigfran. Melee Weapon Attack: +2 to hit (+4 to hit with *shillelagh*), reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage, or 6 (1d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage with *shillelagh*. The target must make a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or be affected by the *confusion* spell for one minute.

Change Shape (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). Grynne Blaid magically polymorphs into either a crow or wolf, remaining in that form for up to 1 hour. She can revert to her true form as a bonus action. Her statistics, other than her size, are the same in each form. Any equipment she is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. She reverts to her true form if she dies.

HAKUG SMELTBANE

By: Jacky Leung

Artist: Dean Spencer

Hakug is a cunning dwarf who left his clan years ago to unearth arcane knowledge. He knows how to navigate out of a tough spot, only to brandish his magic to anyone foolish enough to cross him.

BACKGROUND

Hakug, a cunning but stoic dwarf, was a cloistered acolyte within the clan's stronghold. He maintained and kept the various tomes and grimoires accumulated by generations of his family. Curiosity and experimentation led to Hakug's eventual arcane talents, and, while useful, were deemed a nuisance by his clanmates. There was a time when they vandalized his beloved book collection. As he continued to be ostracized, Hakug eventually left the safety of his longtime home in the pursuit of greater knowledge, tired of only reading the tales and exploits of others on the dusty pages of his books. Though the dwarf swore to return someday to exact revenge on those who wronged him.

Hakug runs a small shop near the merchant district within a city. Here, he sells books and minor magical trinkets he has collected from his expeditions and trades. The shop is simply a front to financially support Hakug's greater expeditions of wealth and lost knowledge. He greatly enjoys news of new locales or legends from faraway lands, and is willing to trade coin or items for information. The dwarf mage made small connections with criminal circles in the hopes of acquiring hard-to-find objects or relics at a reasonable price.

CURRENT MOTIVES

Hakug has connections to some criminal circles, along with various merchants and scholars. He uses these connections to locate rare lore and magical items, sometimes to purchase or barter for them, and other times to steal them.

Hakug can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A Source of Information** – Hakug hears many things from merchants, traders, and explorers searching for lost treasures.



- **A Quest Giver** – Hakug has collected lore and possibly maps for adventurers to explore.
- **A Merchant** – Hakug has procured a considerable amount of trinkets across his travels and dealings, using the store to front his next expedition.
- **A Villain** – His quest for revenge can potentially cause conflict with the interests of a character.

LONG TERM MOTIVES

While Hakug wants to pursue his arcane studies, his business ventures have also yielded several margins of profit over the years. Ultimately, this amassed wealth and knowledge serves a greater goal—revenge. The dwarf seeks to return to his clan as a dominant force, validate all of his years toiling over his grimoires, and exact his vengeance against those who ultimately drove him from his home.

FLAWS

Hakug is obsessive and egotistical. When a goal is presented to him, especially relating to arcane knowledge or artifacts, he spends days researching and preparing for the expedition. Once there, the dwarf becomes as stubborn the wind against a mountain,

relentlessly seeking his prize. Unfortunately, this razor-sharp focus also means he ignores other telltale signs and warnings. One day, his ignorance might cost him dearly.

STRUM

Weapon (warhammer), rare

A gentle hum emanates from this pristine warhammer.

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

A creature hit by this warhammer takes an additional 2d6 thunder damage and must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be pushed 10 feet away and knocked prone.

HAKUG SMELTBANE

Medium humanoid (dwarf), neutral

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 67 (15d8)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +7, Wis +4

Skills Arcana +7, Deception +3, History +7, Insight +4

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Dwarvish, Elvish, Halfling

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Dwarven Resilience. Hakug has advantage on saving throws against poison and resistance against poison damage.

Stonecunning. Hakug adds double his proficiency bonus to an Intelligence (History) check related to the origin of stonework.

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

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt*, *light*, *mage hand*, *message*, *true strike*

1st level (4 slots): *detect magic**, *feather fall*, *mage armor*

2nd level (3 slots): *detect thoughts**, *locate object**, *scorching ray*

3rd level (3 slots): *clairvoyance**, *fly*, *lightning bolt*

4th level (3 slots): *arcane eye**, *ice storm*, *stoneskin*

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

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

7th level (1 slot): *delayed blast fireball*, *teleport*

8th level (1 slot): *maze*

*Divination spell of 1st level or higher

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

ACTIONS

Strum. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 4 (1d8) bludgeoning damage, or 5 (1d10) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands, plus 7 (2d6) thunder damage. The target must succeed a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be pushed 10 feet away and knocked prone.

INDRIS CLEFTSHALL

By: Phil L. Allison

Artist: Dean Spencer

Indris is a taciturn master smith, keeping mostly to himself. Knowledge of forging engages and animates him. He can create any weapon, for a price.

BACKGROUND

As a young dwarf, Indris astonished the smiths with his quick ability to learn the craft. Within a few years his skill level was such that they could teach him no more. He sought out other races to learn their ways of smithing, and worked to subsume their methods into his own.

Word spread among smithing circles and beyond of his skill with the craft. He was eventually approached by an erinyes named Ya'seraf, who promised him magical secrets of the forge, if he met the price. In his rapacity for knowledge, Indris bargained and negotiated with Ya'seraf, whom he nicknamed Josephine.

They finally settled on a contract: For fifty years Indris was responsible for capturing and enlisting four souls a year for Ya'seraf. In return Indris would receive the power to transfer souls into metal itself and utilize their properties. There was a clause that, if Indris could get his hands on and unmake the medallion that held his soul, he could keep the powers and reclaim his soul.

His first piece was a medallion in which his own soul was kept. This work was taken by Ya'seraf, to be held for the term of the contract, at the end of which they would renegotiate.

Over time Indris has felt the lack of his soul. At first it was not so noticeable for the excitement of new powers. But in recent years he has felt the lack of inspiration in his work, the lack of taste in his food, the loss of the subtle feel of steel beneath of his fingertips. Indris only refers to Ya'seraf as Josephine. Every time he says her name, he touches his hammer, falsely giving others the impression that he calls his hammer Josephine.



CURRENT MOTIVES

Indris works to provide the devil a soul every three months or so. He has been at it for years. Most of the time he takes the souls of hapless adventurers who seek power to enhance their abilities. Their soul resides in the metal of their resulting weapon or armor. They walk away with newfound abilities, but it can be their downfall. If the piece is destroyed, so is their soul, and their life comes to an end, giving the devil another soul in her retinue.

Not all Indris' works are dark, for he enjoys the art of the craft and making things for a purpose. But he always remembers that he must fulfill his obligation.

Indris can be used as the following types of NPCs:

- **A Merchant** – Indris has the typical wares in his shop that you would find at a smith's. His works stand out as having that extra bit of flare, strength, or style—depending on the piece—and are priced 5 percent more than other items. He buys decent items, but no junk.
- **A Quest Giver** – Indris is more than willing to send parties in search of rare magic items or metals for forging. If he thinks the party strong

enough, he may send them in search of Josephine.

- **Local Knowledge** – Indris knows the town and people fairly well. Though he does not interact with them much, he makes sure to know who is watching him.
- **A Craftsman** – Indris is willing to make a weapon for anyone, if they are willing to pay the price. See Forging.
- **A Villain** – Indris requires souls, and the characters are his mark.

FORGING

Indris agrees to craft any item for an adventurer, provided they are willing to pay the price. He jovially tells them they are entering a “contract with Josephine,” as he pats his hammer. He seals the metal of the crafted item with an etched script written in Infernal that forfeits the client’s soul to Ya’seraf.

LONG TERM MOTIVES

As his contract with Josephine is nearing its end, Indris is greedily looking for a party that can retrieve the pendant so he can unmake and have both his powers and his soul.

FLAWS

Indris is blind to any indiscretion when it comes to smithing. He no longer has any boundaries around what he will do for knowledge, except to keep hidden the depths to which he has sunk. He is only ever at peace when he is forging something.

RUMORS

The following rumors about Indris float around the town:

- He was kicked out by the dwarves for knowing too much!
- He talks very little, but they say he knows everything about smithing.
- Most people give him a wide berth. He smells... wrong.

BASE STAT BLOCK CHANGES

Indris uses the statistics of the **gladiator (CR 5; MM, p 346)** with the following changes:

Soulless Regeneration. Indris cannot be killed while his soul is in the possession of Ya’seraf. He regenerates 10 hit points at the end of his turn regardless of the damage amount or type taken.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Indris makes three melee attacks with his forge hammer.

Forge Hammer. (+2 warhammer). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage.

IR'THIR, MASTER OF THE ARCHIVES

By: Tera Hooper

Artist: Dean Spencer

Ir'thir is an archmage that is bound to a vast library known as the Atheneum of Ioun. He studies the magics and history of the world in solitude and can get you almost any information—for a price.

BACKGROUND

Ir'thir could be considered somewhat eccentric, some might even call him a stark raving lunatic. However, he has spent the past 500 years in near-solitude, guarding the secret of the Atheneum to the best of his ability. Many believe he made a pact with some otherworldly being for his unnaturally long lifespan. Some even speculate that he is a powerful lich.

The fact-of-the-matter is that Ir'thir is a simple human that has been bound to serve the Archives. The Archives are a legendary magical artifact that has been locked away in the Antheneum. The power that binds Ir'thir to the Archives has given him an immortal lifespan—much like the phylactery of a lich. He can only be killed if the artifact housing his soul is destroyed, or he is freed from his service.

While Ir'thir is unable to leave the Atheneum, he is highly knowledgeable about the magics and history of this world, and can acquire almost any information someone seeks. His information does come at a very steep cost—the client's most precious possession. He also seeks information on the outside world. In particular, he searches for information regarding a particular order of scholars.

Ir'thir seeks knowledge of the Scholars of Ioun. These magi were the ones that bound him so long ago. They felt he sought power beyond his station, and bound him to serve Ioun for eternity. At first, he thought this a blessing. He grew to have all knowledge. Over time, however, he realized that he could never share that knowledge outside of his library. He slowly grew to resent the Scholars for their hand in locking him away. Now, he seeks his revenge upon the order.

Ir'thir guards the secret of the artifact with his life; no one knows of the artifact but him. After all, he



knows quite well that knowledge is power, and that power in the wrong hands is extremely dangerous.

CURRENT MOTIVES

Ir'thir is presently seeking the remaining Runes of Ioun to help release him from his prison. He uses his cunning and intellect to enlist the help of visitors in collecting these runes.

Ir'thir can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A Source of Information** – he has access to a near-unlimited source of information contained within the Archives, but he doesn't share that information readily.
- **A Quest Giver** – he has a large collection of information relating to lost magic items, political intrigue, and information regarding the Runes of Ioun.
- **A Villain** – Ir'thir is extremely slow to trust and seeks revenge against humanity for cursing him to live as a prisoner.
- **An Ally** – Once gaining his trust, the party has access to a wealth of information. The party can also help Ir'thir to free himself from the artifact and regain his trust in humanity.

LONG TERM MOTIVES

Ir'thir seeks revenge against the Scholars of Ioun for cursing him to live as a prisoner. He will stop at nothing to make them suffer as he did. He is presently in

possession of seven of the fourteen Runes of Ioun required to unbind his soul from the Archives.

If he is ever able to regain his trust in humanity and free himself, his goal is to see the world he knows so much about with his own two eyes.

FLAWS

Ir'thir is ancient. He often “forgets” important details when sharing information. For instance, he once shared the knowledge that an item a young party had been tasked to recover was in a white dragon’s hoard to the north. He left out the fact that it was an ancient white dragon. The poor group was never seen nor heard from again, and the item remains lost to the owner.

ARCHIVES OF IR'THIR

Wondrous item, artifact (requires attunement by the one whose soul is bound to it)

The Archives is a small, mundane book that contains all the knowledge in the multiverse. When a question is asked, the book immediately fills with all knowledge pertaining to the question.

However, attempting to read the book if your soul is not bound to it will age you 1d100 years. Many mortals have perished trying to learn the secrets of the multiverse in this way. The only one able to read the book without suffering the effects is the one whose soul is bound to it.

The only way to bind your soul to the Archives is to obtain each Rune of Ioun and perform the binding spell in ancient draconic. The binding spell will then bind your soul to the Archives, but you will be cursed to live in the Atheneum of Ioun forever. If the Archives are already bound to another when the binding spell is performed, the spell is unsuccessful.

Random Properties The Archives of Ir'thir has the following random properties:

- * 2 minor beneficial properties
- * 1 major beneficial property
- * 2 minor detrimental properties

Increased Intelligence Once you’ve read a page from the Archives, your Intelligence score increases by 2, to a maximum of 24. You can’t gain this benefit more than once.

Exceptional Recollection Once you’ve read and studied several pages from the Archives, you gain advantage on Intelligence (Arcana) checks made to recall lore, information on magic items, or recognize magic symbols. You also gain advantage on Intelligence (History) checks made to recall historical events, people, kingdoms, wars, or ancient civilizations.

Destroying the Archives The Archives can only be destroyed by entreating to the Goddess of Knowledge, Ioun, with an offering containing one of every ioun stone and a one-of-a-kind tome containing knowledge that has been lost to the world.

However, to unbind a soul from the Archives, you need to collect the original runes used in the binding spell. These *Runes of Ioun* are hidden away where each variant of ioun stone originates. The runes needed to end the binding are as follows:

- * Rune of Absorption
- * Rune of Agility
- * Rune of Awareness
- * Rune of Fortitude
- * Rune of Greater Absorption
- * Rune of Insight
- * Rune of Intellect
- * Rune of Leadership
- * Rune of Mastery
- * Rune of Protection
- * Rune of Regeneration
- * Rune of Reserve
- * Rune of Strength
- * Rune of Sustenance

Once all runes have been obtained, the original binding spell should be performed in reverse. The spell will only work if performed in ancient draconic. If successful, the runes will then go dormant for 1d100 years.

IR'THIR

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

Armor Class 13 (16 with mage armor)

Hit Points 135 (18d8 + 54)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	24 (+7)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Con +10, Int +14, Wis +9

Skills Arcana +20, History +14, Insight +9, Perception +9

Damage Resistance damage from spells; nonmagical bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing (from *stoneskin*)

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 19

Languages Common plus up to five other languages

Challenge 21 (33,000 XP)

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If Ir'thir fails a saving throw, he can choose to succeed instead.

Spellcasting: Ir'thir is an 18th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 22, +14 to hit with spell attacks). Ir'thir can cast *disguise self* and *invisibility* at will and has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *Fire Bolt*, *Light*, *Mage Hand*, *Prestidigitation*, *Shocking Grasp*

1st level (4 slots): *Detect Magic*, *Identify*, *Mage Armor**, *Magic Missile*

2nd level (3 slots): *Detect Thoughts*, *Mirror Image*, *Misty Step*

3rd level (3 slots): *Counterspell*, *Fly*, *Lightning Bolt*

4th level (3 slots): *Banishment*, *Fire Shield*, *Stoneskin**

5th level (3 slots): *Cone of Cold*, *Scrying*, *Wall of Force*

6th level (1 slot): *Globe of Invulnerability*

7th level (1 slot): *Teleport*

8th level (1 slot): *Mind Blank**

9th level (1 slot): *Time Stop*

*Ir'thir casts these spells on himself before combat.

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Arcane Recovery (Recharge 5-6). Ir'thir regains all of his expended spell slots up to 5th level.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Ir'thir 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. Ir'thir regains spent legendary actions at the start of his turn.

Cantrip. Ir'thir casts a cantrip.

Arcane Shield (Costs 2 Actions). Ir'thir conjures a magical shield to surround him until the start of his next turn. While this shield is active, he gains +5 to his AC.

Arcane Shift (Costs 2 Actions). Ir'thir briefly shifts himself to the Ethereal Plane and reappears in an unoccupied space that he can see within 120 feet. This movement does not provoke attacks of opportunity.

Arcane Discharge (Costs 3 Actions). Ir'thir unleashes a blast of arcane energy. Each target within 60 feet of Ir'thir must make a DC 20 Dexterity saving throw. Targets take 6d6 force damage on a failed save, or half as much on a successful one.

ISTIFELL AGREVAR

By: Micah Watt

Artist: Dean Spencer

“Lies and Truths. It is the quintessential dichotomy that rules the acquisition of information and knowledge. How do we determine one from the other, especially when one being’s falsehood is another’s truth?”

Worse still, between these two lies Memory. The mortal recall is imperfect, and at times our memories are either lie, truth, both, or neither.

It is enough to send one mad...”

Istifell is a seeker of knowledge and truth, plagued by doubts and paranoia. His impermanence of memory makes him a dangerously volatile individual as he often can’t recall his former opinion, behaviors, or actions on any subject or toward any creature.

Istifell desperately desires to learn of his past, but is just as wary of any source claiming just that. He has turned to the elusive Raven Queen for answers, hoping the capricious deity might reveal that which he has lost.

BACKGROUND

Istifell has no history, at least none that he is aware of or that motivates him directly. Istifell has a mental condition where his memories are indistinct, at times losing memories completely, while at others regaining them seemingly at random.

What he knows of his history comes from an extensive journal collection that he has been obsessively authoring for years. When his memories are clear, he records what he can, and, when they are vague, he refers to his notes. This collection is thousands of tomes in size, and ranges from very well organized to extremely fragmented. The entries are no more than a decade old, though he has chronicled memories going back further. He theorizes that his condition occurred around this time, but has no information concerning its origin.

He is a winged tiefling, but only partially aware of his parentage. He recalls a few images of his father, whom he believes was an elf with black hair and a stern demeanor. He has no recollection of his mother, but secretly believes it is the Raven Queen herself, despite any real evidence beyond his arcane abilities



and a few of his earliest journal entries, written in a scattered and cryptic manner.

CURRENT MOTIVES

Istifell has dedicated his life to the pursuit of three things: determining his past, uncovering the origin of his condition, and discovering a cure for it.

These pursuits have led him to develop significant arcane talents tied to the matronage of the Raven Queen, and a vast collection of books, tomes, keepsakes, curios, and other objects—both magical and mundane. Istifell seeks information concerning psychological conditions, magical effects or curses, monster abilities, gods or religious cults, or any other source of memory-altering effects. Despite all his efforts, his condition hampers cohesive research, which only adds to his growing frustration.

Istifell is intelligent and charming but is given to long periods of deep thought or brooding. He has

developed a necessary patience but becomes frustrated if faced with a situation or creature he should know, or there are expectations based on previous encounters or incorrectly chronicled information. Istifell lacks empathy and is so self-centered that he is oblivious to the needs or desires of others. His obsession with his own condition overrides all other concerns.

Istifell has a raven that constantly seems to whisper in his ear, and a journal and quiver that float nearby, recording furiously.

Characters encountering Istifell multiple times may not be prepared for the reception they receive, which could be cordial or hostile, or he simply may not remember them at all.

Istifell can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **An Employer** – Istifell seeks adventurers or specialists to retrieve an item, find a person, or confirm a rumor or scrap of esoteric lore that is (at this point) significant enough to warrant investigation but not his immediate personal attention.
- **An Enemy** – Adventurers may find themselves on the wrong end of Istifell's wrath due to a real or perceived offence, or if they are in possession of something he needs.
- **A Source** – Throughout the years, Istifell has amassed an impressive library and collection of objects. Adventurers may seek him out for information, or to "retrieve" an item he has acquired from another.

LONG TERM MOTIVES

Istifell's research is leading him closer to the Shadowfell and the Raven Queen. He believes that somewhere in her vast collection in the Fortress of Memories are the answers he seeks. Her evasive and capricious nature has strained his loyalty, and he begins to harbor thoughts of raiding or engineering a war on her domain in the Shadowfell. While he would never attack her directly, he is not above maneuvering others to do so.

FLAWS

Istifell's memory issues plague his life with inconsistencies. He often lacks vital information to gauge the context of a situation, relationship, or interaction.

His lack of recall makes him vulnerable to deception, but having encountered this several times at the hands of unscrupulous individuals, when he eventually does recall the treachery (or discovers via his notes), he makes sure to exact a particularly vicious revenge on the perpetrators.

ISTIFELL'S SHADOW TOWER

Istifell's research and connection to the Shadowfell have allowed him to infuse his home, a seven-storied tower, with elements and materials from the plane of shadows. The lighting conditions of the tower are always dim unless he wills it otherwise. With a specialized ritual—taking an hour of concentration—the tower can slip into the Shadowfell or return to the Material Plane.

LAIR ACTIONS

When combat occurs within the tower, Istifell can take advantage of its unique properties. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties) Istifell takes a lair action to cause one of the following effects:

- All light sources are extinguished.
- A 10-foot square section of wall or floor becomes insubstantial until initiative count 0. This area is chosen by Istifell. If the section is below a character, they must make a **DC 14 Dexterity saving throw** or fall 20 feet to the level below, taking 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage. A successful save allows the character to move to the nearest unoccupied space. A section of the wall chosen allows egress from the tower.
- Shadowy tendrils erupt from a surface and grasp at all creatures within a 10-foot radius. Each creature must make a **DC 14 Strength saving throw** or gain the *grappled* condition. The tendrils are semi-solid and cannot be damaged but may be dispelled as a 3rd level spell effect. The tendrils disappear on initiative count 0.

TACTICS

Istifell will try to have *foresight* up for any encounter. He will try to use *darkness* if effective as he can see through it, and his lair actions can dispel light effects. He will use *circle of death* with impunity as he is immune, and if struck he prefers to use his reaction to cast *hellish rebuke*, then his legendary action to Misty Escape.

He will also try to take advantage of the lair actions available to him, using his eldritch blast and knockback to push opponents through incorporeal sections of the wall or floor. If opponents are caught in the shadowy tendrils, he'll drop *hunger of hadar* to try to take advantage of their limited movement.

TREASURE

Istifell has a *rod of the pact keeper +3* and a *ring of protection* (included in his stats), as well as a magical quill that (on command) levitates itself and a provided book, and constantly records events in a 60-foot radius in painstaking detail. He may have any other magic items the DM deems appropriate.

ISTIFELL AGREVAR

Medium humanoid (tiefling), neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (17 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 170 (20d8+80)

Speed 30 ft.; Fly 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Str +1, Dex +4, Con +5, Int +3, Wis +6, Cha +12

Skills Arcana +8, Deception +11, Perception +5, Stealth +9

Damage Resistances fire, psychic

Damage Immunities necrotic

Condition Immunities charmed

Senses see in darkness (magical or normal) 120 ft.; read all writing; passive Perception 15

Languages Common, Elvish, Infernal

Challenge 15 (13,000 XP)

Dark Delirium (recharges on short or long rest). Istifell can choose a creature within 60 feet that he can see to make a DC 22 Wisdom saving throw or be *charmed* or *frightened* of him for 1 minute or until the creature takes damage.

One with Shadows. As an action in an area of dim light or darkness you become *invisible* you move or take an action or reaction.

Voice of the Chain Master. Istifell can communicate telepathically with and speak through his raven familiar.

Innate Spellcasting. Istifell's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 22). He can cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At Will: *mage armor*, *speak with dead*, *hold monster*

(celestial, fiend or elemental only)

1/day each: *circle of death*, *feeblemind*, *foresight*, *planeshift*

Spellcasting. Istifell is a 20th level warlock spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 22, +14 to hit). He regains expended spell slots on a short or long rest. He knows the following warlock spells:

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

1-5th level (4 5th level slots) *banishment*, *blight*, *contact other plane*, *counterspell*, *darkness*, *dimension door*, *dispel magic*, *greater invisibility*, *hellish rebuke*, *hex*, *hunger of hadar*, *misty step*, *mirror image*, *scrying*, *suggestion*

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. Hit 5 (1d4+3) slashing damage.

Eldritch Blast. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +14 to hit, range 120 ft, 4 beams, 1-4 targets. Hit 10 (1d10+5) force damage, and push creature 10 feet.

REACTION

Beguiling Defenses. If Istifell is subject to a charm spell, he can use his reaction to immediately force the caster to make a DC 19 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed instead, for 1 minute or until it takes damage.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

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

Misty Escape. In response to taking damage on a creature's turn, Istifell can turn *invisible* and teleport up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space he can see. He remains invisible until the start of his next turn or until he attacks, makes a damage roll or casts a spell.

Eldritch Blast. Istifell makes one eldritch blast attack.

Summon Shadow. Istifell summons a **shadow** (CR ½; MM, p 269) that appears next to and immediately attacks one creature, and then fades into nothingness.

JULI

By: Jeff C. Stevens

Artist: Terran Empire Publishing – Evan Rodda

Not only is Juli an elite warrior of the grung, he is also a seer, blessed by the goddess Nangnang.

BACKGROUND

Originally from the jungles of Chult, Juli (HOO-lee) now spends his time in a small cave, protected by the creatures of the forest. Once an elite warrior, for his brilliance in combat, and in serving the grung, the goddess Nangnang has bestowed several gifts upon him.

Gone are his motivations for simple combat, slavery, or caste systems, Juli lives a secluded life, praying to Nangnang, looking into the future, and practicing his new-found skills.

One of Nangnang's gifts to Juli was mastery of the forgotten and ancient martial arts techniques of the grung. He uses these skills and maneuvers as a way of mediation, gracefully moving about with his polearm in a silent but deadly dance.

CURRENT MOTIVES

Juli currently seeks wisdom and self-awareness, which he accomplishes by praying to Nangnang, meditating, studying books, and living a life of seclusion. He enjoys the silence of his swamp sanctuary and finds peace in his seclusion.

Juli can be used as NPCs as follows:

- **A Seer** – Juli possesses the ability to scry and does not need to have seen the location, he only requires a small trinket from the location.
- **A Teacher** – Juli can teach a character the forgotten maneuvers of the grung. To do so, a character must spend one week on the island with Juli. Only one character may be trained at a time (see Juli's Gift).
- **A Quest Giver** – Juli enjoys reading books on obscure topics. He may ask the characters to bring him new books, offering a handsome payment.
- **A Villain** – Juli has little desire to engage in combat for the mere thrill. Though, he will



protect himself and his island sanctuary if threatened.

- **A Champion** – Though he no longer seeks out violence, Juli may be found defending his fellow grung, serving as their champion.

LONG TERM MOTIVES

Juli wishes to continue his peaceful existence in the swamp, studying and meditating. One day, he hopes to return to a grung village and teach the villagers the forgotten martial techniques Nangnang has gifted him.

FLAWS

Juli's studies have made him overly confident and headstrong. He believes he is all-knowing and one of the wisest creatures in the land. Is this true? That is up to you to decide.

JULI'S GIFT

Juli can pass on his knowledge of the ancient fighting style of the grung. He does so without payment, only requiring the student's full attention and discipline.

Training requires, but is not limited to, the following:

- Standing waist deep in the murky swamp water for 2 hours.
- Eating bowls of decaying grubs and worms, boiled down into a thick goo—no salt or pepper added.
- Staring at one's right index finger for 1 hour without blinking.
- Mastering an obstacle course that Juli designs in the swamp.

After completing the tasks above and succeeding on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw, the character receives one of the following:

Grappler (PHB, p 167)

Martial Adept (PHB, p 168)

Proficiency with unarmed strikes

Polearm Master (PHB, p 168)

JULI

Small humanoid (grung), lawful neutral

Armor Class 15

Hit Points 143 (22d8 + 44)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Str +9, Con +6, Wis +7

Skills Acrobatics +6, Athletics +9, Perception +7

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses passive Perception 17

Languages Common, Grung

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Amphibious). Juli can breathe and and water.

Indomitable (2/Day). Juli rerolls a failed saving throw.

Poisonous Skin. Any creature that grapples Juli or otherwise comes into direct contact with his skin must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute. A poisoned creature no longer in direct contact with Juli can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Scry (1/Day). Juli has the ability to cast *scrying*, requiring only a trinket from a location he is scrying upon.

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

Standing Leap. Juli's long jump is up to 25 feet and its high jump is up to 15 feet, with or without a running start.

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Juli makes three attacks with his halberd or his unarmed strike.

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

- The target must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone.
- The target must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be stunned until the end of Juli's next turn.

Halberd. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d10 + 5) slashing damage.

REACTION

Parry. Juli adds 3 to his AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, he must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

KREIGER FOLGER – AMBITIOUS

ALCHEMIST

By: Christopher M. Sniezak

Artist: Dean Spencer, Daniel Comerci

Kreiger Folger is an ambitious alchemist who's getting ready to make his move.

BACKGROUND

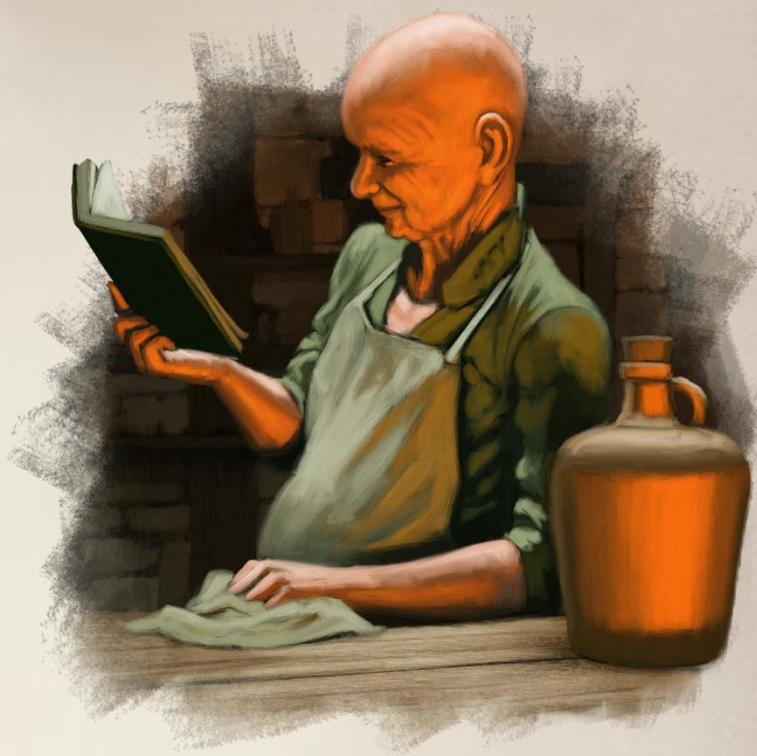
While a young man Kreiger took the test to join the Sorcerer Occulta, the most prestigious school in the land. He had the talent and the mind, but the Sorcerer Occulta decided he lacked the will, so they turned him away.

The thing about the tests is those who are turned away are never told why. Kreiger assumed he didn't have the talent or the mind, but he always felt that he had the will. Magic would be his life, even if he couldn't be a wizard.

After that he got a job at a bar in the city of Kingshaven, at the Boar's Hat right down the street from the Sorcerer Occulta, and learning. He spoke with any wizard who would talk to him, bought spellbooks off of wizards in training who had come into the Boar's Hat, and learned what he could about the arcane arts.

After several years of learning and casting a few spells, an old woman entered the bar named Bacara. She was an alchemist and took a shine to Kreiger. She saw the spark in his eyes and caught a glimpse of the books he was reading. They got to talking and she realized his potential. This led to an offer to train him in the art of alchemy.

Kreiger learned quickly and in a short time surpassed Bacara's teachings. He devoured her training and then her library. He understood and made connections Bacara never did. He was a genius. That's when he decided the Sorcerer Occulta passed him over because they were scared of his potential. All he ever wanted was to be a part of the magical world. Now he would show them all, and be recognized by those who passed him over, by those who kept him down.



CURRENT MOTIVES

Kreiger Folger wants to show the Sorcerer Occulta they made a mistake in rejecting him.

Kreiger Folger can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A Foil** – Kreiger is intelligent, ruthless, and believes he's smarter than everyone else in the room. This makes him feel like an outsider in a lot of ways who likes to talk about and share his views and opinions with other outsiders, like adventurer's.
- **A Merchant** – While Kreiger keeps his alchemical knowledge secret, if the characters start to ask around for a potion maker in the city, the rumor is someone called The Brewer can make just about anything and some things no one has ever heard of. Getting a meeting with The Brewer isn't easy though.
- **A Villain** – Kreiger is clever and holds a grudge against the Sorcerer Occulta. This grudge isn't civil and the bodies of dead magic users and students start to show up in the city.

LONG TERM MOTIVES

Kreiger wants to reveal himself and be acknowledged by the Sorcerer Occulta as a full member once he has

had his revenge against those wizards who have wronged him.

FLAWS

Kreiger believes he is one of the smartest people alive. He is quite intelligent, but sometimes it blinds him to simple truths. Kreiger is also highly manipulative, has a lack of remorse or guilt for any of his actions, and is quite callous. This means he doesn't always read or understand the emotions of others.

CONCOCTIONS

Kreiger's concoctions are all alchemical creations he has in vials, flasks, and containers. In order for Kreiger to use them, he has to utter a magic word, activating the concoctions' magic. Only he knows the word for each of his concoctions. Then the concoction must either be drunk or released from its container in some way. Every concoction has a verbal component.

Fog cloud, *fireball*, and *cloudkill* are all thrown concoction and their range is up to 50 ft away.

Elemental weapon is poured onto a weapon.

The rest of the concoctions all need to be drunk.

It is possible to buy concoctions from Kreiger, but they cost 300 gp per level of concoction being created and they only last for a week before becoming inert.



KREIGER FOLGER

Medium humanoid (human), neutral evil

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 66 (12d8 + 12)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Int +9, Cha +7

Skills Arcana +9, Deception +7, History +9

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Spellcasting. Kreiger can use the following spells at will (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks):

fire bolt, *light*, *prestidigitation*

Alchemy. Kreiger is a 12th-level spellcaster. his spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). When Kreiger uses a spell, it is stored in a flask as a concoction. These concoctions only activate when he uses the activation word. He has the following concoctions prepared:

1st level: *armor of agathys* x1, *cure wounds* x1, *fog cloud* x1, *mage armor* x1

2nd level: *enlarge/reduce* x1, *cure wounds* x1, *spider climb* x1

3rd level: *elemental weapon* x1, *fireball* x1, *haste* x1

4th level: *freedom of movement* x1, *greater invisibility* x1, *stoneskin* x1

5th level: *cloudkill* x1, *modify memory* x1

6th level: *globe of invulnerability* x1, *Tenser's transformation** x1

*Appears in Xanathar's Guide to Everything

Harmonizing Concoctions. Kreiger can concentrate on utilizing the magic of up to two concoctions at the same time. If Kreiger adds a third, he chooses which spell ends.

Steel Mind. When making a Constitution saving throw to maintain concentration, Kreiger has advantage.

ACTIONS

Knife. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

LEF ADARA

By: Emily Smith

Artist: Forrest Imel

Map: Daniel Walthall

Lef Adara is a travelling merchant from the Anauroch Desert.

BACKGROUND

Lef was raised in a nomadic tribe of sand surfers, who use adapted canoes with sails to swiftly travel across the Anauroch Desert, using the strong desert winds to guide their travel. Their people specialize in moving goods across the desert, serving merchant cities far to the east and west. Growing up, Lef had a natural talent for animal handling, with a special fondness for jackrabbits and desert chinchillas, and became a specialist in handling rare animal cargo.

On their 20th birthday, Lef left their tribe to travel the world and create valuable merchant connections. They saw animals they could have never imagined: the feathered dinosaurs of Chult, strange catlike krenshar, and feral speckled owlbears. But this experience opened their eyes to the cruelty of society as they saw these beautiful creatures mistreated as roadside attractions and killed as sport by adventurers.

Instead of returning to their tribe after five years, as is customary, Lef stayed in the outside world, as a silent steward for beasts and monstrosities alike. They took it upon themselves to rescue as many animals as possible. At the age of 30, Lef has repurposed an abandoned wine cellar at the edge of the Anauroch Desert as a makeshift animal sanctuary for beasts in need.

CURRENT MOTIVES

Lef Adara is regularly on the lookout for creatures of interest—and those in need of help—that they can add to their collection.

Lef Adara can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A Quest Giver** – Lef often seeks rare ingredients as medicine or feed for their exotic creatures, and may ask characters for their assistance. Alternatively, Lef may need help



transporting or acquiring a particularly dangerous creature.

- **A Merchant** – Lef has many unique ingredients—byproducts from their collection of rare animals. They may be willing to sell such items to characters, for the right price.
- **A Villain** – Lef's overeagerness to protect animals often puts the needs of creatures above those of humans. This can set them up as a potential villain, at odds with merchants or other community members.

LONG TERM MOTIVES

Lef's long term goals are uncertain. They wish to one day rejoin their nomadic tribe, but cannot bear to part with their rescued beasts.

FLAWS

Lef is close to their animal companions, often to the detriment of their human relationships. Lef fails to recognize truly dangerous situations and creatures, believing all beasts and monstrosities are worthy of love and care.

LEF ADARA

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 16 (studded leather and shield)

Hit Points 26 (4d8 + 8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Dex +4, Int +3, Wis +6

Skills Animal Handling +6, Perception +6, Stealth +4, Survival +6

Senses passive Perception 16

Languages Common, Elvish

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Spellcasting. Lef is a 4th-level spellcaster. Their spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). Lef has the following druid spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *guidance, mending, shillelagh*
1st level (4 slots): *animal friendship, fog cloud, goodberry, healing word, speak with animals*
2nd level (3 slots): *gust of wind, moonbeam, pass without trace*

ACTIONS

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

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

THE ANIMAL SANCTUARY

This wine cellar has been expanded with the help of Lef's pet bulette, Xrasham, to encompass a variety of tunnels and caves that make up an expansive animal sanctuary for exotic creatures.

ENTRANCE

A small one-story house with boarded-up shutters sits abandoned over a mile from the nearest town of Ascore. The surrounding area is dry and sandy, dotted with crackling tumbleweeds and stands of short grass. Inside the house, the rooms are barren, with a staircase in the kitchen leading down to the wine cellar. A **DC 13 Wisdom (Perception)** check reveals the floor is coated in dust, aside from a walkway leading from the front door to the wine cellar. The plain wooden door opens onto a 15-foot-long stone staircase that descends downwards. A pair of metal sconces on the wall are lit, if Lef is present.

AREA 1: WINE CELLAR

This 20-foot-by-30-foot wine cellar features a small cot, a writing desk, and a cabinet of ingredients. A **DC 11 Intelligence (Investigation)** check reveals one of the desk drawers is locked. A **DC 11 Dexterity check using thieves' tools** or a **DC 13 Strength (Athletics)** check is needed to open the drawer, which reveals a ledger of animal acquisitions and mundane animal product trades. Animals include a bulette, a basilisk, and two krenshaw.

Investigating the cabinet of ingredients reveals a variety of rare animal byproducts. They are all ingredients that are produced naturally by animals (earwax, nail clippings, snot, drool, etc.) rather than ingredients that can only be harvested after death. Sample ingredients include bulette sweat, basilisk venom, and krenshaw drool.

TUNNELS

A series of tunnels connect each of the caves. A **DC 12 Intelligence (History)** or **Intelligence (Nature)** check reveals the tunnels were dug recently by a large creature. The tunnels appear to be added more recently than the wine cellar, which is man-made. A **DC 11 Intelligence (Investigation)** check reveals a secret stone door connecting one of the central tunnels with the Krenshaw Cavern.

AREA 2: KRENSHAW CAVERN

This cavern features 40-foot-tall ceilings with a series of 10 to 15-foot-tall stone outcroppings. The southernmost outcropping contains a miniature cave, littered with gnawed bones. Inside are two large untouched cushions and two well-used topless wooden crates. Scattered throughout the cavern are a variety of discarded toys, featuring feathers, bells, and crinkling cloth. A small carved pool sits at the north of the cavern, which is filled with clear water.

A male and a female krenshaw, Velma and Thurvis, live in this cavern. They are distrustful of visitors, but can be calmed with a **DC 13 Wisdom (Animal Handling)** check. This check is made at advantage if characters offer them meaty treats or use one of their toys to play with them.

A **DC 11 Intelligence (Investigation)** check reveals a secret stone door connecting one of the central tunnels with the Krenshaw Cavern.

AREA 3: BASILISK CAVERN

This moderately sized cavern features large stalactites and stalagmites which obscure most of the area. A small pool filled with clear water sits at the northwest of the cavern.

This room is home to a **basilisk** (CR 3; MM, p 24) named Minerva. Minerva is grumpy and old; she prefers to be left alone. A **DC 14 Wisdom (Animal Handling)** check is needed to approach Minerva. This check is made at advantage if the character is calm and quiet. Minerva attacks characters who disturb her rest, but does not fight if it can be avoided and does not pursue characters.

AREA 4: BULETTE CAVERN

Xrasham the **bulette** (CR 5; MM, p 34) lives in this extensive cavern, which features a dozen side tunnels that burrow in all directions deeper into the ground. A large rubbery ball sits near the center of the room. A **DC 11 Intelligence (Investigation)** check reveals it has deep gouges, as if from enormous shark's teeth. A **DC 10 Wisdom (Perception)** check reveals several portions of the walls have collapsed (from previously burrowed tunnels). A small underground fountain bubbles into a pool in the corner of the room.

Xrasham is rarely in this room, as he spends most of his time burrowing and exploring the surrounding tunnels. However, he does return for mealtimes and to sleep. He is friendly towards Lef and cautious towards others, he does not immediately attack on sight.

POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENTS

EARTHQUAKE

Xrasham loves digging tunnels and accidentally destabilizes the area, leading to an unexpected cave in. Characters must rush to evacuate the animals before the caverns come crashing down on top of them. Lef refuses to leave without their beloved pets.

NEW RESIDENT

Lef just acquired a new rescue, a northern spotted **owlbear** (CR 3; MM, p 249) named Click, who is not adjusting well to his new environment. Lef asks characters to acquire Click’s favorite treats—seal meat and salmon—both of which are rare in this area. Characters must locate a merchant or travel to the north to find the treats, so that Click can calm down and feel at home.

KRENSHAR

Medium beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 28 (8d6)

Speed 40 ft.

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

Skills Intimidation +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages --

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The krenshar makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage.

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

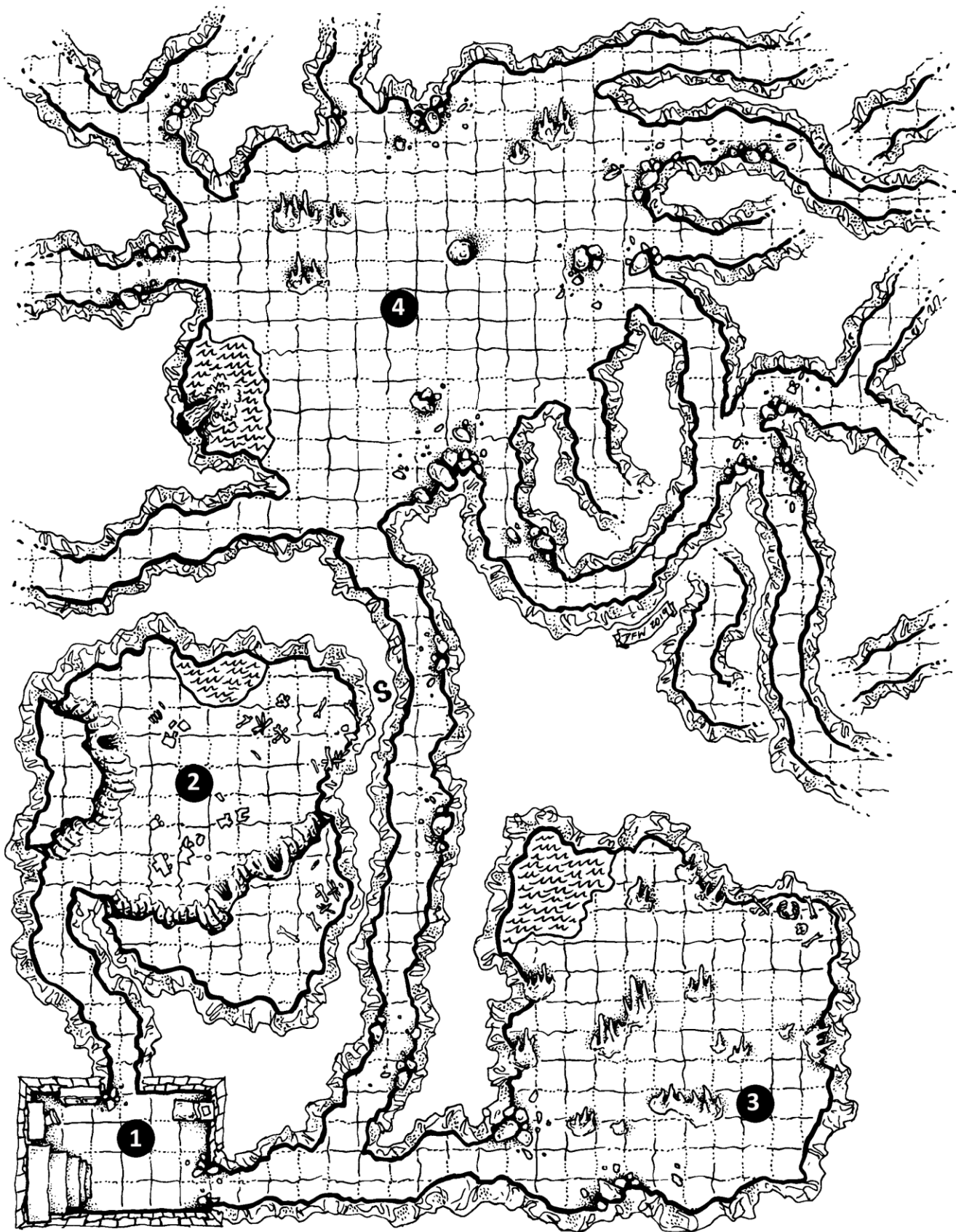
Frightening Roar. Creatures other than krenshar within 60 feet of a krenshar when it roars must succeed on a DC 11 Charisma saving throw or fall prone and become frightened for 1 minute. Creatures cannot stand from prone while frightened by the krenshar. At the end of their turns, affected creatures can attempt another DC 11 Charisma saving throw to end the frightened condition. When a creature makes the saving throw or the effect ends, the creature is immune to all krenshars’ *Frightening Roar* for the next 24 hours.

Krenshar are nightmare beasts native to the Feywild, but they have spread to countless other worlds and realms as well. They are a predatory cat-like creature, at least the size of a panther, who hunt and kill their prey through terror-inducing physical features.

Predator. The krenshar are hunters, generally traveling in packs and hunting together. Over four-feet long, the cat-like features of the krenshar include four pawed feet, a muscular frame, a long tail, and a loose, jowly face.

The Stuff of Nightmares. When it is about to attack, a krenshar pulls back the skin of its muzzle, revealing the skull-like bones of its face. At the same time, a krenshar lets out a terrifying roar that can scare its prey so badly it falls to the ground and cannot stand. This ability is thought to come from the krenshar absorbing all the nightmares that collect in the Feywild. Hags making concoctions to cause nightmares often use krenshar blood as a main ingredient.

You can find more information on the Krenshar in Shawn Merwin’s adventure [Return of the Lizard King](#).



The Animal Sanctuary

1 square = 5 feet

MARELLE AUTUMNFALL

By: David Markiwsky

Artist: David Markiwsky

Marelle Autumnfall is an eladrin, hiding out for hundreds of years as an elven matron to keep herself safe from a fey elder, from whom she stole the soulslight lantern.

BACKGROUND

Marelle is a well-mannered, helpful elven matron. She offers aid where she can, advice where someone will take it, information, and the opportunity to earn coin. However, Marelle is not as she seems.

Marelle is an eladrin from the Feywild, who lives under the effects of an illusion that dulls her appearance to that of an elf. She appears helpful and selfless at first, eventually turning to blackmail, sabotage, and misinformation to manipulate and turn others to her purpose.

When Marelle was still a young woman, her wife, an eladrin historian named Lanaya, was studying an artifact called the *soulsight lantern*, in the employ of its archfey owner. Lanaya was tasked with cataloguing the histories of the souls imprisoned within the lantern, when her own soul was trapped in an accident. Marelle, young and impetuous, begged the archfey to release Lanaya's soul. The archfey promised that if Marelle served them faithfully for ten years plus one day, they would release Lanaya's soul. Ten years later, on the final day of her servitude, Marelle went before the archfey, touting her years of faithful service and demanding the release of Lanaya's soul. The archfey looked on with an imperious grin and said, "Even were I inclined to release the girl's spirit, it is not within my power to do so." Enraged by the archfey's trickery, Marelle stole the lantern from its vault and fled the Feywild, with the archfey's minions in fast pursuit.

Four hundred years later, hidden from the archfey and their minions by her illusions, Marelle has established herself as a politician and an advisor to powerful merchants and nobles. She subtly pulls the strings of those around her, knowing that one day she



might have use of them in her quest to rescue Lanaya's soul.

CURRENT MOTIVES

Marelle is secretly consumed by her quest to release Lanaya's soul from the *soulsight lantern* and magically create a new body for her.

Marelle can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A Source of Information** – Marelle has hundreds of years of experience dealing with monarchs, nobles, merchants, and all those who hold power. In that time, she has accumulated a vast catalogue of information

and secrets that she does not hesitate to turn to her own purposes.

- **A Quest Giver** – Marelle is seeking any knowledge, magic or mundane, that might enhance her understanding of the *soulslight lantern*'s construction or aid the release of Lanaya's soul. In particular, she seeks out necromantic magic and historical knowledge about the lantern and Mardellion, the fey artificer who constructed it. Marelle has hundreds of years worth of accumulated magical items and artifacts, which she offers as rewards for service.
- **A Villain** – Marelle is merciless and manipulative in the pursuit of her goals. She plays every side against one another, manufacturing conflict where it suits her. She is a master of weaponizing information and can cause a war with only a few words whispered in the right ears.

LONG TERM MOTIVES

Having seen her success in manipulating the events outside the Feywild, once Lanaya is returned to her, Marelle plans to return to the Feywild to practice her skills there, disrupt the fey courts, and subvert the rule of the archfey.

FLAWS

Marelle is overconfident to a fault, believing that her plots are too nuanced and too well-concealed to be recognized for what they are. The hundreds of years of grief and wanting, resulting from the loss of her wife and the things that she has done in her quest to gain knowledge and understand the *soulslight lantern*, have eroded her empathy and compassion. Marelle tries to hide this fact, sometimes overcompensating for it.

BASE STAT BLOCK CHANGES

NPC uses the statistics of an autumn eladrin (CR 10; MTof, p 195) with the following changes: proficiency in Deception and Persuasion (+8).

Marelle can change her season to winter, adopting the winter eladrin (CR 10; MTof, p 197) statistics, but is unable to change her season to spring or summer.

THE SOULSLIGHT LANTERN

Wonderous item, legendary (requires attunement)

Instead of light, swirls of grey, black, and white fill the globe of this tarnished silver lantern.

The lantern has 3 charges. As an action, you can speak the command word and expend 1 charge to cause one spirit residing within the lantern to emerge under your command for the next 1 hour. While summoned, the spirit has the statistics of a **specter** (CR 1; MM, p 279).

The lantern gains an additional charge (up to 8) when a living, sentient creature dies within 20 feet of the lantern. The creature's soul is drawn into the lantern on its death, where it resides in a state of limbo.

Lanaya and the Soulsight Lantern: Lanaya's body and spirit are trapped within the soulsight lantern. To free her, an Archfey Elder must cast the *remove curse* spell, targeting the lantern. A Warlock of the Archfey may also free Lanaya by casting *arcane gate*, selecting the lantern as one of the points mentioned in the spell.

MARKACIAL SA'VILLE

By: Jeff C. Stevens

Artist: Dean Spencer

Markacial Sa'ville was once an experienced thief, as well as being trained in the way of exotic hand-to-hand combat. Fate finally caught up with him, blinding him while attempting to disarm a trapped vault.

BACKGROUND

Markacial grew up in a well-established, wealthy family. As a boy, he watched the handsome adventurers enter his city in their flashy armor, elegant weapons, and exotic magic items. He dreamed of growing up and becoming an adventurer, though his parents would have nothing to do with the idea. *'You'll go to school and practice your numbers. Finance has gotten us where we are, and finance is what you'll learn.'*

The boy begged and pleaded his parents to invite adventurers to dinner so that he could hear their stories, to hire some to hunt for treasure, to hire at least one to act as a guard for their home. None of this happened. However, his parents did decide that he could practice martial arts. It was good exercise and it taught discipline. Markacial gladly accepted this compromise, and he studied and practiced diligently. Little did his parents know that his teacher was a retired adventurer, who shared her stories with Markacial after their sessions.

To appease his parents, Markacial studied finance while secretly learning the art of lock picking, acrobatics, and survival from his martial arts instructor. When he grew old enough, she introduced him to a new adventuring crew who were looking for someone skilled in thievery. He accepted a short adventure, telling his parents that he acquired a job that was sending him to Chult. They couldn't have been happier.

Markacial's first 'job' went extremely well. From then on, it is all he did. He traveled with this group of adventurers for several years, until a stupid argument between the cleric and paladin about whose deity was better broke them up. Then, Markacial settled down in a small village along the Sword Coast, where he married and fathered two sons—Gabriel and Jarvis. His wife passed away much too soon, leaving him to raise



the young boys, teaching them the arts that he had been taught. **Gabriel** (martial arts adept; CR 3; VGtM, p 216) travels with his father as they scheme unsuspecting travelers. **Jarvis** has made his own name in the business (see *Villains & Lairs*).

Money soon ran short, and he dreamt of returning to his old profession, if only for a short time. Noticing a flier on a notice board, he met up with a rather young and cocky group of adventures, listened to their proposal, and accepted a short job.

On that job, he lost his eyesight. Jarvis gave his father a gift of a magical staff, one which allows him to continue using his skills, though not as he would like to use them.

CURRENT MOTIVES

Markacial and Gabriel travel from city to city, stealing when they can. Gabriel finds the mark, and Markacial,

being the better pickpocket, uses his blindness to get close to the mark. The two do this to survive.

Markacial and Gabriel can be used as NPCs as follows:

- **A Common Thief** – Markacial bumps into unsuspecting travelers, pilfering their pockets as he excuses himself.
- **An Accomplice** – Markacial has impressive abilities, which he would love the chance to showcase again.
- **A Bounty Hunter** – Gabriel may have learned there is a bounty on one of the characters. He relays this information to Markacial.
- **A Quest Giver** – the men have pilfered many maps. It's possible one of these maps leads to treasure. They may offer to sell the map to the characters, or ask for a percentage of the treasure.
- **A Villain** – It's possible that Markacial and Gabriel have found a small village they can overthrow. Both men are handy in combat, and taking control of a village isn't beyond their means.

LONG TERM MOTIVES

Though Markacial enjoys using his skills to pilfer and pick pockets, he would rather have a nice home and return to full-fledged adventuring. He's had trouble finding a group of adventurers who will accept a blind man into their party.

FLAWS

Markacial is arrogant, which is another reason he's had trouble procuring a job with an adventuring party. He clings to the man he once was, unable to accept this change of life and reliance upon Gabriel.

THE EYES OF HELM

Weapon (quarterstaff), very rare (requires attunement)

A wooden staff with an eye carved into both ends.

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. While attuned to this weapon, you gain the benefits of *blindsight* up to 120 feet.

In addition, once per day, you may slam an end of the staff into the ground. Doing so casts the *thunderwave* spell as a 2nd-level spell.

MARKACIAL SA'VILLE

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic neutral

Armor Class 17

Hit Points 65 (12d8 + 12)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Dex +7, Int +3, Wis +6

Skills Acrobatics +7, Deception +4, Sleight of Hand +7, Stealth +7

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Thieves' Cant

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Unarmored Defense. While the adept is wearing no armor and wielding no shield, its AC includes its Wisdom modifier.

Evasion. If Markacial is subjected to an effect that allows a Dexterity saving throw to take half damage, he instead takes no damage on a successful save and only half damage on a failure.

Sneak Attack. Once per turn, Markacial deals an extra 17 (5d6) damage when he hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when he has an ally that isn't incapacitated within 5 feet of the target and he doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Markacial makes three unarmed strike attacks, or three quarterstaff attacks.

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, Markacial can choose one of the following additional effects:

- The target must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or drop one item it is holding (Markacial's choice).
- The target must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone.
- The target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be stunned until the end of the Markacial's next turn.

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

REACTION

Parry. Markacial adds 3 to his AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, he must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

THE NIGHT WATCHMAN

By: Catherine Evans

Artist: Lawrence van der merwe

There are parts of the city where guardsmen fear to tread; where gangs and monsters hold sway and a uniform is as good as a death sentence. For those parts of town, there's the Night Watchman.

BACKGROUND

The Night Watchman is only slightly younger than the city he protects. The ancient armor he wears, still bearing its insignia, suggests he was once a commander of the City Watch but his name and story are lost to history.

Whoever he was and however he died, he has dedicated hundreds, perhaps even thousands, of years of his undead existence to going where living guardsmen cannot and dealing harshly—but effectively—with the criminals and villains he finds there. Most of the living in the city consider him a far-fetched ghost story, but, to those in the roughest parts of town, he's a very real terror.

He patrols his chosen parts of the city, and when crime occurs, he's often there to prevent it, which he does at the point of his spectral longsword. Those transgressions he can't prevent, he punishes. The Night Watchman pursues foes implacably until he finds them, whether it takes hours or months. Legend has it the only way to escape him once he's on your trail is to leave the city and never return.

The Night Watchman is intelligent and articulate, but not one for idle chit-chat. When he speaks in his whispering, grating voice it is to pass sentence on a wrongdoer, ask or answer a question, or occasionally, and most disturbingly, to make a dry, 'gallows humor' joke.

CURRENT MOTIVES

The Night Watchman's motivations are simple: he wants to keep the city—his city—safe from evildoers and criminals. He intervenes when he can and hunts down those he doesn't catch in the act.



The Night Watchman can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A Source of Information** – the Night Watchman sees most of what happens in the rougher districts, even if it's not of interest to him. He's almost certainly been to any major crime scene before adventurers even hear of it. He's also an expert on city history.
- **Temporary Ally** – adventurers may find themselves hunting the same quarry as the Night Watchman. Of course, they may have different plans for what happens afterwards (the Night Watchman *is* going to execute said quarry).
- **Antagonist** – characters who break the law of the city may find themselves facing, or being hunted by, the Night Watchman.
- **Rescuer** – if adventurers get in over their heads while in the Night Watchman's part of town, they could find that he comes to their rescue.
- **Quest Target** – plenty of scholars and curious nobles would pay well for proof that this urban legend exists.

LONG TERM MOTIVES

There is one villain whom the Night Watchman has never caught: the one who killed him. He believes that person to be responsible for a string of murders that continue to this day. The Night Watchman believes this target to be a powerful undead or a long-lived creature.

He can't catch them in the act, and he can't find them. They are protected, and probably very powerful. Perhaps if he ever caught them, he could finally rest.

FLAWS

The Night Watchman has, over time, lost any sense of mercy: criminals do not deserve it. He'll execute a juvenile pickpocket as readily as he will a hardened killer, and he can't be swayed by pleading, reason, or threats.

THE NIGHT WATCHMAN

Medium undead, lawful neutral

Armor Class 18 (plate)

Hit Points 180 (19d8 + 95)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	11 (0)	20 (+5)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Wisdom +8, Charisma +8

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities exhaustion, frightened, poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Abyssal, Common

Challenge 13 (10,000 XP)

Magic Resistance. The Night Watchman has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Marshal the Just. Unless the Night Watchman is incapacitated, it, members of the city watch, and any good-aligned creatures of its choice within 60 feet of it have advantage on saving throws.

Spellcasting. *The Night Watchman is a 10th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following paladin spells prepared:*

1st level (3 slots): *command, compelled duel, searing smite*

2nd level (3 slots): *hold person, magic weapon*

3rd level (2 slots): *dispel magic, elemental weapon*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Night Watchman makes three longsword attacks.

Longsword. Melee Weapon Attack: +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage, or 10 (1d10 + 5) slashing damage if used with two hands, plus 18 (4d8) necrotic damage.

Hellfire Orb (1/Day). The Night Watchman hurls a magical ball of fire that explodes at a point it can see within 120 feet of it. Each creature in a 20-foot-radius sphere centered on that point must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw. The sphere spreads around corners. A creature takes 35 (10d6) fire damage and 35 (10d6) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Turn the Evildoer. The Night Watchman forces each creature of its choice that it can see within 30 feet of it to make a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, a creature becomes frightened of the Night Watchman for 1 minute. The frightened creature can repeat this saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a

success. A creature that has broken city laws within the previous 24 hours has disadvantage on saving throws against this effect.

REACTIONS

Parry. The Night Watchman adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit him. To do so he must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

ORIANA ASTRAEUS

By: Alison Huang

Artist: Eric Lofgren

Oriana is a ruthless criminal-for-hire whose ability to ride griffons gives her an advantage over her prey.

BACKGROUND

Oriana, a determined and self-serving human, was once a member of the Order of Griffon Riders. It was expected that, once her griffon, Midnight, reached full maturity, she would help protect the surrounding lands. Talented and highly driven, Oriana was expected to climb high within the Order's ranks.

However, Oriana's ambition led her to value power over justice. She felt that Midnight would not be able to grow to her full potential within the Order. One night, she flew away on Midnight's back.

It wasn't long before Oriana realised how much she had taken the Order for granted. Griffons required a lot of meat to survive, an amount that would not be easy for her to obtain. She took to raiding farms and ambushing travellers to sustain both herself and Midnight. She never stayed in one place for long, as members of her old order were chasing her.

Because of this, Oriana became infamous. While this meant that she had even more enemies, it also meant that criminal organizations began to seek her out. After all, she had easy access to a very useful and rare asset: nonmagical flight.

Her earnings and rewards from these jobs improved her way of life immensely. Her most prized possession is an *ioun stone of sustenance* that magically keeps Midnight fed. Without having to leave a trail of dead livestock behind her, Oriana is harder to track.

This has also allowed her to settle down in one place, instead of constantly travelling. Located deep within a mountainous cave, her home's whereabouts are a well-guarded secret. If you want her services, you need to be referred by one of her clients.

CURRENT MOTIVES

Oriana is content with her current situation, and mostly just wants more people to hire her. Though the money is nice, she enjoys going on heists and raids.



Naturally her motives align with whatever villain has offered her a job.

Oriana can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A Criminal-for-Hire** – for the right price, Oriana is willing to offer her services to anyone, provided that they have a referral from another client of course.
- **An Adversary** – another villain may find her skillset useful, and hire her to do their dirty work.

LONG TERM MOTIVES

Though she pushed her dreams of becoming powerful aside in favor of her and Midnight's survival, Oriana has never quite forgotten them.

Even though she is happy with what she has now, if a stronger villain offered her a place in their ranks, she

would gladly accept in order to increase her abilities even further.

FLAWS

Oriana’s greatest flaw is her selfishness. She doesn’t care about anyone else, except for Midnight; she doesn’t have any close allies. No one will save her if she makes a costly mistake.

Though she is aware that she has many enemies, her arrogance may also lead her to underestimate someone she shouldn’t.

MIDNIGHT

Midnight uses the statistics of a **griffon** (CR 2, MM, p 174) with the following changes:

Controlled Fury. Midnight can take the Attack and Multiattack actions even as a controlled mount.

Griffon’s Bond. Midnight has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if Oriana is within 5 feet of Midnight and Oriana isn’t incapacitated.

HARNESS OF GLIDING

Wondrous item, rare (requires attunement)

A harness with a thin backpack. A feather-covered frame resembling a pair of wings can emerge from the backpack to stop a fall.

When you fall while wearing this harness, you descend 60 feet per round, take no damage from falling, and you can move up to 2 feet horizontally for every 1 foot you descend.

ORIANA ASTRAEUS

Medium humanoid (human) neutral evil

Armor Class 14 (studded leather)

Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Str +5, Con +5

Skills Animal Handling +4, Athletics +5, Intimidation +4,

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Dwarvish

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Griffon Rider. Oriana has advantage on saving throws made to avoid falling off Midnight. If Oriana falls off Midnight and descends no more than 10 feet, she can land on her feet if she isn’t incapacitated.

In addition, mounting and dismounting Midnight only costs Oriana 5 feet of movement, rather than half her speed.

Harness of Gliding. When falling, Oriana descends 60 feet per round, takes no damage from falling, and can move up to 2 feet horizontally for every 1 foot she descends.

Rider’s Bond. Oriana has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if Midnight is within 5 feet of Oriana and Midnight isn’t incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Oriana makes two attacks with her pike.

Pike. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) piercing damage.

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

PENNY "THE TINKERER" SALINA

By: Dungeon Rollers

Artist: Forrest Imel

Penny spends her days developing new creations in her chaos-filled workshop. With a keen mind and visionary outlook, she creates automatons and trinkets, infusing them with arcane power that she can bend to her will.

BACKGROUND

A short, wide-eyed gnome speaking at a rapid pace, Penny seems absent-minded and fleeting. She often jumps around in conversation as if she is barely registering those to whom she speaks, as she is instead focusing on yet another new creation. The Tinkerer, as she is known amongst those with enough patience to maintain a relationship with her, is friendly and matter-of-fact in conversation, seeing no reason for subterfuge and lies when speaking with others. She sees those she deals with as tools, much like her *tinkerer's wrench*, or *auronic goggles*. They are there to be used on a whim, when and how she sees fit.

Born into a wealthy family, Penny had all the blessings life could give, and from a young age it became clear that she was naturally gifted in the arcane arts. She would learn spells by heart much quicker than her siblings, and by her adolescent years she surpassed even her parents, who were capable mages in their own right. Wanting to nurture these natural talents, Penny was sent to study under the renowned wizard Kalanius Lightweaver.

Studying under Kalanius, Penny started to develop her skills. She discovered she had a talent for imbuing items with powerful magics. Soon she was creating automaton constructs to carry out her mundane tasks, allowing her to focus on enhancing her skills. Word of these powerful constructs soon got out, and before long there was a constant trickle of emissaries from regional rulers and nobility seeking out Penny's services. Each of these delegates was sent away—Kalanius believed that Penny was not yet in full control of her abilities and in her raw form could be more dangerous without his careful gaze upon her.

Cinder Rathmore, a noble from Waterdeep, having heard news of this "Tinkerer," sent his forces to get her under his command, using any means necessary. After the entourage was turned away, Cinder's mercenaries,



led by the sorcerer Severina Calabris, stormed Kalanius's tower in the dead of night. Whilst the warriors battled against Penny's creations, Severina and Kalanius dueled with potent spells. As Penny watched on, her mentor implored her to leave, summoning the last of his energies to protect her retreat. In doing so, Severina exploited this opportunity, tearing apart the mighty wizard's mortal form, and banishing his soul to the Abyss.

Though Penny escaped that night, it was at the cost of not only her tutor's life, but his very soul. She swore that day that she would stop those who use their powers recklessly and unchecked. Spiraling into despair and grief, Penny built a large workshop guarded by her constructs and complex traps. From this workshop, the Tinkerer began tracking down those careless magic users who reminded her of that fateful night. Using her networks of constructs and informants, she would follow their activities from afar. When she felt they needlessly put others' lives at risk she would imprison them or, in severe circumstances, end their lives where they stood.

Seeing policing the arcane as the only way to stop tragedies like the one she lived through, Penny has a

indomitable determination. She drives forwards with her ambitions, failing to see those innocents that she hurts in search of these goals.

CURRENT MOTIVES

Penny is attempting to nullify magic in her city by producing a large, permanent *antimagic field* in the area. Whilst doing so she uses her network of constructs and allies to build a portfolio of reckless magic users within the area, taking those she sees as too dangerous off the streets.

Penny can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A Source of Information** – Penny keeps herself in the know with all arcane activities within the city. Between her sources and her constructed spies, she has unparalleled information that she will share if she believes it is in her best interest.
- **A Quest Giver** – In order to construct her maniacal contraptions, Penny often requires powerful items or rare reagents that she will instruct bands of adventurers to find for her in exchange for gold or spare inventions.
- **A Villain** – Penny will stop at nothing to achieve her aim of policing all the magic in the region. This may result in her sending her contraptions to limit the party's activities should they start acting out, or they may find she has started kidnapping wizards in the region who refuse to work by her rules.

LONG TERM MOTIVES

Penny wants to see all magic in the realm regulated and sees herself as the only viable overseer. She believes that the Weave is often used recklessly by many throughout the world, and only those licensed, or controlled, should be allowed to use the arcane arts.

FLAWS

Though her goals come from a noble aim, Penny is unable to see the errors in her intentions, which can drive her to perform abhorrent deeds in their pursuit. She carries her wishes out relentlessly, not caring who gets harmed as she always deems the results a worthy cause. This can result in innocent bystanders, and good people, becoming imprisoned, banished, or killed by Penny and her contraptions.

BASE STAT BLOCK CHANGES

The Tinkerer uses the statistics of the archmage (CR 12; MM, p 342) with the following changes:

Auronic Goggles: The Tinkerer has the benefits of detect magic whilst wearing these goggles.

Tinkerer's Wrench: As a bonus action, target a construct within 5 feet. It regains 2d10 hit points and has advantage on the first attack it makes on its next turn.

AURONIC GOGGLES

Wondrous item, rare

These brass goggles are well-worn and held together with heavy leather straps.

Once per day you can spend an action to flick the lever on these goggles and pull them over your eyes. Whilst wearing these goggles in such a manner, you can view magic around you as though under the effects of the detect magic spell for 1 hour. Once used in this way, this feature cannot be used again until the following dawn.

TINKERER'S WRENCH

Wondrous item, uncommon

This oversized wrench is battered from constant use. A blue glow creeps out from the center hinting at an arcane source of power trapped inside.

As a bonus action you can use the wrench to fix a construct. Target a construct within 5 feet who regains 2d10 hit points. If this restored hit points, the construct has advantage on the first attack it makes in its next turn.

HENCHMEN

The Tinkerer has many henchmen, both guarding her workshop and being sent out on tasks. For large challenges use the **golem** statblocks (CR varies; MM, p 167), whilst for more copious henchmen use the **modron** statblocks (CR varies; MM, p 224) with the following changes:

Alignment becomes neutral

Languages: understands the Tinkerer but can't speak

Axiomatic Mind replaced with The Tinkerer's Commands.

The Tinkerer's Commands: The construct obeys the words of the Tinkerer and cannot be forced to act in a nature contrary to these demands.

VINHEIMAR

By: Cameron Blair

Artist: Dean Spencer

Vinheimar is a raider cursed to live endlessly until the Jarl that ended his life perishes.

BACKGROUND

Vinheimar began life as the son of a little-known farmer serving under the watchful eye of a powerful yet just chieftain known as a Jarl. He grew quickly and had high ambitions for his life. Vinheimar set out early to be an adventurer and raider.

Vinheimar rose in fame for his combat prowess. He led successful raids along coastal settlements, bringing back bountiful treasure, which the Jarl took and gave to the villagers. Vinheimar wished ill upon the Jarl in secret, enraged at his interference in Vinheimar's success. He soon felt that he could better lead his people and hatched a plan to kill the Jarl, assuming his role. Though a violent rite, Vinheimar imagined that this brutal act would gain him the respect and glory he deserved.

Vinheimar followed the Jarl to the nearby forest and into an ambush where Vinheimar was slain. Though the raider was quick with a blade, he failed to garner any support to his cause, and his comrades had betrayed his plan to the Jarl. As the Jarl and his compatriots slew the ambitious Vinheimar, he lashed out with one last attack: a curse upon the Jarl.

Vinheimar soon woke, breathless and bound to this plane until he saw his curse fulfilled; Vinheimar had returned as a revenant only able to rest once the Jarl dies. Vinheimar seems to never age, and his glowing red eyes give away his unlife.

His ghastly death had set him on a path of violence, one that Vinheimar embraced wholeheartedly. He has created a small shelter for himself deep within the forest where he gathers supporters and pleads for the aid of adventurers.



CURRENT MOTIVES

Vinheimar searches for adventurers that would aid him in his quest for vengeance.

Vinheimar can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A Source of Information**— he knows the forest better than any other and can guide any adventurer to where they want to be.
- **A Quest Giver** – Vinheimar gladly sends adventurers to kill the Jarl, freeing Vinheimar from his unlife.

LONG TERM MOTIVES

Vinheimar longs to feel the Jarl's life slipping from his body and will do—and promise—anything to achieve his goal.

FLAWS

Vinheimar is a curt, brooding, and violent man even in his undeath. He sees others as tools towards his ultimate conquest.

VINHEIMAR

Medium undead, lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (chain mail, shield)

Hit Points 145 (20d8 + 55)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Str +9, Con +7

Skills Athletics +9, Perception +6, Survival +6

Senses passive Perception 16

Languages Common

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

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

Regeneration. *Vinheimar* regains 10 hit points at the start of its turn. If Vinheimar takes fire or radiant damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of Vinheimar's next turn. Vinheimar's body is destroyed only if he starts his turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

Turn Immunity. Vinheimar is immune to effects that turn undead.

Vengeful Tracker. Vinheimar knows the distance to and direction of the Jarl, even if the Jarl and Vinheimar are on different planes of existence. If the Jarl dies, Vinheimar knows.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. *Vinheimar* makes three attacks with his battleaxe.

Battleaxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) slashing damage or 10 (1d10 + 5) slashing damage if used with two hands.

XUL'NA'CHAK

By Jeff C. Stevens

Artist: Eric Lofgren

Map: Mobral Rox

Xul'Na'Chak is nothing more than a vicious intergalactic villain that feeds on fear, power, and corruption.

BACKGROUND

Xul'Na'Chak, an intergalactic villain captured by Lars Hamerstein (see *Villains & Lairs*), was a prisoner traveling on the MX-555 when it crash-landed. It's a foreign being on an alien planet. Having escaped the spacecraft, it now finds itself thriving in a small cave system on this world.

The creature's intelligence and wisdom rival its impressive strength. Its kind are typically a peaceful race, but mutations and anomalies occur. Xul'Na'Chak found it desired more than just a peaceful life. It wanted power, respect, and wealth.

Its species are very special. Each individual is able to become both male and female when necessary. Reproduction is simple—the creature becomes female, lays a clutch of one to four eggs, which remain soft until pollinated. The creature's body then becomes male and produces a yellow spore-like pollen that coats the eggs, hardening the shell as the pollen passes through the osmotic membrane. The eggs hatch 30 days later, and the babies grow to adulthood in a mere 700 days.

Since escaping the MX-555 with several energy cells and its alien weapons, the creature has been hiding in an old cave system not far from the MX-555. A superb survivalist, Xul'Na'Chak has successfully covered its tracks, trapped its lair, and captured several prisoners, which it uses to learn the foreign languages of this world.

CURRENT MOTIVES

Xul'Na'Chak is taking its time learning about this new world—tasting its meats and experimenting with its creatures. It sees itself as a superior being and may one day make a move to establish a position of power, once it learns the languages used in this world.



Xul'Na'Chak can be used as an NPC as follows:

- **A Devious Ally** - Xul'Na'Chak may convince the party that it needs help. This may only be a ruse in order for Xul'Na'Chak to gain advantage in some way.
- **A Warlord** - The creature's knowledge of military tactics and foreign technology make it a formidable villain. Once it establishes itself in a position of power, it uses this knowledge to better its troops. If it holds any of the energy cells from the MX-555, it creates portable shield generators for its generals.
- **A Villain** - Locals report missing livestock. Orcs and goblins report vanished tribe members. Each of these have been taken by Xul'Na'Chak, to either be eaten or as subjects for its experiments.

LONG TERM MOTIVES

Xul’Na’Chak views the crash landing as being a great opportunity. It doesn’t require others of its kind to thrive. The idea of becoming a powerful warlord on this world intrigues it.

FLAWS

Xul’Na’Chak’s own language is comprised of sounds: pops, clicks, buzzes, and hisses. Though it’s learned a little Goblin and Orcish, its voice isn’t accustomed to making those sounds and the words often come out garbled or with a random click or buzz added to them.

Xul’Na’Chak is also overly confident. Having not met all the creatures of this world, it may be unaccustomed to those who use magic. The idea of magic intrigues it and, if it encounters or sees an arcane artist, it captures them and persuades them to show it how they perform their tricks.

ENERGY CELL

Wonderous item, legendary

Energy cells are 1-inch glowing blue cubes used to power the force pistol and other items found in the MX-555 (see *Villains & Lairs*).

FORCE PISTOL

Wonderous item, legendary

As an action, you may activate the force pistol, discharging a blast (range 60/120 ft.) of force energy at a single target. On a hit, the target takes 7 (2d8) force damage + your Dexterity modifier, and the target must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be pushed back 20 ft. and knocked prone.

The force pistol is powered by an energy cell, with each cell containing 10 charges.

Xul’Na’Chak

Medium humanoid (alien), chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 112 (15d8 + 45)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Str +6, Dex +7, Con +7, Int +7

Skills Athletics +10, Intimidation +4, Survival +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages broken versions of Common, Goblin, and Orcish

Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Carapace. Xul’Na’Chak’s carapace grants it a natural Armor Class of 17.

Mental Toughness. Xul’Na’Chak has advantage on Intelligence and Wisdom based saving throws.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Xul’Na’Chak makes two adamantine claw attacks, or one adamantine claw attack and one force pistol attack.

Adamantine Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (2d6 + 2) slashing damage.

Force Pistol (10 charges/energy cell). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, range 60/120 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d8 + 3) force damage and the target must succeed on a **DC 15 Constitution** saving throw or be pushed back 20 ft. and knocked prone.

Force Grenade (3/day). Xul’Na’Chak throws a grenade up to 100 ft. Each creature within 30 feet of the grenade’s detonation must make a **DC 15 Constitution** saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) force damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

REACTIONS

Parry. Xul’Na’Chak adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, it must see the attacker.

XUL'NA'CHAK'S LAIR

Map: Mobral Rox

Xul'Na'Chak's lair is a small, tiered cave system along the shores of a sea or large lake. The caves were once used by pirates as a hideout and small lair.

AREA 1

Crudely formed, man-made rock stairs lead down into a large, cool cavern. The stench of decay hangs heavy in the air, getting stronger at the bottom of the stairs.

TRAP

The second set of stairs is trapped with a force grenade hidden under a rock.

The trap can be detected with a successful **DC 15 Wisdom (Perception)** check. Disarming the trap requires a successful **DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools**. On a success, the character notices that a blue button on the device had been depressed.

If triggered, each creature within 30 feet of the grenade must make a **DC 15 Constitution** saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) force damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

If disarmed, the characters now have a force grenade, though they have no idea how to use it. A character succeeding on a **DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation)** check notices two small buttons on the side of the grenade—one blue, the other white.

The white button activates the grenade, causing it to detonate when it next hits a solid surface. The blue button causes the grenade to detonate immediately once it is released. This is the button that was depressed when the trap was disarmed.

ROTTING CARCASSES

Sheep, cow, elk, rabbit, along with goblin, orc, and human remains are found rotting behind the large boulders.

Treasure. If the characters search the carcasses, a successful **DC 14 Wisdom (Perception)** check yields a *scimitar +1* and a leather pouch containing 25 gp.

AREA 2

A large pool of spring water fills the back of the room. A smaller pool of water is murky. More rock stairs lead further into the cave system.

LARGE POOL

The water in the pool is fresh, clean, and cold. The pool is fed by a freshwater spring, but naturally drains out to the sea before it overflows. The pool is 20 feet deep.

SMALL POOL

The pool is 8 feet deep, murky, and has a pungent aroma. It was once fresh, clean water, fed by the same spring as the large pool. However, Xul'Na'Chak uses this pool when it molts, finding the cool water reduces the itching. A full exoskeleton of the alien creature is found at the bottom of the pool. It has no apparent value, but a collector of rare items may find it interesting and valuable.

AREA 3

The stairs lead to a larger cave. The calming sound of water lapping against the underground shore is disturbed by the muffled cries of the prisoners tied to the wreckage. A blue glow emanates from the western side of the cave.

PRISONERS

Two prisoners are in this cave, each tied to the mast of a different shipwreck. If Xul'Na'Chak is in the cave, the prisoners are quiet and submissive. If the creature is away from the cave, exploring this new world, the prisoners are vocal, howling and yelling in an attempt to be rescued.

Hax (goblin; CR ¼; MM, p 166) is tied to the mast of the first shipwreck. She's worked off her gag and pleads for the characters to help her. She offers to help the party for three days if they set her free.

Gob (quaggoth; CR 2; MM, p 256) is tied to the mast of the second ship. The creature is gagged and badly beaten. Xul'Na'Chak found the quaggoth's language to be very difficult and took out its frustration on Gob. Gob also offers to help the party for three days if he is freed, though he's more accustomed to underground settings.

BLUE LIGHT

Twenty energy cells from the MX-555 are stacked against the wall, radiating blue light in a 15-foot-radius. They also radiate enough heat to keep the area dry and warm but comfortable.

A clutch of six, red-shelled eggs rests in front of the energy cells, soaking up the warmth the cells radiate.

The eggs have an AC of 12, 10 hit points, and damage vulnerability to bludgeoning damage. If destroyed, small, red alien-looking creatures spill out the shells.

SECRET AREA

The pirates that once used this cove left a cache of treasure. Xul'Na'Chak has not noticed the secret entrance and the treasure remains untouched.

A successful **DC 16 Wisdom (Perception)** check reveals the secret tunnel, which is hidden behind a mass of stacked stones.

Treasure. The pirate cache consists of a wooden chest containing 100 pp, 100 gp, and 100 sp. In addition, a

shield +2 made of ivory, a quarrel of twelve *bolts* +2, a set of *mariner's armor*, and a *club* +2 lean against the wall.

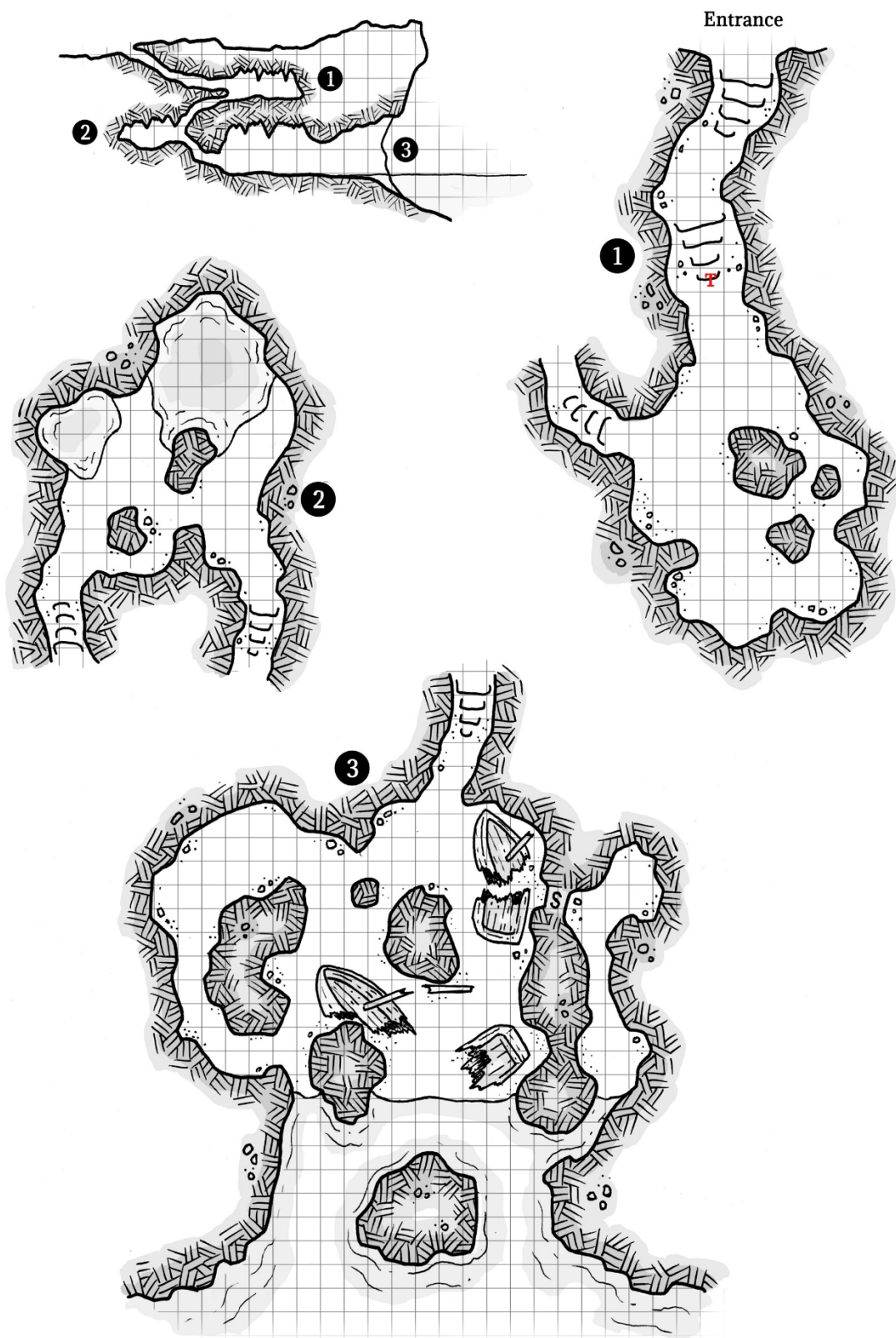
OPTIONS

You could choose to have some of the eggs hatch, with the young feeding on one of the prisoners, or merely laying on the energy cells. If so, the young aliens resemble Xul'Na'Chak but have the statistics of a **giant centipede** (CR ¼; MM, p 323).

If Xul'Na'Chak is not in the lair, when it returns and finds the prisoners missing, or the eggs destroyed, the alien uses its survival techniques and hunting skills to track the characters, attacking when it feels it has a tactical advantage.

If Xul'Na'Chak is in the lair, the alien fights to protect its eggs. It cares little about the prisoners. Xul'Na'Chak may offer to align with the characters. Speaking in broken Common, it explains how it was abducted from its home world and crash-landed in a flying ship. Xul'Na'Chak entices the characters with talk of exotic weapons and shows them the energy cells used to power the weapons

XUL'NA'CHAK'S LAIR



ZASHEIR PASHAR

By: Scott Bean

Artist: Forrest Imel

Map: Mobral Rox

Zasheir Pashar is a pirate captain without a ship.

BACKGROUND

Zasheir grew up in Calimport as the son of a prominent fisherman who made his living on Faerûn's "Shining Sea." By his teen years, the young fisherman had mastered his father's trade, but he was unhappy with such a mundane existence. Looking for more lucrative opportunities, Zasheir joined the crew of the *Black Bounty*—a pirate ship that preyed upon trading lanes between Calimport and Faerûn's northern cities. Ever striving to improve his position, the young pirate survived many assaults and flourished as he worked his way up to the rank of quartermaster. A few months later, Zasheir's fortunes turned for the worse when he launched a failed mutiny against the ship's captain—he and a few loyal followers barely escaped with their lives on one of the ship's jolly boats.

Having made it ashore, Zasheir and his fellow scalawags were on the run—hunted by pirates, bounty hunters, and Calishite authorities alike. The pirates decided to relocate to Northern Faerûn to rebuild their crew as they raided merchant caravans along the Trade Way. Being "of the sea," the brigands aspired to add to their crew and obtain another ship. They built temporary tent encampments along the coast as they moved northward, and obtained three more jolly boats. They raided fishing boats and merchant caravans while recruiting new crewmembers, either willingly or forced into service to avoid death or slavery.

In Amn, Zasheir bought a magical spyglass from a Zhentarim merchant that changed his strategy. He named his crew the "Shipwreckers," and set his sights for Faerûn's



Sword Coast. He plans to implement a new strategy that should bring him closer to obtaining a ship and gaining notoriety as a dreaded pirate captain. He plans to use the spyglass to spot vulnerable ships sailing along the Sword Coast at night so he can lure them into the shallows where they'll be beached and boarded by his crew.

CURRENT MOTIVES

Zasheir Pashar has a strong desire to capture or purchase a seaworthy ship so he and his crew can begin raiding merchant ships in the deeper waters along the Sword Coast.

Zasheir's strategy is as follows:

- **Mobility** – The Shipwreckers move along the coast building temporary

encampments using tents. They never stay too long after a raid.

- **Coastal Raids** – The crew use signal lights to lure ships into the shallow waters at night during low tides. A ship stranded in the shallows may then be boarded by the crew from the jolly boats.
- **Trade Way Raiding Parties** – Zasheir and his crew set up ambushes along the Trade Way, looking for vulnerable merchants to raid.
- **Reconnaissance** – Zasheir sends spies into communities to gather information about trade routes and shipments in order to plan his attacks.

LONG TERM MOTIVES

Zasheir would like nothing more than to gain infamy as a pirate captain. He would like to use the loot gained from the raids to finance a fleet of pirate ships to raid shipping lanes and settlements from the northern Sword Coast to the Shining Sea.

FLAWS

Zasheir is ambitious and overconfident. He might be overly tempted by the promise of riches or rewards that could bring him closer to achieving his goals. He may be tempted to split his forces between raiding merchants on the Trade Way and attacking a ship near the coast if those opportunities coincide.

SPYGLASS OF THE NIGHT

Wonderous Item, very rare

The spyglass has 7 charges. Objects viewed through the spyglass are magnified to twice their size. You can use an action to spend one of the charges to view objects through the glass with darkvision or magnified to three times their size. Or, you can use your action to spend two charges to view objects magnified to three times their size with darkvision.

The spyglass regains 1d6 + 1 expended charges daily at dawn. If you expend the last charge, roll a d20. On a 1, the spyglass becomes nonmagical.

THE SHIPWRECKERS

The Shipwreckers are a mixed crew of twenty-four or more **pirates** (see below), six **spies** (CR 1; MM, p. 349), and four **pirate veterans** (see below).

BEACH CAMP

The Shipwreckers pitch their tents on the beach close to the jolly boats (use the statistics for rowboats). Each crewmember has a personal tent. The campfire is only lit during daylight hours for cooking meals.

Most of the time, raiding parties attempt to lure ships closer to shallow waters at night during low tide by using fake signal lights. These lights are made to fool ships's navigators into believing they are approaching a settlement's harbor. Zasheir always sends spies and thugs into nearby settlements to gather information about how trade is conducted, where signal lights are posted, and when shipments are due before planning an attack. Zasheir will use his spyglass to view and assess targets before giving the order to light the signal fires.

For a waterborne attack, each Jolly boat has six pirates, at least one spy, and a pirate veteran aboard. They approach a ship in shallow waters and attempt to jam the rudder with wooden

wedges to render the ship's steering inoperable. The pirates then throw grappling hooks over the side of the ship and attempt to board the vessel while being covered by crossbow fire.

Alternatively, the Shipwreckers target merchants traveling along the Trade Way, if shipborne targets are in low supply. For these attacks, they find a good ambush point and launch their attack at the appropriate time, or at night while the merchants are camped, if that opportunity arises. Half the pirates charge into melee while the others cover them with crossbows and then engage themselves. The spies act as a rear guard and pick off targets with hand crossbows, making sneak attacks whenever possible.

Zasheir sends most of his force on a raid whether against a ship or a land target unless circumstances warrant a different approach. He sometimes buries treasure and recovers it later, if he needs it protected for a time. The Shipwreckers are constantly on the move, so they won't stay long after a raid, whether it was successful or not.

INDIVIDUAL TREASURE

Individual pirates carry a pouch containing 3d6 (10) gold pieces. Each pirate veteran carries a pouch containing 6d6 (20) gold pieces. Each spy carries a pouch containing 4d6 (14) gold pieces. Zasheir always carries three hidden pouches: one that contains 50 gold pieces, one holding 100 silver pieces, and another holding 5 platinum pieces. He also carries a gold coin trinket that has a skull-and-crossbones engraved on its face that makes him feel lucky when he carries it. He often rubs the coin for luck while holding it in his pocket just before an upcoming battle.

SHIPWRECKERS' LOOT

The Shipwreckers keep their collected treasure in two chests. They are saving up to purchase a ship or to finance their pirate ventures if they capture a ship. The chests contain the following:

Wooden Chest (locked, DC 15): the chest contains four matching silver chalices in an engraved redwood box; the chalices are adorned with moss agate gems and are worth 250 gold pieces each or 1,500 as a set. The chest also contains a scroll with the *thaumaturgy* cantrip, two *potions of healing*, and a small book from a faraway land containing herbal medicinal recipes written in an archaic language. The chest also contains three sacks holding 1,000 sp, 500 gp, and 50 Calishite platinum pieces separately.

Wooden Banded Chest (locked, DC 20): The chest contains four art objects worth 250 gp each: A silver necklace with a skull pendant, a large gold bracelet, a brass mug with jade inlay, and a gold ring set with bloodstones. The chest also contains four magic items: A *potion of superior healing*, a scroll containing the *confusion* spell, and a scroll of *protection from undead*.

In addition, the chest holds a colorful stuffed parrot from a far-away land and a wooden snuff box full of rare chewing tobacco of unknown origin.

The jolly boats each hold six sets of 50-foot-long hempen ropes with grappling hooks, four large wooden wedges, and two hammers to drive wedges into ship rudders. The boats are operated by two large oars that require at least one operator each.

ZASHEIR PASHAR

Medium humanoid (human), lawful evil

Armor Class 19 (*leather armor*)

Hit Points 97 (15d8 + 30)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws Str +4, Dex +7, Cha +6

Skills Acrobatics +10, Athletics +, Deception +9,

Stealth +10, Survival +3

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

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

Suave Defense. While Zasheir is wearing light or no armor, his AC includes his Charisma modifier.

Survivor. Zasheir regains 10 hit points at the start of his turn if he has at least 1 hit point but fewer hit points than half of his hit point maximum.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Zasheir makes three attacks; one with his dagger and two with his cutlass.

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

Cutlass. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage.

REACTION

Parry. Zasheir adds +3 to his AC against one melee attack that would hit him. To do so, he must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

PIRATE

Medium humanoid (human), lawful evil

Armor Class 14 (leather armor and buckler)

Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Intimidation +3

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge ½ (100 XP)

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

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The pirate makes two melee attacks.

Cutlass. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 2) slashing damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 2) piercing damage.

Pirates are trained sailors who are skilled in Intimidation. They band together to raid merchant trading ships and often split shares of loot accordingly. While they are commonly viewed as chaotic, they have strict codes of conduct between them, and they even show mercy at times. At their worst, pirates are lawless, brutal, and merciless.

PIRATE VETERAN

Medium humanoid (human), lawful evil

Armor Class 14 (leather armor and buckler)

Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Acrobatics + 5, Intimidation +3, Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common

Challenge 3 (100 XP)

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

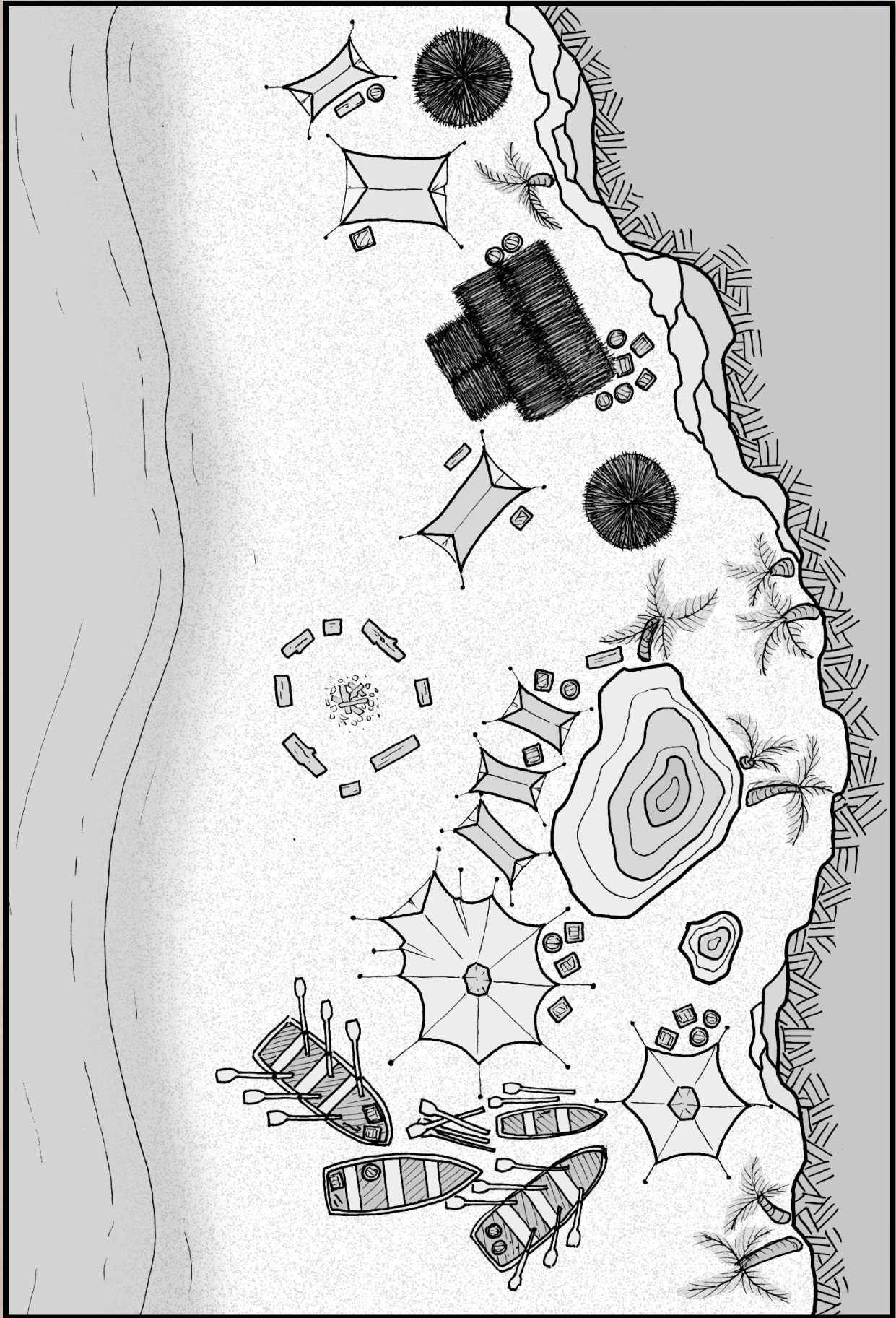
ACTIONS

Multiattack. The pirate veteran makes two melee attacks.

Cutlass. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d10 + 3) piercing damage.

Pirate veterans are trained sailors who are skilled in Acrobatics, Intimidation, and Perception. They band together to raid merchant trading ships and often split shares of loot accordingly. While they are commonly viewed as chaotic, they have strict codes of conduct between them, and they even show mercy at times. At their worst, pirate veterans are lawless, brutal, and merciless.



DOWNLOAD EVEN MORE ADVENTURE!

